

## **Bible Study on Prayer for New Converts: Download PDF**

Hello friend!

Today, we are going to look at one of the key pillars that constitute the Christian faith, and that is prayer. To enhance our comprehension of this subject, we shall seek to answer the following questions:

1. What is prayer?
2. Who should pray?
3. Where should you pray?
4. When should you pray?
5. Why should you pray?
6. How should you pray?
7. What hinders our prayers from being answered?

The answers to these questions must, of course, come from the Bible itself, which is the reference manual for every believer. So let us begin the journey.

## **What is prayer?**

Prayer is communication between man and God. During prayer, man talks to God to accomplish any of the following: *express gratitude, offer praise, offer worship, request for children, request for healing, request for rain, and request for salvation*, among others. We will be looking at these reasons in detail shortly.

## Who should pray?

Every human being has been called by God to pray. This is recorded in Jeremiah 33:2–3 as follows:

*"This is what the LORD says: He who made the earth, the LORD who formed it and established it—the LORD is His name—says, **"Call to me, and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."**"*

In this scripture, God is in fact challenging us to call to Him and see if He will not answer back.

Jesus Christ also directed His disciples to pray without ceasing. We read this in several scriptures, including the following:

Luke 18:1

*"Then **Jesus told His disciples** a parable to show them that **they should always pray** and not give up."*

Luke 21:36

***"Be always on the watch, and pray** that you may be able to escape all that is about to happen and that you may be able to stand before the Son of Man."*

Similar sentiments are echoed by the Apostle Paul in the following scriptures:

Romans 12:12

*"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and **faithful in prayer.**"*

Ephesians 6:18

*"And **pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.** With this in mind, be alert and **always keep on praying** for all the Lord's people."*

Colossians 4:2

***"Devote yourselves to prayer,** being watchful and thankful."*

1 Thessalonians 5:17

***"Pray continually."***

So anyone and everyone who is born again is called to prayer in response to the call for prayer by God, Christ, and the apostles.

## Where should you pray?

Jesus taught His disciples that prayer is a personal matter and therefore **should be done in secret**. We find this instruction in Matthew 6:5–6. It says:

*"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. **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.**"*

Corporate prayer should also be done **in the local assembly**, where brethren gather together for worship. This is according to the following scriptures:

Acts 4:31

*"And **when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together** was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness."*

This scripture shows that any place where brethren gather in His name can be used for prayer. This fact is also qualified by Jesus in Matthew 18:19–20, which says:

*"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. **For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.**"*

You can also **retreat to the mountains to pray**, as Jesus did. This is as long as it is safe for you to be there. This example was set for us by Jesus Himself, as recorded in Mark 6:45–46. The Bible says:

*"Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. And when He had sent them away, **He departed to the mountain to pray.**"*

Similar sentiments are echoed in Luke 6:12 as follows:

*"Now it came to pass in those days that **He went to the mountain to pray and continued all night in prayer to God.**"*

So people can pray **anywhere** as long as they are gathered together in the name of Jesus Christ.

In fact, in 1 Timothy 2:8, the Apostle Paul urges men to pray '**everywhere**'. The scripture says:

*"I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting."*

## **When should you pray?**

Men have been called to **pray at all times**, in good times as well as bad. You should pray in the morning and also in the evening. You should pray during the day and also during the night!

In other words, every moment is a prayer moment. This instruction is given by the Apostle Paul in the book of 1 Thessalonians 5:16–17. It says:

*"Rejoice always; **pray without ceasing.**"*

Similar sentiments are echoed by the apostle in Ephesians 6:18. It says:

*"**Praying always** with all prayer and supplication in Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—"*

Jesus instructed His disciples to always pray so as to escape the great tribulation and, at the end, be able to stand before the Son of Man. This is recorded for us in the book of Luke 21:36. It says:

*"**Watch** therefore, and **pray always** that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man."*

## Why should you pray?

There are quite a number of reasons why you should pray. Let us look at some of them as recorded in Scripture.

### 1. ***You should pray so as not to fall into temptation.***

Jesus instructed his disciples to pray so as not to fall into temptation. This is recorded for us in Matthew 26:41. The scripture says:

*"Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, 'What! Could you not watch with Me for one hour? **Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.** The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.'"*

In our walk of faith, we encounter trials and temptations on a daily basis. Be it at home, in our neighborhood, at work, etcetera.

As a result, failure to engage in prayer will cause us to fall into temptation time and again, which will lead to our disqualification at the judgment seat of Christ (1 Corinthians 9:25).

### 2. ***You should pray so as to escape things that will happen before the second coming of Jesus.***

In the book of Luke 21:34–36, Jesus urged His disciples to watch and pray so as to escape the things that would happen just before His second coming. The scripture says:

*"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and the cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and **pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass and to stand before the Son of Man.**"*

Which things was Jesus referring to? The answer to this question is found in Luke 21:7–28. Kindly read the passage to get the whole picture of the said events.

However, for now, we shall restrict ourselves to Luke 21:20–28, where the scripture says:



*"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains; let those who are in the midst of her depart; and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things that are written may be fulfilled. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*

*And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars, and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."*

### **3. You should pray to request healing.**

Whenever you fall sick, you should pray to God to request healing. A good example is set for us by King Hezekiah.

The Bible tells us that the king got sick and was informed by a prophet of God that the sickness would result in death. On hearing this, Hezekiah petitioned God, and his health was restored.

This is recorded for us in Isaiah 38:1–5. The scripture says:

*"In those days, Hezekiah was sick and near death. And Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, went to him and said to him, 'Thus says the LORD: 'Set your house in order, for you shall die and not live'.*

*Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall and prayed to the LORD, saying, 'Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart and have done what is good in Your sight.' And Hezekiah wept bitterly.*

*And the word of the LORD came to Isaiah, saying, 'Go and tell Hezekiah, Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will add to your days fifteen years.'"*

The Apostle James also teaches that when a brother is sick, he should call for the elders to pray over him so that God may heal him. This is recorded in James 5:13–16 as follows:

*"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and **pray for one another** that you may be healed. The effective, fervent **prayer of a righteous man avails much.**"*

#### **4. You are to pray for all men, especially those in authority.**

The Bible instructs you to pray for all men, especially those whom God has placed in positions of authority. This is recorded in 1 Timothy 2:1-2. The scripture says:

*"Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings, and for all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence."*

In other words, as a believer, God expects you to not only pray for yourself but also to make supplications, intercede, and give thanks for all men.

Why should you do so? Firstly, so as to lead a peaceful and quiet life, Secondly, the Bible teaches that all authority has been put in place by God Himself. And He thus expects us to respect and honor that authority (Romans 13:1-2). The scripture says:

*"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore, whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves."*

It is only when you honor such authority that you will find the grace needed to pray for them.

#### **5. Praying is part of the armor of God.**

You should pray because prayer is part of the whole armor of God that every believer should put on in order to overcome 'the wiles of the devil'. These include *principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places* (Ephesians 6:11–13).

Prayer as part of the armor of God is recorded in Ephesians 6:18 as follows:

*"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,"*

It is also through prayer that one is able to overcome the enemies of our faith, including the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16–17).

## **6. Prayer delivers in life-threatening situations.**

As believers, we are constantly under attack by the enemies of our faith. These attacks manifest in the form of broken relationships, ill-health, lack, marital problems, and terrorism, among others.

When faced with such threats, the first stop for a believer should be the prayer closet. It is in the prayer closet that you get to talk out your issue with God, and He will give you an answer of peace.

This is what the Apostle Paul meant when he penned the words recorded in Philippians 4:6-7. The scripture says:

*"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, **let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**"*

Daniel gives us a real-life example of how to deal with a life-threatening situation. It so happened that certain men became envious of Daniel because he was highly favored by the king. So these guys came up with a plot on how to get rid of Daniel.

In that plot, they convinced the king to pass a law that criminalized petitioning any other god apart from the king for a period of thirty days.

Nevertheless, even after knowing that the law had been passed, Daniel still went home and prayed to the God of heaven, as was his custom. We read this in Daniel 6:10–11 as follows:

*"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, **he knelt down on his knees three times that day and***

*prayed and gave thanks before his God, as had been his custom since the early days. Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God."*

The story of Esther is another example of how prayer can deliver people from a life-threatening situation.

During the days when Esther was queen, the Jews were faced with annihilation courtesy of Haman's wicked plot. So Queen Esther, together with all the Jews in that realm, fasted and prayed to God for deliverance. God heard their prayers and delivered them from death. This is recorded for us in Esther 8:7. The scripture says:

*"Then King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and Mordecai the Jew, "Indeed, I have given Esther the house of Haman, and they have hanged him on the gallows because he tried to lay his hand on the Jews. You yourselves write a decree concerning the Jews, as you please, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's signet ring; for whatever is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's signet ring, no one can revoke."*

The people of Nineveh are another example of how prayer can deliver a people from destruction. God sent the prophet Jonah to warn the city of impending destruction unless they repented. All the people of Nineveh, right from the king to the least of them, heeded Jonah's call with fasting and prayer, and God relented from destroying them (Jonah 3:5–10).

## How should you pray?

How you pray plays an important role in whether or not you will receive answers.

Therefore, for us to know how to pray right, we shall examine the prayer models employed by the following Biblical personalities: Abraham's servant, Jacob, Hannah, Solomon, Hezekiah, Elijah, Daniel, and Christ Jesus.

### 1. The Prayer of Abraham's Servant

When Abraham saw that he was approaching the end of his life, he called his oldest servant and sent him to his country to fetch a wife for Isaac (Genesis 24:1-4).

On seeing the enormous task that was placed on his shoulders, the servant made a prayer to the God of his master Abraham and asked Him to make his mission successful. That prayer is recorded in Genesis 24:12–14. This is what the scripture says:

*"Then he said, 'O LORD, God of my master Abraham, please give me success this day and show kindness to my master Abraham. Behold, here I stand by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. Now let it be that the young woman to whom I say, "Please let down your pitcher that I may drink, and she says, "Drink, and I will also give your camel a drink." Let her be the one You have appointed for Your servant Isaac. And by this I will know that You have shown kindness to my master.'"*

According to the Bible, everything turned out exactly according to the servant's prayer.

From this prayer, we can draw five lessons on how to pray. These include:

**You must know the God you are directing your prayers to.** The servant directed his prayers to the 'God of his master' because he had witnessed God's faithfulness in Abraham's life in the many years they had been together. Therefore, he believed that God would make his journey a success because he was undertaking it on behalf of Abraham.

**You must pray in faith.** By directing his prayer to God and requesting Him to make his journey successful, Abraham's servant showed that he had faith in God.

***It is okay to pray for success.*** Abraham's servant asked for a successful journey, and God granted him his request. So, it is okay to pray to God, requesting success in your pursuits, as long as they are aligned with the will of God.

***Your prayer has to be selfless.*** Abraham's servant requested God to show kindness to his master Abraham by making his journey successful. This servant knew how important the success of the mission was to his master and pleaded with God to grant Abraham his desire. So, it was not about his success but the fulfillment of Abraham's desire.

***Your prayer should be specific.*** Abraham's servant kind of gave God a list of the things he expected the would-be wife of Isaac to do as a confirmation that she was the appointed one. According to the scriptures, God's answer exactly matched the request of the servant (Genesis 24:15–28). So, our prayers to God must always be specific and on-point. In other words, when you come to God in prayer, you must know exactly what it is that you want Him to do for you.

## **2. Jacob's Prayer Model**

In the book Genesis 32, we meet Jacob heading for his motherland after fleeing from Laban, his uncle.

Remember, by the time he left his motherland to go to Laban's place, Jacob was not on good terms with Esau for 'stealing' his firstborn blessing. For this reason, Esau vowed to kill him after the demise of their father.

And now that he was returning to his home country, Jacob became very afraid that Esau would hurt him and all of his household. It was while in this distress and fear that Jacob prayed to God to deliver him from the hand of his brother. This prayer is recorded for us in Genesis 32:9–12.

The scripture says:

*"Then Jacob said, 'O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the LORD who said to me, return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you; I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies. Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he come and attack me and the mother with the children.'" For You said, 'I will surely treat you well and make your descendants 'as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"*

When you read on, you will find out that God answered this prayer, and the two brothers were reconciled.

So here are four lessons we can draw from Jacob's prayer on how we ought to pray:

***Establish the relationship between God and you.*** Jacob referred to God as the "*God of his fathers, Abraham and Isaac.*" He felt connected to God because he was related by blood to Isaac, who was in turn related by blood to Abraham. So when you come to God in prayer, you must understand your relationship with Him. And how do you do that?

If you are born again, then you are ***a son of God through your faith in Christ.*** If you are Christ's, the Bible calls you ***the seed of Abraham.*** That means you have a relationship with God. This is according to Galatians 3:26–29. The Bible says:

*"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."*

***Establish God's word concerning your life.*** You should pray with the word God has spoken to you. God's word to Jacob was that he should return to his country and that he would deal well with him. In fact, Jacob tells us exactly what God promised him in Genesis 32:12. The scripture says:

*"For you (God) said, 'I will surely treat you well and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.'"*

You get to know God's word for your life by reading and meditating on His word (Psalm 91). It is only by so doing that the Holy Spirit will reveal God's mind concerning your life.

For instance, ask yourself, "What has God said about a believer as far as the Bible is concerned? What promises has He made concerning those who believe? If you are married, what word has He said about married couples? If you are an employer, what word has He said about employers? If you are a parent, what has he said about it?"

Scriptural answers to these questions will help you know how to pray right!

**Acknowledge what God has already done for you.** You must acknowledge the successes and victories God has helped you secure in the past. In his prayer, Jacob does this by narrating how he left his home country with only a staff but is now returning home in two companies.

It is not like you are reminding God of something He has forgotten, no! On the contrary, by stating the said achievements and victories during prayer, you will be building up your faith in anticipation of God doing more in your life.

**Specify your request to God.** Jacob then asks God to deliver him from the hand of his brother. It is that simple and straight-forward. Likewise, whenever you pray, you must ensure that your request to God is as precise as possible.

In fact, this will make it easy to tell whether or not the prayer has been answered.

### **3. Hannah's Prayer Model**

Hannah and Peninnah were cowives of an Ephramite man called Elkanah. Peninnah bore children to Elkanah, but Hannah had none.

Now, Elkanah and his entire household observed a yearly tradition of going to worship and sacrifice at Shiloh. It was during one such visit that Hannah went to the house of God and made a prayer in which she petitioned God for a child. Here is the prayer she made as recorded in 1 Samuel 1:9–11:

*"So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the LORD. And she was in bitterness of soul, and she prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish. Then she made a vow and said,*

***O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."***

Now, here are four main lessons we can learn from Hannah on how to pray:

**Acknowledge God's power.** Hannah's reference to God as the LORD of hosts clearly indicated that she recognized God as a commander of the heavenly hosts. This means that all



creation does God's bidding. She thus believed that God had the authority to command her womb to open to enable her to bear children.

The lesson for us here is that, when we approach God in prayer, we must have confidence that everything is subject to and answerable to Him. In other words, nothing is impossible for Him.

***Hannah pointed God to the affliction she was going through.*** Hannah then pointed God to the affliction and anguish she was going through because of her inability to bear children. Scripture tells us that her soul was bitter and in anguish because of her condition.

Thus, during prayer, we should point God to the pain and suffering we are going through and request His relief.

***Hannah clearly specified her request to God.*** Hannah's prayer was specific, that is, she wanted God to bless her with a male child.

This teaches us that during prayer, we should be as specific as possible.

***You can make a vow to God during prayer.*** Because of the distress and persecution she had been through because of the lack of a child, Hannah included a vow in her prayer. In her vow, she promised to offer the child God would give her to the service of the LORD for the rest of his life.

So the LORD opened her womb, and she brought forth a child, whom she named Samuel. Then Hannah waited until the weaning period was over and took the child to Eli in Shiloh. And there Samuel remained for the rest of his life, serving in the presence of the LORD. And so Hannah fulfilled her vow to God.

**A word of caution:** never make a vow to God and fail to fulfill it. If you do, God will '*destroy the work of your hands*'. That is what the scriptures tell us in Ecclesiastes 5:4–7. It says:

*"When you make a vow to God, do not delay in paying it, for He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed; it is better not to vow than to vow and not pay. Do not let your mouth cause your flesh to sin, nor say before the messenger of God that it was an error. **Why should God be angry at your excuse and destroy the work of your hands?** For in the multitude of dreams and many words, there is also vanity. But fear God."*

So during your prayer time, never say things like, '**God, if you do this for me, then I'll do that for you!**' Just pray without vowing and wait for God to answer you.

#### **4. Solomon's Prayer Model**

On the night that King Solomon dedicated the newly built temple to God, the LORD appeared to him in a dream. God told him to ask for anything he wanted from Him. Solomon's answer is recorded in 2 Chronicles 1:7-9. The scripture says:

*"And Solomon said to God, 'You have shown great mercy to David, my father, and have made me king in his place. Now, O LORD God, let Your promise to David my father be established, for You have made king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. Now give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours?'"*

There are two main lessons we can draw from this prayer:

**Solomon begins by acknowledging and appreciating God's faithfulness toward his father, David.** This teaches us that our prayers should include recognition and appreciation of what God has done for us in the past. That means appreciating God for past achievements, successes, and victories.

**Solomon asked for the right thing.** By virtue of his new position as ruler of the people of God, Solomon needed wisdom in order to succeed. So when he asked for wisdom to rule justly, God was very impressed. As a result, God added to him riches, wealth, and honor.

The lesson we learn here is that before you pray for anything, ask yourself whether it is the right thing as far as your current state is concerned. Solomon knew that he needed wisdom and knowledge to effectively rule Israel, and so he asked for wisdom.

For instance, you cannot pray to God to give you a child if you are unmarried! I mean, you must first get married and then ask for children. So, if you are unmarried, begin by praying for a spouse! Once you get married, you can now go ahead and pray for a child!

So, you must clearly understand your need before you pray to God.

## 5. Hezekiah's Prayer Model

Hezekiah was king of Judah and pleased God because he did what was right in His sight. However, a time came when he fell sick and was at the point of death. This prompted him to send for the Prophet Isaiah, who told him that he would die.

On hearing the bad news, King Hezekiah turned to God in prayer. This was his prayer:

*"Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall and prayed to the LORD, saying, "Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart and have done what is good in Your sight." And Hezekiah wept bitterly."*

***This prayer teaches that your good works can speak for you before God and make Him answer your prayers.*** Hezekiah 'reminded' God how loyal and faithful he had walked before Him. And for this, God healed him and added to his days fifteen more years.

Another example of how our works can speak for us before God is that of Cornelius, a Roman centurion who gave alms to the poor and helped God's people (Acts 10). His alms and good works came before God as a memorial. And for that, God sent the Apostle Peter to preach to him and his household the gospel of peace.

In Acts 10:3–4, the scripture says:

*"About the ninth hour of the day, he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, Cornelius! And when he observed him, he was afraid and said, "What is it, lord? So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.""*

This tells you that when you engage in good deeds, a record of them is kept in heaven and will one day trigger answers to your prayers.

## 6. Elijah's Prayer Model: James 5:17–18

During the time of Prophet Elijah, Israel had stopped worshiping God and instead turned to idolatry. As a result, the prophet declared a drought for a period of three years as punishment for their sin. Elijah's prayer declaring the beginning and end of drought is recorded for us in James 5:17–18 as follows:

*"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. And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit."*

This prayer teaches one very important thing: **earnest prayers yield answers**.

But what does the Bible mean by earnest prayers? The term earnest means 'resulting in or showing sincere and intense conviction.'

Therefore, praying earnestly means praying in sincerity and with deep conviction.

Therefore, we should always pray sincerely and with conviction so as to receive answers to our prayers.

## **7. Daniel's Prayer Model**

In the book of Daniel 9, we find the prayer of Daniel. You can read the entire chapter to see how he prayed, but for now, let us look at Daniel 9:16–19. Scripture says:

*"O Lord, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain, because for our sins and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us.*

*Therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant and his supplications, and for the Lord's sake, cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate. O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations and the city that is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds but because of Your great mercies. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and act! Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."*

The lesson we can draw from this prayer is that we should **always confess any sins we have committed before making any requests to God**. Daniel acknowledged the fact that Israel had turned its back on God and therefore deserved punishment. He thus knew that as long as sin was lingering over their heads, there was no way God would answer their prayers.

This tells you to always examine your lifestyle before you pray. This is because sin is one of the things that hinders prayer in the life of a believer. However, if we confess our sins, he is faithful to forgive us, heal us, and answer our prayers (1 John 1:9–10).

## **8. Jesus' Prayer Model**

In the book of Matthew 6:9–13, we come across the model prayer that Jesus left for His disciples. The scriptures say:

*"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen"*

We can learn the following nine lessons from this model on how to pray:

***Begin by directing your prayer to the God of heaven.*** We recognize Him as our Father because He is the creator of everything.

***Honor His name.*** This is the meaning of the word hallow.

***Welcome His kingdom.*** God's everlasting kingdom will be established at the end of the age. Our desire as believers is that this kingdom be established because it will herald a new era of righteousness and justice. In this kingdom, sin shall no longer have dominion over man, for God will live in the midst of men.

***Pray for the will of God to be done in your situation.*** God's will is superior to ours. Before His crucifixion, Jesus requested His Father to let the cup pass from Him, but again, he prayed for the Father's will to carry the day. So, we should learn to pray in the same manner, that is, pray for something but ask God to do His will, for it is always the best.

***Pray for God's provision.*** By asking Him to give us our daily bread, we are showing that we trust Him to provide for all our needs. The Bible calls Him Jehovah Jireh, meaning our provider.

***Forgive those that have offended you.*** In order to be forgiven, we must learn to forgive those who offend us seventy times seven times! This means we should learn to forgive again and again without putting any limits on it.

This is because we have also sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And that there is no time when we can say we are sinless! Despite this, when we confess our sins to the Father, He readily forgives us and allows us to start all over again.

Therefore, understand that if you are holding grudges with anyone, your prayers won't get anywhere!

***Pray that God does not lead you into temptation.*** The Scriptures teach that God knows how to deliver His people from temptations and trials (2 Peter 2:9–13). And because we are vulnerable, we should learn to ask God for His protection against the temptations that the enemy sends our way.

***Pray for deliverance from the evil one.*** God is also able to deliver us from the evil one, who is the devil. The Bible calls him our adversary, who is constantly moving around looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8).

It is only God who can help us overcome the devourer, so we should always pray to Him for protection.

The Bible says that the devil had requested to sift Peter as wheat, but Jesus intervened and prayed for Peter so that his faith would not fail. This is recorded for us in Luke 22:31–32 as follows:

*"And the Lord said, 'Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.'"*

Had Jesus not prayed for Peter, you can be sure that his faith would have failed him. But because of Jesus' prayer, Peter got restored even after denying Him three times.

The Bible tells us that Christ is at the right hand of God, interceding for us. This is recorded for us in Romans 8:34 as follows:

*"Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died and, furthermore, is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, **who also makes intercession for us.**"*

**Acknowledge God's coming kingdom, dominion, power, and glory.** The book of Revelation 11:15 teaches that after the seventh trumpet is sounded, all the kingdoms of the earth will become the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ. The scripture says:

*"Then the seventh angel sounded, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"*

I hope the reviewed prayer models will help you reorganize your prayer life so as to reap maximum benefits from this powerful 'weapon' God has placed in our hands.

## What hinders our prayers from being answered?

As believers, there are several hindrances that may prevent our prayers from being answered. This section identifies 10 hindrances as recorded in the scriptures. They include the following:

### 1. Unconfessed sin

The Bible teaches that our sins and iniquities hide God's face from us. This is according to Isaiah 59:1–2. The scripture says:

*"Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nor is His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God, and **your sins have hidden His face from you**, so that He will not hear."*

So, before you pray, you should confess your iniquities, sins, and transgressions and turn away from them in order to obtain mercy and forgiveness from God. It is only after doing so that you will be in a position to get your prayers answered by God.

These sentiments are also echoed in 2 Chronicles 7:14. The scriptures say:

*"If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, pray, seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land."*

### 2. Exploiting and oppressing the poor

Exploiting workers is one form of mistreating the poor that does not sit well with God. When you engage in such an act, God won't answer your prayers. This is recorded for us in Deuteronomy 24:14. Scripture says:

*"You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether one of your brethren or one of the aliens who is in your land within your gates. Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the LORD, and it be sin to you."*



### 3. Shedding innocent blood

The Bible teaches against shedding innocent blood because man was created in the image of God. In Genesis 9:6, we find these words:

*"Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God, He made man."*

So when you shed innocent blood, you have violated God's commandment, and His judgment is upon you. Thus, He cannot answer your prayers because, by so doing, He will be going against His own word. Remember, God and His word are one.

### 4. Walking in pride

The Bible teaches that God hates pride. Therefore, He opposes them and brings them down. This is recorded in James 4:6. The scripture says:

*"But He gives more grace. Therefore, He says, 'God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble.'"*

Similar sentiments are echoed by Jesus in Luke 18:14. The Bible says:

*"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; **for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**"*

When you walk in pride, God resists you and will in no way answer your prayers.

### 5. Speaking lies

The Bible teaches that God hates a lying tongue. At the same time, it says that God hates a false witness who speaks lies (Proverbs 6:17, 19).

So when you walk in lies, God won't answer your prayers because you are walking contrary to His word.

In fact, Revelation 21:8 identifies liars as one category of people that will end up in the lake of fire. The scripture says:

*"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*

## **6. Mistreating orphans, strangers, and widows**

God is against those who mistreat widows, orphans, and strangers. This is recorded for us in several scriptures, including:

Ezekiel 22:29

*"The people of the land have used oppression, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger."*

Zechariah 7:10

*"Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. Let none of you plan evil in his heart against his brother."*

Exodus 22:21

*"You shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt."*

Exodus 22:22

*"You shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If you afflict them in any way, and they cry at all to Me, I will surely hear their cry; and My wrath will become hot, and I will kill you with the sword; your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless."*

Deuteronomy 27:19

*"Cursed is the one who perverts the justice due the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. And all the people shall say, Amen."*

Thus, if you mistreat orphans, widows, and strangers, God will never answer your prayers.

## 7. Mistreating your parents

The Bible directs us to obey our parents so that we may live long on the earth (Exodus 20:12). When we fail to do so, we attract the wrath of God into our lives. This was the case with the children of Israel at the time of the prophet Ezekiel. In Ezekiel 22:7, we get these words:

*"In you they have made light of father and mother; in your midst they have oppressed the stranger; in you they have mistreated the fatherless and the widow."*

In Deuteronomy 27:16, we find very strong words against those who dishonor parents. The scripture says:

*"Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt. And all the people shall say, Amen."*

So, if you walk in disobedience to your parents, God won't answer your prayers.

## 8. Mistreating your wife

The book of 1 Peter 3:7 advises husbands to treat their wives well. If they fail to do so, their prayers will be hindered. The scripture says:

*"Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, **that your prayers may not be hindered.**"*

## 9. Doubt and unbelief

Doubt and unbelief are other hindrances to answered prayers. The Bible teaches that God does not answer the prayers of a doubtful person. So when you pray, you must have faith in order to please God and get answers.

We read this in James 1:6–8. The scriptures say:

*"But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in his ways."*

These sentiments are echoed in Hebrews 11:6. The Bible says:

*"But without faith, it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."*

So if you express doubt or unbelief while praying, no answer will be forthcoming from God.

## **10. Walking in unforgiveness**

The Bible clearly teaches that we should learn to forgive others when they offend us. Failure to do so will mean that God won't forgive us our sins. Consequently, He won't answer our prayers.

Here are some scriptures that urge us to forgive those who offend us so that we can also obtain mercy:

Mark 11:25

*"And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses."*

Matthew 6:14-15

*"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*

James 2:13

*"For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment."*

Ephesians 4:32

*"And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God forgave you."*

So, no matter how hard it is to forgive, it is something that you have to do so as not to hinder your prayers.

## **Conclusion**

In this Bible study about prayer, we discussed what prayer is, who should pray, where you should pray, when to pray, why you should pray, how you should pray, and hindrances to answered prayers. As a new convert, I hope the study has helped you grasp elementary teachings about prayer that are key to your growth and maturity in the Christian faith. It is also my belief that the study will add value to the already existing body of knowledge on the subject of prayer. Thank you, and see you later, God willing.