

PRAYING In The Bible

Prayer in the Bible: Solomon's prayer

Can you just decide to ask for prayer? There are people that go to a confession booth. They believe that the priest can ask of God on their behalf. How often does a pastor get asked to pray over the dinner? Why not the cook or the one holding the event? Yet, it is not a president set that only men of high religious esteem can pray. Each one of us can come before the Lord. However, praying the right way will get you some sort of results.

I have said many times that you cannot gain Gods favor. He makes it shine on the wicked and the good. It can rain too. Yet, a man with a good heart towards the Lord probably will get better results. Why? It is because they are not praying for results half as much as honoring and extolling the Lord. If I do not give thanks first then what is the purpose of prayer. If I do not let God know that He is the only one I pray to then what is the point. Prayer has been misinterpreted. We should pray because we can, not because we need stuff.

Solomon prayed the right way from the beginning. 1 Kings 3:10 says "*The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this.*" Asked for what? Solomon asked for wisdom. For ten verses in 1 Kings 8, Solomon praises God. This boy King puts his own father's legacy on the throne. The only right Solomon had was to pray to God through his father's relationship with God. That is how to pray. We come to the Father in heaven through our relationship with Jesus. Jesus intercedes on our behalf because of His relationship to the Father.

1 Kings 8:22 is a great prayer of exultation. A dedication of the temple to the Lord. It opens with an acknowledgment that God is Lord of all. Only God keeps His word. Then

Solomon praises the relationship between his father and the Lord in heaven. There is a reminder of the promises to Solomon? No, it is to his father David. This is quite a humble prayer. Look at verse 28 *“Yet give attention to your servant’s prayer and his plea for mercy, Lord my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day.”* It is a plea for mercy. Then it says in this present day. Solomon is now willing to ask for today.

Hear the supplication *oh Lord* because we have built you a house. We are dedicated to you alone. An act of asking. Yet, Solomon decided to ask by putting God on the throne first. Then he puts his father David on the throne of respect. Finally, Solomon allows himself to be able to ask in prayer. That is how we should pray. Our prayers should come on the heels of those before us. They had a relationship with God that helped us become saved in our times. We need to respect God and our for-fathers before we come in prayer.

This is a prayer and a speech. However, it is also a poetic set of verses. It asks in a certain order. It is a series of “when’s.” Judgment comes from God. God will judge us as we pray to Him. This all begins in verse 31 “when anyone wrongs.” Did we swear an oath or make a mistake against a neighbor? In verse 33 it says when we have sinned against God. Notice it is not against the neighbor. Also notice it says when we are defeated because of our sin. God will judge compared to might judge.

Verse 35: *“when there is no rain, and we have sinned against thee”*. The next verse then asks for forgiveness and to teach us how to do it right. This is an awesome prayer. Solomon then goes on in verse 37 *“when famine and plagues come.”* Again, it is “if.” He then alludes that no prayer should work. Only the mercy of the Lord works. That also extends to the stranger of foreigner. Read verse 43 *“then hear from heaven, your dwelling place. Do whatever the*

foreigner asks of you, so that all the peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as do your own people Israel, and may know that this house I have built bears your Name.”

There are people that say only the chose can be with God. That is just not true. Why do some think that God will not hear the prayers of strangers? Solomon did not believe that. There are also those who do not think there is a time for war or adversaries. That it is always: turn the other cheek. Yet, Solomon did not think so. I think Jesus meant for us to try and resolve things. Yet, at times we must fight. Yet, God will judge whether our actions are justified.

Then Solomon lifted his hands and tells the people that God’s word will not fail. That the promises to David will not fail. I love it that Solomon is so confident in the way he prayed. I believe he felt that his heart was in the right place. That the love of God mattered over what he wanted. That sin mattered. That the people of Israel and strangers mattered to God. They mattered to Solomon. This is an amazing prayer. It lifts the Lord over top of the prayer. It is like praying a prayer of praise is more important. Why? It is because Solomon had trust in the word and promises of God.