

Prayers from the Old Testament

Last Sunday we came to a discussion of the topic “to whom do we pray.” I highly recommend that you listen to Kit’s study on the relationship of Abraham and Moses to God and how that bears on who they addressed prayer to.

Now lets consider our understanding of praying in the Old Testament.

Most prayers in the Old Testament were given to “HaShem” which is a Hebrew term for the “Name for God.” Literally, it means “the name.”

Deuteronomy 28:58 “If you are not careful to observe all the words of this Law that are written in this book, to fear (or give observance) this honored and awesome name,

HaShem-means The Name—now said here-- the Lord- YHWH your God, Elohiym plural meaning God.

HaShem means “The Name” and is used to identify a person. In the Bible the Hebrew word for God is made up of four vowels—YHWH. Saying God’s name was considered a very serious and powerful thing, so much so that one of the Ten Commandments prohibits them from saying God’s name in vain. Today, the Jews will not even say His name but they call Him HaShem.

It is such a shame how in English referring to God has become common profanity. I hope that this study we are in right now causes you to think so reverently when you pray, even for a meal or more important in your prayers. Remember even His name refers to His Power—as you pray be Respectful, Fearful, Observant when you pray to God. It is interesting how Israel does not think that Jesus is the Messiah but they do have full reverence for His very name.

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So our passage:

Deuteronomy 28:58 “If you are not careful to observe all the words of this Law that are written in this book, to fear (or give observance) this honored and awesome name, (Hashem) the Lord your God - (YHWH your God, Elohiym-- plural meaning God)

Deuteronomy 28:59 then the Lord—Jehovah (So here we have YHWH, Elohim & Jehovah or Lord) will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses.

Deuteronomy 28:60 And He will bring back on you every disease of Egypt of which you were afraid, and they will cling to you.

Deuteronomy 28:61 Also every sickness and every plague, which are not written in the book of this Law, the Lord Jehovah will bring on you until you are destroyed.

Now lets read a few verses to get an idea of the warning against profaning His Name.

Leviticus 24:11 the son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name, That is she blasphemed YHWH and cursed. So they brought him to Moses.

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(Now his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.)

Leviticus 24:12 Then they put him in custody, waiting for Moses to give them a clear decision in accordance with the command of the Lord.

Leviticus 24:13 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,

Leviticus 24:14 "Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and have all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then have all the congregation stone him.

Leviticus 24:15 You shall also speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If anyone curses his God, then he will bear the responsibility for his sin.

Leviticus 24:16 Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the Lord must be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The stranger as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.

Names of God in the Old Testament

1. Hashem—The Name
2. YHWH (shorter Yah)

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3. El—God (singular)
4. Elohim—God (plural)
5. Shaddah —almighty
6. Saba—host as in God of the armies 1 Samuel 17:45
7. Adonai—Lord

Unlike in the New Testament where God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit refer specifically to one of the members of the Godhead, here in the Old Testament these Hebrew names can be used for either of them.

Prayer: address a request or thanks or expression to deity.

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1. Genesis 1-2 said only by the Lord.
2. Genesis 3:1 first prayer said other than the Lord was Satan and then not in a prayer, nor spoken of, to the Lord but to Eve; then the woman spoke but not to the Lord but to Satan.
3. Then the Lord spoke to Eve and Adam Genesis 3.
4. Genesis 4 The Lord spoke to Cain and Cain to the Lord about Abel; Cain talked with the Lord and the Lord answered Cain and spoke to all concerning killing of Cain.
5. Gen. 6 God talked with Noah—on the flood and the Ark; but Noah is never said to speak to God.
6. God spoke to the two other members of the Godhead but not to mankind Genesis 11:7

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7. The Lord spoke to Abram with the words of the Abrahamic Covenant then with Abram after Lot separated out from Abram concerning the land of Abraham. Genesis 12.
8. The first blessing to the Lord was by Melchizedek “Blessed be Abram of God most High, Possessor of heaven and earth. He referred to God as El—which means mighty one, or hero, one of the most ancient names for God. Genesis 14:19.
9. Then the Lord has a discussion with the Abram and Abram with the Lord addressing Him as ‘O Lord God’ as O Adonai YHWH. This name of God will come up with God talking with Moses. Genesis 15:2, 8.
10. Repeated the name El given in Genesis 16:13 by Hagar, El.
11. Again by Abram ‘I am God Almighty’ El Shaddai –almighty God had several discussions with Abram. Genesis 17:1
12. The first time that Moses talked with God, in Exodus 3:6, God referred to Himself as God—Elohiym and then in 3:14 I am who I am—YHWH who YHWH
13. Spirit of the Lord Judges 3:10; 6:34 and 14:6
14. Judges 5:3-4 song from Deborah to the Lord; she sang to YHWH
15. Long wonderful prayer to God: by Hannah in 1 Samuel 2:1
16. The first prayer revealed recorded in history was by Job in Job 1:21 and the first use of the name YHWH.

Job 1:21 Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked I shall return there. The Lord (YHWH) gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

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17. The first prayer by David also contains use of the name YHWH

Psalm 3:1 O Lord how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me.

18. Sometime we have to pray to God calling on Him to hear our prayers.

Psalm 143:1 Hear my prayer, Lord, Listen to my pleadings! Answer me in Your faithfulness, in Your righteousness!

But always be in the power of the Spirit in your prayers.

Psalm 18:6 In my distress I called upon the Lord, And cried to my God for help; He heard my voice out of His temple, And my cry for help before Him came into His ears..

Psalm 145:18 The Lord is near to all who call on Him, To all who call on Him in truth.

Psalm 34:6 This afflicted man cried, and the Lord heard him And saved him out of all his troubles.

19. Learning something about prayer or more accurately how God rejects prayers.

Isaiah 1:15 So when you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide My eyes from you; Yes, even though you offer many prayers, I

will not be listening. Your hands are covered with blood.

Here is a very important principle about prayer: God will not listen to every prayer you offer.

Isaiah 8:17 And I will wait for the Lord who is hiding His face from the house of Jacob; I will even look eagerly for Him.

Please be aware of prayer. God is always waiting for us to pray with Him but you cannot pray with sinful hearts.

20. But God is always ready to answer our prayers.

Jeremiah 29:12 Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.

Jeremiah 33:3 ‘Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.’

Always be ready to pray because of great pains in your soul.

Lamentations 1:20 See, O Lord, for I am in distress; My spirit is greatly troubled; My heart is overturned within me, For I have been very rebellious. In the street the sword slays; In the house it is like death.

21. Prayer can change the thinking of God!!!

Amos 7:2 And it came about, when it had finished eating the vegetation of the land, that

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**I said, "Lord GOD, (Jehovah) please pardon!
How can Jacob stand, For he is small?"**

Amos 7:3 The Lord YHWH changed about this. "It shall not be" said the Lord "It shall not be," said the Lord.

Now in our study from last Sunday we saw that we pray to God the Father, as Jesus did in His life. Then we saw that we pray in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the name or authority of Jesus Christ.

1. Why should we pray? Because God desires to hear our voice.
2. Prayers should always be proclaimed in thanksgiving.
3. Then we saw the emphasis of Thanksgiving in prayers. Then this is where we became centered on was the Order of Prayer.