

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

November 14, 2011

Volume 10 Number 22

Lord, Teach Us to Pray

It is easy to assume that Yahshua (Jesus) chose His disciples because they were advanced theologians. However, like many that are called to do God's work, they had not been trained by the religious authorities. Instead, they might be considered to have been common people. Many were working as fishermen and one was even a tax collector. Even though they had often observed Yahshua praying, they did not know how to pray as they should:

- 1 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. -Luke 11

Would you teach us to pray? Many of us would not think to ask such a question. Some believe that prayer is reading a script that has been written by someone and passed on to us. We may think that an eloquent crowd-pleasing oration is effective prayer. Yahshua says this:

- 5 And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites *are*: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Truly I say unto you, They have their reward. -Matthew 6

Others are convinced that effective prayer is accomplished through repetitive incantations performed in a precisely prescribed manner, of which Yahshua said:

- 7 But when you pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do*: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. -Matthew 6

Yahshua says that effective prayer begins with hallowing the name of Yahweh:

- 9 After this manner therefore pray you: Our Father which are in heaven, Hallowed be your name. -Matthew 6

We thereby believe and confess that His name alone is holy, as distinguished from being profane or common. In doing so, we set His name apart from the names of all other gods or images, to which we might be tempted to pray. He requires that we hallow His name and believe that it is He that hallows us:

- 32 Neither shall you profane my holy name; but I will be hallowed among the children of Israel: *I am* Yahweh which hallows you, -Leviticus 22

When we recognize His holiness, we are able to see more clearly our own sinfulness and our need for forgiveness. Such was the case with Isaiah:

- 1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.
- 2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he did fly.
- 3 And one cried to another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, *is* Yahweh of hosts: the whole earth *is* full of his glory.
- 4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.
- 5 Then said I, Woe *is* me! for I am undone; because I *am* a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for my eyes have seen the King, Yahweh of hosts. -Isaiah 6

His name is Holy. If we can see His holiness, we realize that we have no basis for lifting ourselves up in pride. As we approach Him with "a contrite and humble spirit," He says that He dwells with us, reviving our spirits and hearts:

- 15 For thus says the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name *is* Holy; I dwell in the high and holy *place*, with him also *that is* of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones. -Isaiah 57

David, the king of Israel, demonstrated such a heart as he repented from his sins of adultery with Bathsheba and murder of Uriah. His once prideful heart was humbled and crushed, as he revealed in his remorseful prayer of repentance:

- 17 The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. -Psalms 51

In the midst of his affliction and pain, David asked Yahweh to forgive him for his sins:

- 18 Look upon my affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins. -Psalms 25

Through repentance, Yahweh healed David of his prideful heart:

- 1 Yahweh, my heart is not haughty, nor my eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. -Psalms 131

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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Once our prideful hearts are healed and our sins are forgiven, we can only give one response to Yahweh, which David did. He praised His name:

- 1 I will extol you, my God, O king; and I will bless your name forever and ever.
- 2 Every day will I bless you; and I will praise your name forever and ever.
- 3 Great *is* Yahweh, and greatly to be praised; and his greatness *is* unsearchable. -Psalms 145

Pride is an insidious enemy, waiting to steal the glory that only belongs to Yahweh. It lurks to entrap God's people, persuading them to take the credit for the victories that Yahweh has won!

This happened with Hezekiah. He was the king that tried to restore Judah back to Yahweh, as he sought to completely trust and obey Him:

- 5 He trusted in Yahweh God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *any* that were before him.
- 6 For he clung to Yahweh, *and* departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which Yahweh commanded Moses. -2 Kings 18

Yahweh answered the prayers of Hezekiah and Isaiah, miraculously sparing Judah from almost certain destruction by the Assyrians:

- 20 And for this *cause* Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven.
- 21 And Yahweh sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valor, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he had come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword. -2 Chronicles 32

After this miracle, people brought gifts to Yahweh, and to Hezekiah! Soon, Hezekiah was the one being magnified:

- 23 And many brought gifts unto Yahweh to Jerusalem, and presents to Hezekiah king of Judah: so that he was magnified in the sight of all nations from thereafter. -2 Chronicles 32

Following this great victory, Hezekiah shared in the victory that only belonged to Yahweh. He fell into the

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snare of pride and opened himself, as well as his kingdom, up to receiving the wrath of Yahweh:

- 25 But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit *done* to him; for his heart was lifted up: therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. -2 Chronicles 32

Isaiah brought to him the news of his impending death:

- 1 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus says Yahweh, Set your house in order: for you shall die, and not live. -Isaiah 38

That news was a wake up call for Hezekiah. He humbled himself before Yahweh:

- 26 Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, *both* he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the wrath of Yahweh came not upon them in the days of Hezekiah. -2 Chronicles 32

In his humility, Hezekiah prayed a tearful prayer unto Yahweh:

- 2 Then Hezekiah turned his face toward the wall, and prayed unto Yahweh,
 - 3 And said, Remember now, O Yahweh, I beseech you, how I have walked before you in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done *that which is* good in your sight. And Hezekiah wept greatly. -Isaiah 38
- Yahweh answered Hezekiah's tearful prayer. He said, "I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears:"
- 4 Then came the word of Yahweh to Isaiah, saying,
 - 5 Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus says Yahweh, the God of David your father, I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears: behold, I will add unto your days fifteen years. -Isaiah 38

After Hezekiah had recovered, he revealed in a writing more of the content of his prayer. He showed his love for Yahweh, as he called Him by the shortened form of His name, "I shall not see Yah, *even* Yah, in the land of the living:"

- 9 The writing of Hezekiah king of Judah, when he had been sick, and had recovered from his sickness:
- 10 I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years.
- 11 I said, I shall not see Yah, *even* Yah, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. -Isaiah 38

The beginning of prayer is faith in Yahweh. We must repent of our pride, and recognize that He alone is holy. That is when we can humble our prideful hearts and diligently seek Him, knowing that He will answer our prayers:

- 6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that comes to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. -Hebrews 11

Once we hallow His name, recognizing His holiness, we are ready to humbly prepare our hearts for effective prayer.