

PRAYER -- LESSON TWO

THE WORD PRAYER

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. Our English words pray and prayer:
1. "Pray -- 1. To intreat; implore. 2. To supplicate or beg for; crave..." [Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary]
 2. "Prayer -- 1. Act, practice, or an instance of praying; entreaty; earnest request. 2. The offering of adoration, confession, supplication, thanksgiving, etc., to God or a god..." [Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary]
 3. "Prayer -- from the Latin *prex*, means simply... a petition, a request, or an entreaty. But in its scriptural usage, as well as in common parlance, it includes not only petitions, but also confessions and thanksgivings." [Milligan, Scheme of Redemption, pg. 367]
- B. The word prayer in the N.T. is translated from several different, though synonymous, words.
1. There are about nine different words or word forms but three of these are so closely akin to another three that we really have only six words to consider separately.
 2. A study of these will give us some insight into what prayer is and what it involves!

II. DISCUSSION:

- A. The six words translated prayer in the N.T. involve the following ideas:
1. The expression of a wish -- *euchomai*
 - a) This word translated prayer in 2 Cor.13:7 and James 5:16 is translated "wish" in the KJV in 2 Cor.13:9 and 3 John 2. [Vine's Expos.Dict. of NT Words, Vol.III, pg.199]
 - b) Also note the same word as used in the following instances: [Vine's, Vol.III, pg.199]
 - 1) Acts 26:29 - "I would"
 - 2) Acts 27:29 - "wished for" [R.V., marg., "prayed"]
 - 3) Rom.9:3 - "could wish" [R.V., marg., "could pray"]
 2. The offering of a prayer or petition -- *proseuchomai*
 - a) "To offer prayers, to pray." - Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon.
 - b) "...is always used of prayer to God, and is the most frequent word in this respect...". [Vine's, Vol.III, pg.199].
 - c) Note: *euchomai*, wish; *pros*, with, or along. Hence, "to wish along side of".
 - d) Seems to be a more general term which includes some or all of the other terms translated prayer.
 3. To ask or make a request -- *erotao*

- a) Means to ask, "...is translated by the verb to pray in Luke 14:18-19; 16:27; John 4:31; 14:16; 17:9; 15:20;" Acts 23:18 and I John 5:16 in KJV. [Vines, Vol.III, pg.199]
- b) "...often translated by the verb beseech, in the gospels elsewhere in I Thes.4:1; 5:12; 2 Thes.2:1; 2 Jno.5. [Vines, Vol.I pg.120]
4. The expression of a desire -- deoma and deesis
- a) Deomai: "...to desire, to long for, usually representing the word 'need', is sometimes translated 'beseech', e.g., Luke 5:12; Acts 21:39; 2 Cor.10:2; Gal.4:12. It is used of prayer to God, in Matt.9:38; Luke 10:2; 21:36; 22:32; Acts 4:31; 8:22, 24; 10:2; Rom.1:10; I Thes.3:10." [Vines, Vol.I, pg. 120]
- b) Deesis, a related word "...primarily a wanting, a need... then asking, entreaty, supplication, in the N.T. is always addressed to God and always rendered 'supplication' or 'supplications' in the R.V.; in the A.V. 'prayer' or 'prayers', in Lk.1:13; 2:37; 5:23; Rom.10:1; 2 Cor.1:11; 9:14; Phil.1:4; [in the 2nd part, 'request']; 1:19; 2 Tim.1:3; Heb.5:7; Jas.5:16; I Pet.3:12." [Vines, Vol.III. pg.200]
- (2)
- c) Here is the very heart of prayer, a sense of need. These terms approximate the idea of begging, a strong entreaty.
5. To call to one's aid -- parakaleo
- a) "...Lit. denotes to call to one's side, hence to call to one's aid. It is used for every kind of calling to a person which is meant to produce a particular effect, hence with various meanings, such as comfort, exhort, desire, call for, in addition to its significance to beseech, ...". [Vines, Vol.III, pg. 200.]
- b) "...is rendered by the verb 'to pray' in the A.V. in the following: Matt.26:53 (R.V. 'beseech'); so Mark 5:17-18; Acts 16:9; 24:4 (R.V. - 'intreat'); 27:34 (R.V. - 'beseech')...". [Vines, Vol. III, pg. 200.]
6. Intercession or a meeting with -- enteuxia
- a) "a falling in with, meeting with; an interview, a coming together; that for which an interview is held, a conference or conversation, a petition, supplication (intercessions)." -- Thayer.
- b) "...a technical term for approaching a king, and so for approaching God in intercession; it is rendered 'prayer' in I Timothy 4:5; in the plural in 2:1 (i.e., seeking the presence and hearing of God on behalf of others). [Vines, Vol. II, pg. 267].
- B. Prayer also involves the following:
1. Adoration and praise -- Matt.6:9; 11:25; Eph.3:14-21; Rom.11:33-36; Jude 24-25.

2. Confession -- Luke 18:13; 15:18; I John 1:7-22;
I Sam.15:17-24.
3. Thanksgiving -- Rom.1:8-10; Eph.1:15-16; Col.1:3-
14; Phil.1:3-5; I Thess.1:2.

III. CONCLUSION:

Surely it is a great blessing to have the privilege of expressing our wishes, petitions, requests, and desires in the presence of God. It is a great source of comfort to realize we, mere human beings, may call upon the Father in heaven for aid and comfort. ***What a grand and marvelous privilege prayer is!***