

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER



Reinhard Ratz

Pray God's Word and receive God's Answer!

Therefore I say unto you, whatever things your ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. Mark 11:24

God
Answers
Prayer

by Reinhard Ratz

All scripture passages are the New King James Version unless noted.

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Jer 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. (KJV)

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Preface

Prayer has been wonderfully given to us by God. We can communicate directly with God. God hears and knows everything that is going on in this world. At the same time, God answers prayer according to His Will, that is His Word which has been given to us as the Holy Bible.

There are some things that will never happen unless we ask for them to happen in prayer.

Each of us can have a close relationship with God by receiving His Son, Jesus Christ as Savior. As Christians, we are children of God, accepted in the beloved, our Lord Jesus. We can come boldly before the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Prayer is part of our living relationship with our Heavenly Father, through His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. As we delight ourselves in Him, he will give us the desires of our heart. As we seek Him first, all other things will be added to us. As we live for Him, blessings overtake us. Still, there are blessings that will not happen in our lives or others unless we first pray for them.

I have grown in learning how to pray. When a prayer is answered, there is not only joy, but also, an anticipation to claim more of God's promises in prayer.

My earthly father was a man of prayer. Even though he did not have much formal education and had a regular job in a factory, he would take time each morning to pray. I believe that what I am today is by the grace of God and in part to a father and mother who took time to pray.

My dad had gone through a war trusting God. From what he told me, God had delivered him from death and hopeless situations. Our family would have regular devotional times, where we would gather for Bible reading, short discussion and then prayer. My dad and mother raised four sons and two daughters who all trusted God in their own lives.

1 God's Will and Your Will

We can know God's Will from His Word given to us in the Bible. We can know that God has thoughts of peace for us, to give us a future and a hope.

Jer 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12 Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 13 And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

God has shown His Will in His written Word, the Bible. God has promised us peace. Through Jesus Christ, we can have peace with God and have the peace of God that passes all understanding. As born again believers in Jesus Christ, we can know God's Will for us. As children of God through faith in Jesus Christ, we can know our rights and privileges.

God has promised to answer our prayers. We can study His Will, that is His Written Word, the Bible and then pray according to His Will. God has promised that as we abide in Him and His Words abide in us, we can ask what we will and it shall be done unto us.

John 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

God in his sovereignty has made clear in His written Will that we as believers have a part in using our own will as we pray and claim God's promises.

There are areas in our lives where it is clear what God expects from us. There are other areas in our lives, where we are trusted to make good choices based on the wisdom and abilities that God has given us.

God in his sovereignty stands behind His Written Word. It is much better than having an insurance policy. As we are in relationship with our

Heavenly Father through his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, we can claim God's promises. We cannot earn God's favor or grace by works. We simply chose to believe God and stand on His promises to us.

I once heard a sermon on John 15:7. God had promised answered prayer. The next day I was able to pray, claim God's promise and then see the prayer answered. Part of my duties at the time was overseeing a group of mechanics. The next day at work, my supervisor challenged me to see about getting an inoperable vehicle fixed. I had the opportunity to pray. In a short while, I had the insight of how to have a needed part made out of another part. I told a mechanic that if he would make the part, he could have the rest of the day off. In a couple of hours the part was made and fitted. The vehicle was working again. I began to see that we can ask specifically based on God's Word and believe for results.

As Christians, we can study God's Word and find God's Will for our lives. We can research God's promises and then claim them.

As I was growing up in Connecticut, my parents would take me regularly to a church where the pastor would ask the members for testimonies. That is, to tell of how they had seen God's intervention and help in their lives during the past week. My dad would often start his 'testimony' by quoting from Psalm 103. I found out that God truly stands behind His Word and His promised benefits.

Five blessings that are God's Will

Psalm 103 lists five benefits that are clearly God's Will for believers today.

Ps 103:2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits:

3 Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases,

4 Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,

5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

While there are many other benefits to being a child of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, this passage provides a great starting points for areas that we can believe God's provision for. We claim God's promises; we act on them.

1. Forgiveness of sins: God forgives all our iniquities as we ask Him to. Iniquities can be defined as habitual sin. As Christians, we don't plan on sinning. However, if we do, we can ask God for forgiveness and He has promised to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

The blood of Jesus Christ is available to wash away our sins. We can never through our own efforts pay for our sins. Jesus Christ died on the cross once and for all. Jesus paid for our sins.

Heb 9:12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

In the Old Testament, the Israelites had to bring animal sacrifices for a covering of their sins. Jesus Christ, once and for all time, paid for our sins on the cross. When we become a Christian, we receive the forgiveness Jesus paid for. If we sin again, we can ask for forgiveness and receive complete cleansing. Jesus is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

A follow up verse is:

2 Chronicles 7:14 If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

God promises to forgive our sins as we repent by turning from wickedness. Each of us has to judge ourselves in the light of God's Word on what sin is in our lives. We want to obey God with his help.

2. Healer of diseases: God has promised to heal all of our diseases as we trust Him. We see in the Bible that God healed people in the Old Testament. God healed people when our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth. God healed people in the book of Acts. Peter, one of the disciples, said that it was not their power but the Name of Jesus, that had made a man whole. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. The Name of Jesus Christ has the same power today as in the first century.

God made healing available to the children of Israel under the Old Covenant:

*Ex 15:26 and said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, **I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you.**"*

As Christians, we are under the New Covenant, that is, the New Testament. We have a better Covenant than the first Covenant. God healed people in the Old Testament who came to Him in faith. God is still willing and able to heal us in our present time.

Some Christians are not as convinced about God's will to heal them. This topic will be addressed more in a later chapter. I believe that it is as much God's will to heal people physically as it is to save them spiritually. Just as in salvation, the Word of God has to be shared with the person.

3. Protection: *'Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;'*

God has promised to redeem our life from destruction. This applies both spiritually and physically. We know that when we become a Christian, we have eternal life and are headed for heaven. At the same, as we live wholeheartedly for God, we have the angels of God around us, protecting us.

Ps 34:7 The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.

As we claim and speak God's promises of protection over our lives, the angels are listening.

Ps 103:20 Bless the Lord, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word.

God's promise of protection is better than any contract or policy that man can make or give.

Ps 91:9 Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, Even the Most High, your dwelling place, 10 No evil shall befall you, Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; 11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, To keep you in all your ways.

Ps 121:7 The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. 8 The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in From this time forth, and even forevermore.

4. Lovingkindness and tender mercies: *Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,*

We claim God's great loving kindness and mercy in our lives.

God simply asks us in turn to be merciful to others.

Matt 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

God promises that as we walk in the fear of the Lord (defined in Proverbs as hating evil), His great mercy is available for us.

Ps 103:11 For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Ps 103:17 But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

5. *Renews our youth:* *5 Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. '*

We can put God's Word in our mouth and be satisfied by it. We can meditate on God's Word. We can read it out loud. We can speak it over our lives and our families.

A well known verse on being renewed like an eagle is:

Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

As we spend time in God's Word, studying it, thinking on it, praying it and sharing it, we can be strengthened. God's Word is unlike natural man's words.

Jesus said, *John 6:63b the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*

We think of Caleb in the Old Testament who, after being sent as a spy into the promised land and then was delayed 40 years, said he was as strong then as he was forty years earlier:

Joshua 14:11 As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in.

We know that God kept Moses strong at 120 years of age:

Deut 34:7 And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

God's will is to keep up us.

We know that it is God's will to keep us. We can claim God's keeping power over our lives.

Jude 24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

Research God's promises to know God's will for our lives. Study God's Word directly for ourselves. Sadly, there are misconceptions about God's Will. One will be mentioned here.

Some think that Paul's 'thorn in the flesh' mentioned in 2 Corinthians was an actual physical ailment when in fact the passage clearly explains that it was a demonic attack.

Paul could have the victory over the enemy each day through God's grace. We too can have God's victory each day. We too can resist the devil's attacks on our lives and make him flee from us.

2 Cor 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Sometimes we hear of other Christians, for whom God's promises did not seem to work. We have a choice of looking to someone else's experiences or to looking at God's clear promises in His Word, the Bible.

The example is given of how an airplane pilot has to rely on his instruments when outside there are no visible landmarks because of bad weather or darkness. In the same way, we should always keep looking to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

Heb 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

We are mindful of God's sovereignty. God is in heaven and we are here on earth. At the same time, God in his sovereignty stands behind his Word.

2 Cor 1:20 For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

God will help us know His Will and will help us make good choices.

As Christians, we can pray and ask for God's specific will in our lives. God has promised to instruct us and teach us in the way we should go.

Ps 32:8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.

A Christian may be deciding between several options. They may have two career paths to choose from. They have a choice of relationships to pursue. They may have choices where to live. I believe that we as Christians can know and sense the leading of the Holy Spirit. A fundamental point is to remember that we want to be obeying God in what He has already told us through His Word and leading. Still, there may be instances where we feel we have done all we know to do and are still not clear on a particular course of action. In the book of Romans, we are given a recipe for knowing God's will:

*Rom 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. **2**And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

As we have our minds renewed by the Word of God, we can know the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. From my view, if we don't have to make a decision right away, we can stop thinking about it for a while and instead meditate on the Word of God. We can pray God's promises over our own and other's lives. God is not limited in communicating with us. The issue is more of whether we will listen to

God. In the Bible, we read numerous examples of God speaking to people through dreams, visions, a prophet, the counsel of other Christians and audibly.

Prov 15:22 Without counsel, plans go awry, But in the multitude of counselors they are established.

God even spoke through an animal when a man of God persisted in going the wrong way:

Num 22:28 Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?"

My experience has been that God primarily communicates through a sense of peace when I'm going in the right direction. If I start to go in the wrong direction, I start feeling a lack of peace showing up as uneasiness.

Once, I was about to go out and felt a check to wait a bit. In a few minutes, a friend called and asked for some help. I got the call in time to change course without having to backtrack.

We see Jesus, while here on earth, praying all night before He chose His twelve disciples. Sometimes we have to spend time waiting on God in prayer and in God's Word as we seek God's direction.

Luke 6:12 Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

It is possible at times to know God's will instantly on a matter. We trust God to help us make good decisions quickly when we need to. We thank God for giving us the ability to choose. We use that right and that power to make choices pleasing to God. We trust God to warn us if we do make a mis-step.

2 That Your Joy May Be Full

God wants our joy to be full. We can have great joy seeing God answer our prayers.

John 16:24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

One of the simplest ways to see the joy of answered prayer is to pray for opportunities to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with others. There are many people who are ready to hear and to receive the Good News. When we pray and then share the gospel, it is a joy to see people choose to make Jesus Christ the Lord of their lives. There is rejoicing in heaven when a sinner repents.

Luke 15:7 I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.

The Bible speaks much about joy. Brief mention will be made of other aspects of joy.

We have great joy when our sins are forgiven and we have eternal life. We are on our way to heaven with Jesus our great Shepherd leading all the way.

We can choose to rejoice in the Lord. The Bible says to ‘*Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.*’ Rejoicing is a step of faith. We praise and worship God in prayer, song and in word. We magnify how great God is. We put our eyes on Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith.

As we offer to God the sacrifice of praise, which is the fruit of our lips, we increase our joy in the Holy Spirit.

Heb 13:15 By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

There is a joy and gladness that comes when we stay away from sin. We thank God for giving us the strength to say no to sin and yes to

God. As we abide in Jesus, there is fullness of joy and peace. Away from our great Shepherd, there is uneasiness and trouble.

Heb 1:9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions."

When we pray and see God answer, there is rejoicing. We can even praise God in advance for answered prayer.

In Luke 15, we see three examples of rejoicing when something lost is found again. The woman who had lost a possession rejoiced when she found it again. The shepherd rejoiced when his lost sheep was found. And the father of the prodigal rejoiced at his homecoming.

In the same context, if we lose something, we can pray that we either are led to what is sought or that by God's providence what is lost finds its way back.

Several years ago, I lost a valuable Bible when I momentarily laid it down. When I came back to it, my Bible was gone and another in its place. I turned in the one Bible to the 'lost and found' department and called several times in the following weeks to see if mine had been turned in. Then about three weeks later, I went to the same church with a friend. Instead of sitting where I usually did, I moved to another area at the request of my friend. During the song service, I leaned over and saw my missing Bible in the row in front of me. It turned out that an older gentleman had picked up the Bible and then wondered who it belonged to. I was glad to get it back. To me, it showed in a small way how much God cares about the details of our lives.

John 16:23 "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. 24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

We can be specific in our requests to our Heavenly Father, praying in the Name of Jesus. We can see specific answers to our prayers.

Once, while sharing the gospel, I made a proposal to a person. I said, if you will give your life to God, then He has promised to answer your prayers. The person became a Christian. God stands behind his Word to do His part.

While there is joy in seeing God's material provision in answer to believing prayer, we can pray for much more important things.

We can pray for the lost to have their spiritual eyes opened to the gospel. We can pray that laborers would be sent to them, that is, that other Christians will share the gospel with them even when we can't ourselves.

We can pray that pastors, ministers and missionaries would be protected and have the freedom to share the gospel. We can pray that doors would be opened for ministers to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Col 4:3 Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

We can pray for peace and for wars to cease. There is great rejoicing when the enemy flees.

We can pray for specific wars to stop. God can turn the hearts of kings.

Ps 46:9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire.

We can pray about our problems according to Phil 4:6-7. We can refuse to worry about specific matters. Instead, we cast our cares upon Him. We can thank God for answering our prayers in advance of them being answered.

Phil 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

We cast our cares upon the Lord Jesus Christ in thought and word. He is our Great Shepherd.

1 Pet 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he cares for you.

We can come boldly to the throne of grace. We can receive God's help in the problems that we may be facing.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

We trust God to help us in every area of our lives.

Heb 13:6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

God has given us clear promises that if we will be persistent in prayer, the answer will come.

Matt 7:7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Sadly, there are some who think that God is arbitrary in answering prayers. Or that a prayer delay is somehow meant to teach us a lesson. Yet, if we will study God's Word, we can learn why believing prayer is answered and why other prayers fail.

John 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

This promise in John 15 is clear in its condition. There aren't additional conditions added at the whim of our Heavenly Father. We can simply abide in the Lord Jesus Christ by being a Christian and obeying Him. We can purpose to let God's Word abide in us. Jesus said that His yoke is easy and His burden is light. That is to say, its not a heavy burden living as a Christian. Instead, it's a joy and can become even more joyful all the time.

I Jn 5:14 And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

15 And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

God has promised to answer us. God can give us understanding, knowledge and wisdom in small and great matters.

Jer 33:3 Call unto me, and I will answer you, and shew you great and mighty things, which you know not.

God can do more in a moment than we could ask or think.

Eph 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

God is a good God. We can always trust Him to be faithful to His Word.

Matt 7:9 Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Throughout the Bible, we are encouraged and admonished to not be afraid. Greater is he that is within us, than he that is in the world.

Luke 1:13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

We purpose to be pure in our hearts. While we want to use of all of God's provisions, we must examine that we aren't being selfish or lustful in our requests.

James 4:3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

We ask God to search us and cleanse us of habitual sin (iniquity). We say no to sin and yes to God.

Ps 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, The Lord will not hear. 19 But certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer. 20 Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer, Nor His mercy from me!

3 The Name of Jesus

There is power in the Name of Jesus. The name of Jesus has the same power today as it did in the book of Acts. Every Christian has the right to use the Name of Jesus.

Jesus Christ, while here on earth, taught us that when He would leave, we were to pray to our Heavenly Father, in the Name of Jesus.

John 16:23 And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.

From the book of Acts, we see that we can both pray in the Name of Jesus and also speak the Name of Jesus over circumstances.

There is no other name given among men whereby we may be saved but the Name of Jesus.

Acts 4:12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

There is power in the Name of Jesus for salvation:

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

There are three keys mentioned in the book of Acts. The Name of Jesus, the Word of God and the power and person of the Holy Spirit.

The Name of Jesus has the same power today as it did in the book of Acts when it was used by men that said, 'its not us, it's the Name of Jesus and faith in His Name.'

We see this in Acts Chapter 3 where Peter and John were going in to the temple and saw a man begging for money. Peter used the name of Jesus to command the man to get up and walk. Peter followed through on the command in faith by taking the man and pulling him up. This is an example of working a miracle in that Peter not only spoke in the Name of Jesus, he also took action, that is, pulled up the man with his hand. The

man was miraculously healed. This miracle in turn drew a crowd to which Peter then preached. When the people heard Peter's message, three thousand people were saved.

Acts 3: 6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

Acts 4: 10 let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

In Acts, the Pharisees recognized there was power in the Name of Jesus and tried to stop the apostles from using it. The disciples said they had rather obey God than men.

Acts 5: 40 And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

In Acts 16, Paul had been sharing the Word of God several days. A girl had followed him, saying that Paul was showing the way of salvation. The girl was trying to add credibility to her own divination, which was from a demonic power.

Although, it sounded like she was doing something good, she did it in a manner that grieved Paul. He used the Name of Jesus and commanded the wrong spirit in the girl to come out.

Acts 16: 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.

The girl did not ask to be delivered of the demon. It was cast out when commanded to by Paul in the Name of Jesus.

The Name of Jesus is more powerful than any situation we can face. We can use the Name of Jesus to command demonic forces to leave our life and the lives of others.

We can use the Name of Jesus to command situations to be still just as Jesus himself commanded the storm to be still.

Mark 4:39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

As Christians, we have been entrusted with the right to use the name of Jesus. We are ambassadors for Christ. We are His representatives. Having the Name of Jesus is like having a signet ring from a king. We are acting on His behalf.

Phil 2:9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The example can be given of a person signing a check drawn on a bank account. Unless the check is signed, it won't be honored when it is presented to be cashed. In the same way, we sign our prayers with the Name of Jesus.

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever.

4 Authority in Prayer

We can have authority in our prayers. When we pray, we can know that God hears and answers our prayers. As Christians, we can speak with authority just as Jesus Christ spoke. As Samuel in the Old Testament, our words don't have to fall to the ground.

1 Sam 3:19 So Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.

Jesus Christ, as the Son of Man spoke with authority.

Luke 4:32 And they were astonished at His teaching, for His word was with authority.

Its important to make our words count. We choose to avoid saying idle words, scornful or mocking words, unkind words or any words that we would soon apologize for. Instead, we have God's Word in our mouth. We choose to speak what is just, lovely and of good report.

Phil 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

We study to be quiet at the right times and then at other times let our words ring out as a trumpet proclaiming God's goodness.

1Thes 4: 11 that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you,

Isa 58: 1 "Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins.

We can spend time in prayer and fasting, that when we do speak or pray, the demons hear and obey as we command them to leave in the Mighty Name of Jesus.

Matt 17: 21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

We see several remarkable examples in the Bible of people just like us, who had a relationship with God. When they prayed, God heard and answered. In the Old Testament, Elijah prayed and God answered:

James 5:17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

In Acts Chapter 16, we see the apostle Paul speaking with authority. A demonized girl had been following him, speaking things that sounded good but were not from God. Paul commanded the demon to leave the girl and it did.

Acts 16:18 But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour.

Jesus Christ, is fully the Son of God. At the same time, He is fully the Son of Man. While here on earth, he was anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. We too can be filled with the Holy Spirit and with power.

Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

The religious rulers recognized that Jesus Christ had power.

Luke 4: 36 Then they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, "What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out."

An important aspect of authority in prayer is shown in the story of the centurion who came to Jesus asking for help.

Matt 8: 9 For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." 10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"

We have to be under authority ourselves to then exercise authority. We have to be in obedience to God. We have to be in obedience to authorities that God has placed in our lives.

Just as a man who goes on a trip and delegates his authority to someone he trusts, we have been delegated authority. As followers of Jesus Christ, we have been given the right to use the Name of Jesus in prayer and to speak it.

Mark 13:34 For 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.

Jesus has been given all authority. We in turn as His followers have been given His authority.

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Jesus Christ exercised authority over demons, commanding them to leave.

Mar 1: 23 Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, 24 saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are—the Holy One of God!" 25 But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be quiet, and come out of him!" 26 And when the unclean spirit had convulsed him and cried out with a loud voice, he came out of him.

Jesus exercised authority over the weather, commanding a storm to stop.

Mar 4:39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

Jesus exercised authority over the barren fig tree, commanding it to dry up.

Mar 11: hungry. 13 And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14 In response Jesus said to it, " Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.:

20 Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. Jesus exercised authority over disease, commanding it to leave.

Jesus exercised authority over the paralytic disease, commanding the man who was paralyzed to stand up.

Mar 2: 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins"— He said to the paralytic, 11 " I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house." 12 Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"As Christians, we are disciples of Jesus Christ. We too can walk in the power and authority we have in Jesus Christ.

Jesus gave authority to his twelve main disciples and then to seventy other disciples.

Luke 9:1 Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

Luke 10:1 After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. 2 Then He said to them, "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.

Jesus gives us authority as his born again believers:

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

We have to be abiding in the Vine, the Lord Jesus Christ to have authority.

John 15: 5 " I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

We are part of the body of Christ. Jesus Christ is the head. We receive authority, strength and power as we remain in Him.

1 Cor 12: 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.

Authority goes with belonging to Jesus Christ. An example is given in the book of Acts of men who tried to use the Name of Jesus to cast out demons without being first Christians themselves.

Acts 19:14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Authority can be used to exercise power without being the source of the power. The example is told of how a person could stand in a road and hold up his hand for a truck to stop. The truck driver could choose to just drive around that person. On the other hand, if a police man stands in the road and puts up his hand for the truck to stop, then the truck driver has to deal with all the authority and the power that the policeman represents.

We are representing a much higher authority than any earthly government. We are representing the King of King and Lord of Lords. We are His ambassadors. We have been given the right to offer eternal life through Jesus Christ to people.

2 Cor 5:20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

As Christians, we have been given the authority to use the Name of Jesus. We purpose to use it to build up people. Just as the Apostle Paul, we want to primarily edify, that is, build up and encourage people.

2 Cor 10: 8 For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed—

5 The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer in the Sermon on the Mount gives us important teaching on how to pray. We can pray the Lord's Prayer word for word or pray in its pattern.

The Preface to the Lord's Prayer

The prayer is prefaced by teaching how not to pray. We don't pray to show off. We pray simply believing God's promises. We speak God's promises out loud in prayer. We realize that God does not want vain repetition. Even though God knows what we need before we ask, God has made prayer the way we ask and receive from God.

Matt 6:5 "And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.

6 "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

7 "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.

8 "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.

God hears when we pray. In Psalm 139, it says that God knows what we are going to say before we say the words. Still, we have to pray and then God answers. We don't want to have the view that if we repeat a prayer long enough or get enough people to pray the same prayer that God will then be convinced. It just takes one person right with God to get a prayer answered.

We read in James 5 about Elijah, who was a human just like us.

James 5:17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. *18* And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

There is power in agreement. We can operate God's wonderful promise of getting someone to agree with us in prayer.

Matt 18:19 "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.

We want to agree with God's Word. We want to agree with and follow the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We want to agree with fellow believers in prayer. At the same time, we want to be aware that it only takes one believing prayer for God to answer.

Mark 11:24 "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.

The Lord's Prayer

Matt 6:9 In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. ¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. *

We start the Lord's prayer by speaking to our Heavenly Father.

Our Father in heaven,

We have been given the privilege of calling the Creator of the Universe, the Almighty God, as our Heavenly Father. He cares for us and loves us.

Ps 68:5 A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy habitation.

We see how much God loves us by sending His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to make the way for us to have eternal life.

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

As Christians, we have the right to call on our Heavenly Father. He cares for us.

Matt 7:11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him.

We are thankful that as God is our Heavenly Father in heaven. We are thankful that God hears every word that we speak and pray. God cares greatly for us. The Bible says that He even knows how many hairs we have on our head.

Hallowed be thy name.

We hallow, that is, keep the Name of God holy. We remember that we have been given the right to use the Name of Jesus.

The beginning of Psalm 113 fits in here with hallowing the Name of the Lord:

Ps 113:1 Praise the Lord. Praise, O servants of the Lord, Praise the name of the Lord. ² Blessed be the name of the Lord From this time forth and forevermore. ³ From the rising of the sun to its going down The Lord's name is to be praised.

Your kingdom come.

We pray for God's kingdom to reign in our lives and then emanate, that is, spread out, from our lives.

Next in the Lord's prayer, we pray for God's will to be done in earth as it is being done in heaven. Specifically, we pray for God's will to be done in our lives.

¹⁰ *Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.*

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

We can know God's will as shown in His written Word, the Bible. We can study God's provision for us through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. A way was made for men to be saved who will receive Jesus Christ as Savior.

1 Tim 2:4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

As we pray further through the Lord's prayer we come to the request for our daily bread. We trust God to provide our needs according to His riches in heaven. While for some, a loaf of bread would suffice. Others, who have greater obligations, can trust God to richly provide.

Give us this day our daily bread.

As Christians, we can pray, asking God to supply our daily needs. When we pray, 'give us this day our daily bread', we are praying for that income or provision to supply our needs.

I have seen time after time how God would supply my 'daily bread'.

While I worked for a regular company, we were dependent on contract projects to come in. Sometimes, I didn't know what the next project would be as one project would be near its end. I would declare God's promise that He would 'give us this day our daily bread.' God has always been faithful to supply my needs. Of course, I would do my part and show up for work.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

In the Lord's prayer and after it, is the importance of forgiving others. We have to forgive, to receive God's forgiveness in our lives.

We have to remember how great a debt we have been forgiven of. Our sins are covered by the blood of Jesus. In comparison, it is a small matter to forgive others.

While much can be said on the topic of forgiveness, we present two great examples of forgiveness in the Bible.

When Jesus was on the cross, he forgave the people who crucified Him.

Luke 23:34a Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

When Stephen was being stoned, he forgave the people who were doing the stoning.

Acts 7:60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

As Christians, we get to love people every day. We can be merciful to others. We can forgive people just as God has forgiven us.

An important benefit to remember as we forgive, is that as Christians, we are led by the Holy Spirit. God can protect us so that we don't go along a path where there is trouble. We thank God for leading us beside the still water and into green pastures. We thank God for leading us away from turmoil and bad situations.

We ask for God's help to keep us away from temptation and evil. We know that God gives us the victory over the enemy and its snares. We don't wait passively for them to come. We stay strong in advance of them.

Matt 26:41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

We thank God for keeping us from falling into sin. We speak God's promise over our lives.

Jude 24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

As we end our prayer time in the model of the Lord's prayer, we magnify how great God is. We remember that God is all powerful. We remember to give God the glory for His many mercies toward us and others.

At the end of the one chapter book of Jude, we see the recognition of how great God is.

Jude 25 To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

We realize that our Heavenly Father, the Creator of the universe cares for us greatly.

To God belongs all the glory.

Ps 3:3 But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head.

Ps 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God;

Ps 24:9 Lift up your heads, O you gates. Lift up, you everlasting doors. And the King of glory shall come in. ¹⁰ Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.