

Joe Czapla - Prayer

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And friends of the truth, grace and peace be unto you all.

We thank our Heavenly Father that he blessed this convention, that we all could gather here together once again in this year, and my topic for today, prayer. Currently we are studying with the young people on our Sunday meetings. That's on our first hour, the words of Jesus and we up to chapter six, and we've got the Lord's Prayer.

And this is what prompt me to actually choose this topic and speak to you about prayer. So maybe the first question that arises to our minds is what is a prayer? A prayer is someone you can worship to. Prayer involves devotion in a sense that you can depend on, someone that you can direct your prayer to. Prayers are connected with a strong faith.

Prayers are sincere, they come from the heart. Pray is someone you can talk to in private, convey your problems, someone you can ask or request, or even played with, beg or sake. Some prayers of prize and songs. We can pray for others, and also praying for his kingdom to come and his will be done.

So the question is, were the prayers always the same from the beginning of the creation?

I think that prayers have changed over the generations. We know that people have changed, the needs have changed, and as God has revealed his plan of salvation, so also we can pray about it in the Lord's prayer. Your kingdom come, your will be done. We pray for that kingdom dead as it was prophesied.

And not these prophets that prophesied, they didn't know even about it.

But some of the scholars of today, what they say about prayers.

The early beginning of a prayer is a process. It was simple, like talk to God, it was a conversation with God. Over the years, prayers are formalized from worship and took on a different variety of forms, such as adoration, confession, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, praise and meditation.

The prying person seeks to acknowledge God and is concerned doing the God's will.

Have you ever heard of anybody that doesn't agree with that, that they want to do the will of God? I haven't.

But is it always like that?

Yes, unfortunately it's not always like that.

The petitioner, the person praying, tends to sometimes arrange his prayer towards God for what he wants, as opposed to giving God what he wants.

Either prayer is from the heart, it can't be read from a book, nor it can be a repetitive recitations.

A prayer must be spontaneous, coming from your heart and each individual in terms of their relations with God.

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Yes, quite often I've seen sometimes people in the streets, repetitive prayers.

But sometimes when you think about it and someone said, how far do these prayers go if they are constantly repeated and repeated over and over again, and sometimes someone said that some of these prayers can only go up to the ceiling height.

What's very important for us if a person wants God to hear him when he prays, the same person should hear God what he wants.

What do we need to do for God to hear prayers and listen? Listen what God wants of us.

So another question. When did men start praying to God? When we have a look in the history of mankind and I think that prayers go a long way. We find in Genesis chapter 4 and verse 26 where it says that Seth also had a son and he named Himenosh, and at that time man began to call onto the name of the Lord.

But there is also a possibility that Adam in the Garden of Eden had his first meditation before he sinned, and since then the first prayers were fairly simple to talk with their own creator, and we know that through the generation Adam and his family depended on God. We also depend on God, and in Genesis chapter four we are told about the IVU and Cain bringing the offerings to the Lord.

And later the nature of the prayer enlarged to include the direction of guidance in specific experiences, and we know the situation with Joseph in Egypt and it grew into a giant nation. Also the prayer has changed which included guidance and specific experiences that the Israelites needed on the walk across the desert, including destroying the enemies which were in the way.

And we know the closeness of Moses. He pleads for the nations and his guidance.

But when we have a look at more modern prayer, it also has expanded further a lot further, which includes Christ forgiveness of sins and unity among the brethren, and that's not all, and as we have the Lord's prayer that was never before, we can call a creator our Father in heaven.

And that is a very big privilege that we can call the Creator of the universe our Father, and after, after our Father Adam, none were called sons of God down to the time of Jesus. The fact that the church are called the sons of God implies the begetting of the new life.

No Jew then ever made use of such expressions that were called the house of the servants.

The Lord's prayer would assure the apostles through they were also Jews. God recognized them now as not as the servants, but as the sons. They could not, they could not be received into sonship until the receiving of the Holy Spirit after the Pentecost.

When we have a look into going back into the history of mankind when we only think the number of people that believe in God and pray to God. Out of the more than 6 billion people of population, and if you want to put it in another perspective and count the number of people, the population from the beginning of the world till now, it is probably over 20 billion people.

So how many of these prayers have been offered to God? If one prays, at least one, twice a week. But we know that a lot of us pray at least two, three times a day or more.

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Yes. It's never too late for our Father to receive our prayer.

He's never tired, it's never too early.

He answers our prayers.

You know, the other day my wife went to the tennis tournament that's on at the moment, and one of her grinder fans, Iga, the Polish number one tennis player, you probably heard of her, haven't you? And she was playing on one of the side courts, practicing, just hits.

And my wife saw her father and asked him, what about if I can have a little bit, have an autograph? And he says, sure, yeah. When she finishes shortly, she will be walking by at the side there, through that gate. If you wait there, she'll be probably happy to sign it for you, give you an autograph. So Eva went up and waits for her, and that the next thing she walks with two guards.

And Eva says, can I have an autograph? And one of the guards says, he's running late, too busy, can't do it. How long does it take? Only 10 seconds with God. He always is ready to receive our prayer.

Never too late, never too early, never too tired.

And when we have a look at the very situation now where we read in Psalms chapter 66 and verses 19 to 20, but God has surely listened to my voice in prayer.

Praise be to God who has not rejected my prayer or withheld his love from me.

And I would like to mention of a situation about that. It's written in 1 Samuel 1 onwards.

It is about a man that had two wives, Elka, and one of the wives was Hannah, and she was childless, she didn't have any children, and we know the situation with her when year after year I went down to worship and sacrifice to the Lord Almighty in Shiloh, and whenever they came, Elka sacrificed, he would sacrifice meat and give portions to his wife, Penina and all his sons and daughters.

But with Hannah he gave her double portions because he loved her so much. But she was childless.

And we know what happened, that her rival because of that, that she didn't have any children. She irritated her. She probably was laughing at her. But Hannah, she wept and she couldn't even eat, and her husband would say to her, why are you waiting?

Why do you not eat?

And one time, Eliezer, the priest, was sitting on the chair in the door post of the Lord's temple. Hannah wept so much and prayed to the Lord.

And we know what happened. That she made a promise that if she ever has a son, she would give him to the Lord.

And as Hannah was praying and Eliezer was sitting and he thought that she was pretty intoxicated, that she was pretty drunk, and he said to her, how long will you keep getting drunk? Get rid of your wine. But Hannah replied, I am a woman who deeply in trouble.

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I have not been drinking any wine or beer. I was pouring out my soul to the Lord.

And in answer, Ali answered, go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you whatever you asked for.

And we know what happened after that. The Lord has remembered her. He has remembered Hannah, and she gave her birth to her son. His name was Samuel.

So through prayer and by speaking to God and listening to him, we discover God's will.

And we like to use another example which is recorded in Exodus chapter 32 and onwards. It's about Moses goes to the top of the mountain of Sinai and God gives him the two tablets of the testimony.

And what did the people do when at the bottom of the mountain, seeing that Moses was not coming back.

So they gathered around Aaron, and I said, so let's make ourselves gods who, who go before us, and for the fellow Moses who brought us out of Egypt, we don't know what happened to him.

And we know what happened. Aaron went along with the idea, and so he took off lot of the earrings that were brought to him and he handed them over and had it made into an idol, cast the shape of a calf.

And then they said, these are your gods, O Israel, who brought you out of Egypt.

And then when Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord.

Do you think the Lord looking at all that, what he saw, that he liked that?

And in verse 9 of Exodus chapter 32 and verse 9, I have seen the people. The Lord said to Moses, thou stiff necked people, now leave me alone. That my anger might burn against them and that I might destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation. But we know Moses, he pleads, he pleads with the Lord not to kill them or to destroy them.

So Moses go down to the mountain with the two tablets of the testimony in his hands, and when he approached the camp. He saw the music. He heard the music. He heard.

And he saw the calf and the dancing, and his anger has burned, and he threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them into pieces in front of the mountain, and he took the calf dimaid and burnt it in the fire. Then he grounded into powder, scattered it in the water.

And might the Israelite drink?

And we know that Aaron, that Moses spending lots of time with the Lord, he knew the will of the Lord even then we know what happened. He could not stand up to the pressure of the people.

Remember what happened. The Lord said to Moses in Numbers chapter 20 and verses 7 to 12.

The Lord said to Moses, take your staff and your brother Aaron. Gather to the assembly together, and people were lacking water.

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And the Lord told him, get all the people out and speak to the rock, and before your eyes it will pour out water, and you will bring water out of the rock and to the community, so they can drink them and the livestock.

But we know what happened. Moses took the staff from the Lord's presence, and what he did, he and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock. Moses said to them, listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock? Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff.

And we know that the water gushed out of and the community.

They drank the water.

But we know that the Lord wasn't happy. He asked Moses to speak to the rock.

But Moses and the Lord said to Moses, because you did not trust me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not, you will not bring this community into the land I give you.

Brethren, this should be a lesson for us. To listen to the Lord carefully. What is the Lord? What he requires of us. In Moses case he did not listen to the Lord carefully, He took things into his own hands.

We now take the rod. The rod would be the reminder of the people to the Lord's special acceptance of Aaron as a high priest and the assistant of Moses, and we know what happened to the rod. That rod had budded and it was kept in the ark.

But where? In Numbers chapter 19 and verse 10, when we read the words, where he says to the people, must we bring you water out of this rock?

The Lord directed Moses to speak to the rock, as on the previous occasion, some years before, around 30 ideas. They had a similar experience where there was no water, and Moses had been instructed to smite the rock. But in this case, the rock was not to be smitten. Hear Moses and Aaron, they have sinned before the Lord.

Yes, this Moses, the meekest man in all of the earth, forgot himself and allowed his spirit to upright and anger to control him. Only for a little moment.

That smiting of the wrong would symbolize.

As the manna of the bread from heaven represented Jesus, so the smiting of the rock would represent also a refreshing water from the rock. Symbolize all the blessings which flow from Christ, and the sacrifice.

The smiting of the rock at the beginning of the Israel experience was authorized. It was very necessary that upon Jesus should fall the rod of affliction, even unto death.

The Lord lied upon him, and the death penalty for the iniquity for all of us.

And his stripes were also healed, as we are told by the prophet in Isaiah, chapter 53.

But when we have a look at the second meeting, which was around 30 years, 40 years later, as the people were about to lead into the promised land, symbolize. Could symbolize that the people of

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God and the body of Christ, which is the church, might symbolize the smithing of the people of God.

So, brethren, as later we read that because you haven't not trusted me enough, the Lord says to Moses.

Moses wished to produce a dramatic effect to impress upon them the lasting lesson. But we know probably he regretted what he did.

It was probably better to hide himself, humbled himself and to have asked for water from the rock from the Lord.

And this costed Moses great dealing. Moses got the entire punishment there and then before death.

And this also should be a lesson for us. Brethren, brethren, and in a summary, as we can see that in the beginning of the human life on this earth, the prayers were simple, like talk with God. Man was nearly perfect. After the Fall, life is a lot more complex.

So the prayers have changed over the years in different forms, such as thanksgiving, praise, confession, petition, adoration, meditation, and most of all, we remember the request of the Lord disciples when they asked him teach us to pray.

And Jesus put them with the words Our Father in heaven. This implies that the heavenly Father is the Creator and accepts one as a son.

Hallowed be thy name. To give our Heavenly Father the reverence, the honour. He should be first in our thoughts every day. Why?

Because his name stands for everything that is just that it's right, wise and loving.

God's name represents his character, his kingdom and his personality.

Especially now, dear brethren, in this very complicated situation that is around the world, how much more we lack for the kingdom to come.

These words bring us so much comfort to our life. They are like a balm cream that heals the suffering soul. God has given his promise to Abraham that all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. That through your offspring all the nations of the earth will be blessed. Because you have obeyed me.

God is everlasting truth and is faithful in his word.

His promises are certain, and that's why, when we declare the words of the Lord's prayer your kingdom come, do we have any doubt that it won't come? That it won't happen? Absolutely not. So glory to his name.

He will make everything new. The day is coming where the old order of things, sin and degradation, will be removed. A new order of will be implemented. Under the new ruler, Christ.

There won't be no more death.

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The prophecy tells us all the stars of the heaven will be dissolved and the skies rolled up like a scroll. All the starry hoist will fall like withered leaves from a vine, like a shivered fig from the fig tree.

Brethren, what the forefathers prophesied our Father was our Father has revealed it to us.

That kingdom as we are told in First Corinthians chapter 15 and verses 51 and onwards.

Listen, I'll tell you a mystery. Brother Adam already mentioned about it. We'll not all asleep, but we'll be all changed in a flash of a twinkling of an eye at the last trumpet. For the traveled will sound. The dead will be raised imperishable and will be changed.

For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable and the mortal with immortality. Isn't that a bright blessing?

We are told that there will be new heavens and new earth in verse 17 of Isaiah, chapter 65:17. Behold, I will create the new heavens and new earth. The former things will be not remembered, nor will they come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever.

The sound of weeping and of crying will be heard no more. Never again. There will be in it an infant who lives but a few dies.

Thou wilt build houses and dwell in them. Thou will plant vineyards and eat out the fruit. Verse 25. The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like an ox, but dust will be the serpent's food. Thou will never harm nor destroy all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

So, dear brethren and friends of the truth, let these few words be a blessing and a lesson to all of us here, and might the Lord at his blessing, amen.