

**Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us**  
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,  
and shew my people their transgression,  
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

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# Prayer, Praise & Thanksgiving

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## Intercessory Prayer

Reading:  
John Chapter 17

### 1. Introduction

Broadly speaking believer's prayers fall into one or more of several categories.

#### Desperation (SoS) Prayers

These are prayers in which the Almighty is called upon in emergencies such as: **imminent danger, sickness or death**. Almost every believer and many, many unbelievers have prayed '**SOS**' prayers. It's a wonderful thing that **Yahweh**, the Almighty God of Israel, answers '**SOS prayers**,' Praise His mercy and love for this.

#### 'Give Me' Prayers

These are prayers in which the Almighty is presented with a spiritual '**shopping list**.' '**Give me this**,' '**give me that**' or '**give me something else**.' There is nothing wrong with '**give me prayers**' as long as one asks for the right things with the right motives. But if you only pray '**give me**' prayers you will not progress far; because you will miss the great spiritual blessing of allowing the Most High to decide what He thinks is best for you. All of us are '**children**' in God's sight; and like children we spend far too much time pestering our heavenly Father for things which are not good for us. We also often fail to recognize our own motives for what they often are - **camouflaged selfishness, pride, or both**.

#### Thanksgiving Prayers

These are prayers where we thankfully acknowledge Yahweh's presence, His help in time of need, His mercy and infinite love. **Gratitude** is one of the greatest of spiritual graces. Cultivate gratitude by thanking the Almighty for His manifold gifts and you will rise above the norm to a higher level of peace and joy than you have ever known. Pray prayers of thankfulness. As the apostle Paul said:

Ephesians 5: 20: "**Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our**

**Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Philippians 4: 6: *“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication **with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known unto God.”*

### **Intercessory Prayers**

These are prayers in which one communicates with Yahweh on behalf of others. Comparatively few believers pray **intercessory prayers**; simply because most of us fail to realize the **power of prayer** and that Yahweh is earnestly looking for His followers to intercede for the lost.

Isaiah 59: 15: *“...and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.  
16: And he saw that there was no man, and **wondered that there was no intercessor.**”*

Because of this lack of **intercession** and **communication** (silently meditating and conversing with God and His Son, listening to His still small voice speaking in our innermost being) let us now consider **Yeshua the Messiah’s** prayer as recorded in (John Chapter 17). In this sermon we will note how the Saviour communicates with His Father and how he **intercedes** for his disciples and also for those who would believe the Gospel through their word.

## **2. Glorifying The Most High**

Man's prime purpose on earth should be to glorify the LORD God; to live a life that will refute Satan's false charge against the Almighty that **faithful obedience to divine law is impossible** and that the Almighty is unfair to expect mankind to keep the commandments. The Master proved how wrong Satan was and how that **perfect obedience** is possible - with God's help. The Saviour's prayer on this point was:

John 17: 4: *“**I have glorified thee on the earth.**”*

John 15: 10: *“**I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.**”*

## **3. Manifesting Yahweh’s Name**

Manifesting the Father's Name is another vital objective; but it goes far beyond making known the name **Jehovah** or **Yahweh** to those who previously didn't know it. Manifesting the Almighty's Name means:

- Accepting the authority of the Father and the Son and the authority of the Holy Bible.
- Obeying God's commandments.
- Bearing the fruit of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, mercy, kindness, etc.
- Exhibiting the Almighty's character.
- Understanding His aims and methods as we conscientiously work alongside Him in the Vineyard of Salvation.

Only when a believer accepts and lives out these spiritual concepts and duties can he/she truthfully say **‘I know and manifest the name of the Almighty.’** The Master's prayer on this matter was:

John 17: 8: *“**I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.**”*

## **4. Passing on Yahweh’s Message**

Yahweh's message, the **Gospel of Salvation**, is the greatest piece of information this world has ever heard. It is the duty of every believer to pass it on to others. The Master's prayer regarding this was:

John 17: 8: *“**For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them...**”*

## **5. Praying for Fellow Believers**

Regular prayer for one's fellows is a sacred duty no believer should neglect. It is an ongoing responsibility. The Master's prayer concerning this was:

John 17: 9: ***“I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.”***

NOTE: “I pray,” (present tense) not “I prayed”

## 6. Responsibility Towards Others

Every one of us has a responsibility towards others, especially to those under our authority. (our children) The world speaks much about ‘**human rights;**’ but little is heard these days about ‘**human responsibilities.**’ Yeshua's prayer concerning this was:

John 17: 12: ***“While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.”***

## 7. Organizing Missionary Activity

It is so easy to leave missionary activity to others in the church, to the leaders or the dedicated believers. But it's surprising what even the weakest member in a congregation can accomplish if he sets out to do something for God. The harvest is ripe and the Most High is waiting for ordinary believers to join in the work of bringing it in. The Master's prayer concerning this was:

John 17: 14: ***“I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”***

John 17: 18: ***“As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.”***

## 8. Personal Holiness

**Yahweh's presence is vital to success.** Indeed nothing spiritually worthwhile can ever be accomplished without the Almighty's Spirit being directly involved. **Sanctification** is the master key to winning Yahweh's presence; and **it is Yahweh's presence which ensures success.** I cannot over-emphasize this fact. Make sure you never forget it. The Saviour's prayer on this vital point of sanctification was:

John 17: 19: ***“And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.”***

## 9. Praying for Potential Believers

If you lead even one soul to Christ, you will share in the harvest of souls he will subsequently bring in. In ever widening circles the work of salvation will thereby spread. **Pray** for the people who receive the truth from you and also for those who will believe the Gospel through their testimony.

John 17: 20: ***“Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.”***

## 10. Finishing Your Work

Yahweh allocates every believer a job to do. By human standards it may not be very much or very exciting; but every believer has a duty to perform in the **Vineyard of Salvation.** It behooves us all to keep that fact in mind. The Master's prayer on this aspect of glorifying his Father was:

John 17: 4: ***“I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to***

**do.”**

Mark 13: 34: *“The Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and **gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work**, and commanded the porter to watch.*

35: *Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:*

36: *Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.”*

The apostle Paul had enormous joy at having successfully finished his course. Listen to his words:

2 Timothy 4: 6: *“I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.*

7: ***I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:***

8: *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: **and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”***

## 11. Ultimate Objectives

The Almighty's **immediate goal** is to overthrow sin throughout the universe; to replace doubt with faith, fear with confidence, sin with righteousness and hate with love. To do this He must first needs accomplish His work in His people. Yahweh's **ultimate objective** is that the universe will be inhabited by souls who **know His Name**; that is, by believers who will **perfectly reflect His character** and be His friends for all time! **Those who profess to know the Almighty's Name but who behave like Satan are deluding only themselves.** The Master's prayer concerning this was:

John 17: 26: ***“And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.”***

## 12. Summary

- Prayers fall into several categories: i.e. *Desperation (SOS) prayers, Give me prayers, Thanksgiving prayers* and ***Intercessory prayers***.
- Your responsibility is to **glorify God in your life** and thereby manifest His Name to the world. This means you must reflect Jehovah's character and bear the fruit of His Holy Spirit; else your knowledge is vain and futile.
- You must pass on the good news, the **Gospel of Salvation** to others that they may believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (**Yeshua the Messiah**) and be saved.
- You must pray for fellow labourers in the field and organise mission activity, however small and feeble it may be. Yes, we all have a job to do and finish!
- You must pray for potential believers and for others who will hear the Gospel through them.
- Always bearing in mind that **Yahweh's** ultimate objective is that His children will live for all time in a new universe with Him and His only begotten Son **Yeshua!**

**AMEN!**

**In the Son's Name - For the Father's glory.**

**Elder: Max W. Mader**

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