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# Prayer

## *Why Pray*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach that prayer is a two-way communication.
- To explain how we can hear from God.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Daniel 6:4-27



### MEMORY VERSE

**Jeremiah 29:13:** You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.



### RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week.

## Note to the Facilitator

There are **at least five reasons** why we pray. This lesson mentions **two reasons only**.

We pray:

- To present our requests before God
- To get to know God and hear from him  
(The story of Daniel illustrates this point)



### INTRODUCTION

From early childhood, we have been taught that we should pray to God daily. Have you ever wondered why our parents and teachers ask us to do this? Today, we will learn why it is important for us to pray.



### ATTENTION GETTER

#### Activity: Getting to Know You

Have the children choose a partner whom they do not know well. For the next few minutes, they must get to know each other. They should try to gain enough information about their partner so that they can introduce each other to the rest of the class.

#### Sample Questions:

- Which class does he/she belong to?
- What is their favorite subject?
- Which food-item do they hate the most...etc...

Call on a few children (or all of them if you have a small group) to introduce their new friend.

**Explain:** You had to talk to each other in order to learn about your partner. The same is true of God. The only way we get to know Him better is by talking to Him.

### **Alternate Activity: My Best Friend**

Ask each child to name their best friend. Then, find out how much time they spend with their best friend:

- How much time do they spend playing together?
- How much time do they spend talking to each other?



## **TEACHING CONTENT**

### **Bible Story: Daniel in the Lions' Den**

Let me tell you a Bible story about a man named Daniel who talked with God often. Daniel was a prophet of God who was captured as a young man and taken to the land of Babylon. Daniel loved God very much and prayed to Him three times each day. God blessed Daniel because of his faithfulness and elevated him to a position of authority in Babylon. King Darius appointed three administrators to preside over his kingdom, one of whom was Daniel. Daniel distinguished himself by his loyalty, honesty and great wisdom that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom.

Unfortunately, Daniel's success caused the other two administrators, along with some other government officials, to become very jealous. They plotted to find some fault in Daniel that would allow them to bring charges against him.

But Daniel was such a good man that they could find no fault in him. They said, “We will never find any basis for charges against this man Daniel unless it has something to do with the law of his God.”

So as a group, they went to the king and said, “O King Darius, live forever!” They claimed the Babylonian officials “have all agreed that the king should enforce the decree that anyone who prays to any god or man during the next thirty days, except to you, O king, shall be thrown into the lions’ den.” The king had no idea these men were plotting against Daniel, so he signed the decree and it became law. This meant Daniel could not legally pray to God for the next 30 days.

You and I might have been afraid to pray or ashamed to pray, but not Daniel. He knew it was the right thing to do and nothing would stop him from talking to God. Daniel had been in the habit of going into his room where he could be all alone. There he opened his windows toward Jerusalem to pray three times each day. This day was no different; so he bravely opened the windows and began to pray as he had always done before.

But on this day, he was being spied upon and the king was immediately informed that Daniel had broken the new law. When the king heard the news, he was very troubled and was determined to rescue Daniel. He made every effort until sundown to save him. But the law could not be changed, so the king reluctantly gave the order for Daniel to be thrown into the den of lions. As Daniel was being put into the lions’ den, the king said, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!” Little did the king know that his prayer would be

answered. Daniel had obediently shown his love for God by taking time each day to pray, and now God was about to show His love for Daniel by working a mighty miracle.

As soon as Daniel was thrown into the Lions' den, an angel appeared, calmed the lions, and caused them to completely ignore Daniel. That night their mouths were shut by the power of God. Early the next morning, the king went to the lions' den and called out to Daniel in hope his God might have saved him. Daniel replied by saying, "O king, live forever! My God sent His angel and shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me, because I was found innocent in His sight."

The king was overjoyed and gave the orders for Daniel to be released from the lions' den. When Daniel came out, there was no cut or bruise to be found anywhere on his body. At the king's command, Daniel's accusers, along with their wives and children, were all thrown into the lions' den and were immediately killed by the wild lions.

That day, God proved Himself to be the one true God. He proved that He was alive and that He hears and answers prayer.

### **Explain:**

Daniel understood why he should pray. He wanted to know God by spending time with Him. God honored Daniel's commitment and worked a miracle that has been told throughout the ages.

Just like Daniel did, we should pray because we want to know God better. The Bible says that if you pray to God, He will reveal Himself to you so that you can have a relationship with Him.

Remember. God does not force us to talk to Him. Instead, He assumes we will talk to Him **if we really do love Him**. We show our love to God and build a personal relationship with Him when we pray.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Note:** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

**How does prayer help us know God? How do you explain the fact that some people pray every day but barely know God?**

Some people go to God every day and give Him a long list of prayer requests, including requests for studies, for gifts, for family members, for needs and so on. They don't realize that presenting our requests before God is just one aspect of prayer.

True prayer involves two-way communication. We talk to God; and then we allow God to speak back to us.

**How does God talk to us? Will we hear a voice from Heaven?**

If we pray to God with a genuine desire to hear from Him, the Lord will definitely speak to us. He usually uses four ways to communicate with us:

Sometimes He communicates during the prayer time itself:

- The Lord may put **spontaneous thoughts, feelings, or impressions** in our mind. Have you ever prayed for something and then FELT as if God will definitely answer? That is God speaking to you.

- You may have to **quiet down your own thoughts** before you begin to **sense what God is thinking and feeling**. For instance, you may be anxiously praying for a lost toy. After asking God to help you find it, you need to become quiet on the inside. Stop thinking about the toy. Stop focusing on your problem. Become quiet on the inside; and focus on Jesus. Then, you will begin to feel God's feelings. You will FEEL the concern He has for your problem. And you will HEAR the comforting thoughts that He is thinking about your situation.

Sometimes, He may choose not to speak to you during the prayer time itself. He may do it later:

- While you're **reading the Bible**: A particular verse may touch your heart deeply. This is God speaking to you through the verse.
- While you're relaxing: You may **see a vision** in front of your eyes while you're wide awake. God may show you different things and speak to you.
- While you're sleeping: He may **come to you in a dream** and talk to you.

Remember, if we pray to God with a genuine desire to hear from Him, the Lord will definitely speak to us.

**Daniel used to pray three times each day. What do you think he talked to God about?**

Like we mentioned earlier, prayer is not just about presenting God with a long list of prayer requests. So I'm sure Daniel didn't do that all the time.

He presented his requests to God; but he also spent time praying for God's plans to be fulfilled. In other words, he prayed that God's plans for the people of Israel and for the world would come true.

Did you know that God depends on the prayers of His children to establish His kingdom? For instance, if you pray that God's plans for your school should come true, it would actually happen.

God will use your prayers to bring changes in your school. You may not be able to see those changes immediately because God works secretly sometimes. (Daniel didn't see answers to his prayers immediately either). But the changes will definitely come.



### APPLICATION

There are two main reasons why we pray:

- To present our requests before God.
- To get to know God and hear from Him.

### Challenge

- This week don't just tell God all your prayer requests. Ask Him to speak to you too. Hear from Him through at least one of the four methods that we learnt today.

Next week, make sure that you come with a testimony of how you heard from God.



### CLOSE WITH PRAYER





## *The Lord's Prayer*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To familiarize children with the pattern of the Lord's Prayer.
- To teach that God is like a loving father, and He will meet all our needs.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Matthew 6:9-15



### MEMORY VERSE

**James 5:16:** The prayer of the righteous person is powerful in what it can achieve.

### Materials Needed:

- Paper cutout shaped like a fish
- Construction paper of different colors



## RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- What did you hear from God this week? Give examples.
- What are the three main reasons why we should pray?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Jeremiah 29:13).



## INTRODUCTION

Last week we discussed the three main reasons for prayer. Today, we will take a closer look at the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples to pray.

The twelve disciples lived with Jesus for three years. In His life, they saw a power that they had never seen in anyone else. And they realized that the answer lay in Jesus' prayer life, in His communion with God the Father. So one day, when Jesus finished praying, the disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray."



## ATTENTION GETTER

### Activity: Paper Fish

**Prepare beforehand:** Cut out a piece of paper that is shaped like a fish.

Here is a pattern for a fish (show the fish pattern). With this pattern, I can cut fish from this paper (show construction paper of Color 1) or this paper (show a construction paper

of Color 2) or this paper (show construction paper of Color 3). This pattern is the same, but the paper is different; and so each fish will be different. If I were to cut out the fish and give each of you a fish to color, the fish would become even more different. Each of you would choose different designs and colors for your fish. However, the fish are all cut according to the same pattern.

### **Explain:**

The Lord's Prayer is a pattern for us to use when we pray. We are not meant to always say the prayer, word for word. Rather, we should follow the pattern Jesus gave us, using our own words and thoughts, so the prayer comes from our own hearts.



## TEACHING CONTENT

### **Teach:**

This is the Prayer Pattern that Jesus taught his disciples:

### **Praise**

**The first thing He taught was:** "Our Father in heaven, help us to honor your name" (Matthew 6:9).

**Explain:** We need to remember to whom we are praying. We are praying to our heavenly father who is all-powerful and all-knowing. He is a holy God. It is a privilege to be able to pray to Him. We should always take time at the beginning of prayer, to praise God for who He is.

## Glory

**Next, Jesus told His disciples to pray,** “Come and set up your kingdom, so that everyone on earth will obey you, as you are obeyed in heaven” (Matthew 6:10).

**Explain:** During this part of the prayer, we are acknowledging the lordship of Jesus Christ. We want His will to be done on earth, not our will. We want His Kingdom to come. He is our Master and Savior, and we are His servants.

## Requests

**The third sentence of the Lord’s Prayer says,** “Give us our food for today” (Matthew 6:11).

**Explain:** God wants to bless us with everything we need for each day of our lives. It is a good thing to ask God to supply for your needs. Hearing about our needs does not cause Him anger or worry. By asking God about our needs, we are also showing our dependence on Him.

## Forgiveness

**Next, Jesus instructed His disciples to ask,** “Forgive us for doing wrong, as we forgive others” (Matthew 6:12).

**Explain:** Just as we have physical needs and material needs, we have spiritual needs. Our greatest spiritual need is to have our sins forgiven. Sometimes we become so focused on worldly things that we forget about spiritual things. Asking forgiveness restores our relationship with God and it reminds us that God alone is our Savior.

## Protection from Evil

**The final sentence of the Lord's Prayer says, "Keep us from being tempted and protect us from evil" (Matthew 6:13).**

**Explain:** As believers we have a common enemy. His name is the devil or the evil one. The devil desires to destroy your life and your relationship with God. He is always seeking to cause you harm. So Jesus said we should daily ask God to help us and deliver us from the schemes of the devil. God can help you to escape the temptation of the world.

These are the different parts of the Lord's Prayer. They are a pattern for us to follow when we pray:

- When we pray, we should always praise God for who He is.
- We should acknowledge His lordship in our lives.
- We should tell Him our needs.
- We should ask Him for forgiveness, and
- We should ask Him to give us power, and deliver us from the devil's schemes.



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

***Note: All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.***

**Why do you think Jesus taught His disciples to address God as 'Father'?**

In Jesus' times, when people prayed they said,

- “O Lord help me” or
- “My God help me” or
- “O Lord God, help your servant”

They spoke to God the same way we would speak to the school principal. They were scared of God, and most of them were worried that God would not answer their prayers.

However Jesus taught that God is not like a scary school principal. And He told his disciples to pray, “Our Abba who is in heaven.”

This was a big shock to the disciples, because only little children called their fathers ‘Abba’ in those days. ‘Abba’ was a baby word similar to ‘Dada’ or ‘Daddy.’

Imagine calling the Almighty God ‘Dada.’ The disciples were shocked!

But it helped them realize that God is not cruel or hard-hearted. He is like a father.

It is true that we have different kinds of fathers on earth. Some are very strict, some are very loving; some are bad-tempered; and some are gentle. However, when Jesus used the word ‘Abba,’ he meant an extremely loving and gentle father—the kind who would absolutely adore his little son or daughter.

Because such a big and powerful God allows us to call Him “Dada’ or “Daddy,” we must pray to Him with deep respect. We must show Him through our words and actions how grateful we are that He loves us so much.

**Last week we learnt that one of the reasons why we pray is to help God establish His kingdom. How would we pray such a prayer? What words would we use?**

Last week, we learnt that “the establishment of God’s kingdom” is simply the “setting up of God’s plans.” We want God’s plans to be fulfilled in our families, our schools, our neighborhoods and so on.

We also learnt that God needs the prayers of first graders for these plans to be accomplished. So we must be willing to pray for these things.

Pray simple prayers like these:

- “Lord establish Your Kingdom in my heart and life. Help me to only say and do what pleases You.”
- “Lord establish Your Kingdom in my family. Help my family to love You more than all other things, and help them to put You first in their lives.”
- “Lord establish Your Kingdom in my neighborhood. Help me to talk about You with at least some of my friends in this colony.”
- “Lord establish Your Kingdom in my school. If the people in my school are doing things that don’t please You, then begin to work in them and change them.”

The Bible teaches that if we pray these prayers with “child-like faith,” we will see great miracles being released.

**The Lord taught that we should pray for “food for today.” Why not for “food for the next one month?” Wouldn’t that have been a better prayer?**

There is nothing wrong in praying for our future needs. But Jesus doesn’t want us to worry much about those.

He wants us to remember that God is like a loving ‘Daddy.’ A Dad provides for all his child’s needs, every single day. The child doesn’t have to worry whether Daddy will remember to provided for tomorrow’s needs.

The child doesn’t say, “Daddy, why don’t you give me tomorrow’s breakfast too now itself? Maybe you’ll forget to feed me tomorrow, and then I’d have to starve. So give it to me now, while you’re still in a good mood, and I’ll store it in my bag.” Such a request would hurt the fathers’ feelings!

We don’t have to talk that way. When we wake up in the morning, we can be confident that our Heavenly Daddy will provide for every need that we will face that day. And we can also know in advance that when tomorrow comes, He will provide for tomorrow’s needs as well.



### APPLICATION

Today, make a promise to your Heavenly Daddy that you will never worry again:

- Promise Him that you will not worry about your exams. Just ask Him each morning to give you the interest and wisdom to study well, and each evening to sit down for study and see Him helping you.

## The Lord's Prayer

- Promise Him that you will not worry if someone steals your favorite toy. Just ask the Lord to either provide you with a new and better toy, or return the old one to you. Leave the matter in His hands, and He will help you.
- Promise Him that you will not worry even if your family is facing a very big problem. Just ask the Lord to help your family; and you will see God working in the situation as the days go by.

Next week, make sure that you come with a testimony of how your Heavenly Daddy answered your prayers.



**CLOSE WITH PRAYER**





# Prayer

## *How to Pray*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach children to pray with thankful hearts.
- To show the importance of having a respectful attitude towards God in prayer.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Philippians 4:6; 1 Peter 1:16



### MEMORY VERSE

**Philippians 4:6:** Don't worry about anything, but pray about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God.

### Materials Needed

Packet of Ring Murukkus (or doughnuts)

## Note to the Facilitator

There are **at least six right attitudes** to observe when praying. This lesson mentions **two attitudes only**.

The right attitudes include:

- Attitude of thankfulness
- Attitude of respect towards God



### RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- How did your Heavenly Daddy help you during this week? Give examples.
- This week, did any of you pray for the establishment of God's Kingdom? What exactly did you pray for? (For establishment of His Kingdom: in my heart, in my family, in my school, etc.)
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (James 5:16).



### INTRODUCTION

Last week we studied the Lord's Prayer. This week we will look at the right attitude to have when we pray.

The Israelites prayed a lot in the wilderness. But they almost always prayed with the wrong attitude. So, few of their prayers received the abundant answers that God wanted for them.

Therefore, it is very important for us to have the right attitude when we pray.

## Note to the Facilitator

There are **at least six right attitudes** to observe when praying. This lesson mentions **two attitudes only**.

- Attitude of thankfulness  
(Illustrated in the Attention-Getter; explained in the Teaching Content)
- Attitude of respect towards God  
(Explained in the Discussion Section)



### ATTENTION GETTER

**Prepare beforehand:** Purchase a packet of Ring Murukkus (commonly known as ‘chegodis’). If you have a big budget, you could purchase doughnuts for the entire class.

### Activity: The Hole

**Present a child with a Chegodi and ask:** If I give you a ring murukku, what should you say to me?

**Prompt the child:** It’s a ‘T’ word that parents teach us to use every time we receive something. (the word is “Thank You”)

### Explain:

We must learn to be thankful for the things we receive.

- If X (the child who received the chegodi) is a thankful child, he/ she will say, “Thank you for the ring murukku.”
- If X is a thankless child, he/she will say, “You have given me a big empty hole, with a little ring around it.”

Instead of noticing the tasty chegodi, he/she will only notice the hole in the middle.

### Observe:

Ungrateful people tend to look at the empty hole—rather than at the tasty treat around the hole. God doesn't want us to be like this.

This is why it is said, "As you go through life make this your goal—look at the doughnut and not the hole."



### TEACHING CONTENT

Have you noticed that life is like a big fat doughnut?

- God has given us so many things! A nice house, tasty food, cool clothes, fun games and gadgets, good schools, loving friends and family, etc.
- They are like a big fat tasty doughnut, making life sweet and pleasant.
- And then there are some things that we don't have.
- These are like the little hole in the middle of the doughnut.

When we go to God in prayer, we tend to concentrate entirely on the little hole. And we say, "Lord I don't have this. I don't have that. Why can't you give me the kind of things that 'so-and-so' has..." and so on.

We forget to say, "It's true that there's a little hole in my life... I don't have everything. But I'm so glad that there is a

big fat doughnut around that little hole. There are so many wonderful things that you have given me. And I want to say a big Thank You Lord, for all your love towards me.”

We indeed forget to thank God for all that He has given us.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Note:** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

### Attitude of Thankfulness

**Philippians 4:6 says, “Don’t worry about anything, but pray about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God.”**

**What attitude of prayer does this verse teach?**

This verse talks about **Two Types of Thankfulness**

#### First Type of Thankfulness

As we discussed earlier, we must be thankful for all the things God has done for us. Such a thankful attitude will help us to pray with a Spirit of Gratitude rather than with a Spirit of Grumbling.

For instance, if I’m praying for roller-skates, I can pray in two ways:

- I can pray, “Lord all my friends have roller-skates, but you haven’t given me any. Please, please give me skates too so that I can join them in skating.”
- This would be a ‘grumbly-prayer.’ I can see only the ‘hole.’ I can’t see even one of the many wonderful

things that God has given me in the past; I can only clearly see what He hasn't given.

- Or I can pray, “Lord you're a wonderful Daddy. You gave me such a cool school bag at the beginning of the year. And you gave me such nice new friends in the school bus. And thank you so much for healing my fever. The same way you have always done wonderful things for me in the past, could you also give me a pair of roller-skates? I'd love to join my friends in skating. Thank you Lord.”
- This would be a thankful prayer. I'm remembering all the things God has given me, and I'm filled with gratitude. And so I present my prayer request to God with a thankful heart, not a grumbly-heart.

### **Second Type of Thankfulness:**

Philippians 4:6 also talks about a second type of thankfulness.

When I ask God for something that is good, I can be completely confident that He will answer me. And I must show God how confident I am by thanking Him even before receiving the answer.

For instance, if I'm praying for roller-skates, I can pray in two ways:

- “Lord I've been praying for roller-skates for so long. I hope you'll give them” OR
- “Lord I know you'll arrange for my roller-skates. You'll see to it that I have fun with my friends. So thank you in advance.”

Knowing that God will not withhold good things from me, I can be sure that He will help me enjoy with my friends. He may provide me roller-skates of my own. Or He may arrange for someone to lend me a pair whenever I need them. Either way, He'll make sure that I have a wonderful time of fun with my friends—because God wants me to enjoy life. God is **NOT** a kill-joy.

### **Attitude of Respect**

**1 Peter 1:16 says, “I am the holy God, and you must be holy too.”**

**What attitude of prayer does this verse teach?**

We must pray to God with a respectful attitude because He is holy.

Some children lie, steal and hurt people. But when it is prayer time, they close their eyes, bow their heads, and speak in a holy voice. God is not fooled by this. He has been watching them and He knows they have no respect for Him.

- So, He may delay answering their prayers until they learn to show respect by being more obedient.

However, some children are very grateful to God for all His love towards them. So they try very hard to please God and make Him happy. They too make mistakes sometimes, but they also try hard to be obedient and good.

- When God sees how deeply they respect Him, He will reward them by answering all their prayers. This is why James 5:16 says, “The prayer of the righteous person is powerful in what it can achieve.”

So we can pray with a respectful attitude only if we are living a God-pleasing life during the day.



### APPLICATION

This week, practice three New Attitudes that will change your prayer life:

- Start noticing the doughnut around the hole. Start observing all that God has provided and thank Him for it.
- When you pray for good things, thank God in advance; show the Lord that you know He enjoys giving us good things.
- Show God respect by obeying Him and pleasing Him, in all you say and do. Then you will be able to pray with a respectful heart.

Next week, make sure that you come with a testimony of how you changed your lifestyle to accommodate these new attitudes.



### CLOSE WITH PRAYER





# Prayer

## *What to Pray*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To show children the different aspects of prayer.
- To teach the importance of praising God during prayer time.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Matthew 6:9-15; Psalms 139:23-24; Psalms 55:22



### MEMORY VERSE

**1 Chronicles 16:34:** Praise the Lord because He is good to us, and His love never fails.

**Materials Needed :** Soft toy



## RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- Did you make any changes in your prayer life this week? Give examples.
- When we thank God in advance for a prayer request, what does this indicate to the Lord?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (Philippians 4:6).



## INTRODUCTION

Last week we learnt about the right attitude to have when we pray. This week we will look at the different things that God wants us to pray for.

Prayer involves more than asking God for things. It involves acknowledging God as the Lord of our lives; it involves confessing sins; it involves asking for power and strength to live a godly life; and it involves praising God for who He is.

Today, we will learn how to do some of these things in greater detail.



## ATTENTION GETTER

### Activity: Soft Thanks

Teach children the art of praise using a soft toy. Have the children sit in a circle. Throw the soft toy at random to different children. The child who catches the soft toy must tell something he/she thanks God for. (E.g., I thank God for the holiday we had in Goa; I thank God for the tasty ice-cream I had yesterday, etc.).

Next, have another round where each child praises God for one good quality of His, explaining what they like about that particular quality. (E.g., I praise God for His holiness because there is nothing unclean in Him; I praise God for His unchanging quality because He never stops being good; I praise God for His power because He uses it to help us; I praise God for His wisdom because He has made beautiful plans for my life, etc.).

### **Help for the Second Round:**

You can prompt the children with helpful questions like:

- Which quality did God display in the story of Noah?  
(He is faithful—He takes care of those who follow Him).
- Which quality did Jesus display in the desert when He was tempted by Satan?  
(He refused to sin. God is holy—there is no sin in Him).
- Which quality did God display in the story of the Crossing of the Red Sea?  
(He is all-powerful: He uses His great power to help me).

You can also ask them to recount the qualities of God that they have discovered through personal experiences:

- How God answered their prayers (God is loving).
- How friends left them, but God never left them (God is unchanging).
- How the advice in the Bible helped them in some situation (God is all-wise).

Some of the more common qualities of God are as follows:

1. He is holy—there is no impurity in Him.
2. He is unchanging—He never stops being good to me.
3. He is all-powerful—He uses His great power to help me.
4. He is all-wise—He makes beautiful plans for my life.
5. He is good—He never does bad things to me.
6. He is loving—He loves me so much that He was willing to die for me.
7. He is gracious—He gives me wonderful things that I don't even deserve.
8. He is merciful—He doesn't punish me as I deserve to be punished for my wrongdoings.
9. He is just—He treats me fairly always and never gives me a raw deal.
10. He is sovereign—nothing and nobody can stop Him from helping me.
11. He is jealous—He loves me so much that He doesn't want to share me with Satan
12. He is faithful—He never lets me down.
13. He is impartial—He treats all of us equally.

Finally, have a third round, in which each child praises God on their own (without the teacher's assistance).

**Encourage:** You have now learnt how to praise God in a simple way. Continue to do this in your personal prayer time. Praise God, mentioning His different qualities and honoring Him for them.



## TEACHING CONTENT

We observed last week in the Lord's Prayer that prayer is more than just a list of requests for personal needs. It involves so many other important things.

### **Praise and Worship: Begin with thanksgiving and praise**

We studied this in detail last week.

### **Prayer 1: Ask the Lord for a submissive heart**

Jesus specifically taught His disciples to pray, "Come and set up your kingdom, so that everyone on earth will obey you, as you are obeyed in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

So, when we go to the Lord in prayer, we need to ask Him, "Lord, in my life, am I doing what you want me to do? Are you displeased about something?"

David prayed, "Look deep into my heart, God, and find out everything I am thinking. Don't let me follow evil ways, but lead me in the way that time has proven true" (Psalms 139:23-24).

When we ask the Lord to examine us, He will bring to light, areas that we haven't yet submitted to God. For instance, I may be very sincere in my studies; but I may be lacking in the area of obedience to my parents. God will point out this weakness to me when I specifically ask Him to reveal my shortcomings.

### **Prayer 2: Seek His forgiveness and strength**

- Ask the Lord to forgive you in the areas where you have displeased Him.

- Promise Him that you will not repeat those things again. Truly mean it when you make this promise.
- And ask Him for the divine strength that you need to keep your promise, so that you don't repeat those sinful things.

### **Prayer 3: Forgive in the same way that you have been forgiven**

When we ask God to forgive us of the sinful things we have done, He forgives completely. This means, He chooses to forget that you ever did that sinful thing against Him.

Because the Lord forgives us so completely, He expects us to forgive in the same way. I can't continue to hold a grudge against someone who has wronged me.

For instance, if I ask the Lord to forgive me for being very disobedient to my parents, the Lord will forgive me completely. He will not even think about what I did, the next time He looks at me. In the same way, I too must forgive the person who has hurt me. The next time I meet them, I must be very loving and friendly, as if they never hurt me at all.

The same way God chooses to forget my sins and treats me with great love, I too must forget the other person's wrong doings and treat them with great love.

### **Prayer 4: Pray for every single need in your life**

No prayer request is too small in God's eyes. I may want to pray for a simple thing like a friendly smile from the class teacher. I can ask God for even a small thing like that. God doesn't think such prayer requests are 'silly.'

In the same way, no prayer request is too big or too difficult in God's eyes. I may feel that it's impossible for me to ever enjoy studying math. But if I pray sincerely, and also spend time every day working on my math, God will help me to gradually start enjoying it. Nothing is impossible for God!

Psalms 55:22 says, "Our LORD, we belong to you. We tell you what worries us, and you won't let us fall." So look upon God as your own Heavenly Daddy, and confidently place all your needs before Him.

### **Prayer 5: Pray against temptation**

Many Christians don't know that they are supposed to pray *against temptation*. They wait until temptation hits and then start praying for help.

However, Jesus specifically taught His disciples to pray, "Keep us from being tempted and protect us from evil" (Matthew 6:13).

What temptations trouble you the most? Are you usually tempted to lie? Do you have trouble with the temptation to lose your temper and lash out at people? Are you always struggling with the temptation to disobey your parents?

Pray specifically about these temptations. Say something like this:

- "Lord, today, keep me from telling lies. Please stop me from getting into situations where I'd be tempted to lie." God will listen to your prayer, and help you avoid getting into situations where you'd be tempted to lie.  
OR

- “Lord, protect me from the spirit of bad-temperedness, today. Don’t allow me to be controlled by it even if I get into a situation that could make me angry.” God will listen to your prayer, and give you control over your anger. OR
- “Lord, today, tame my rebelliousness so that I will be able to submit to my parents and obey them, no matter what they ask me to do. You prepare my spirit so that I don’t give in to the temptation to rebel and disobey.” God will listen to your prayer, and prepare your heart.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

***Note:*** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

**What if something sad or painful happens to me? Should I praise God even when I’m sad? Why?**

We must praise God at all times, because God is good to us all the time.

Whatever might have occurred, God is still interested in me, and He still wants to help me. So I must praise and thank Him for His goodness and love which will lead me through my difficult times.

If I refuse to praise God during bad times, it’s as if I’m saying God has become bad! However, God is never bad.

I suffer sad and painful things because of a wrong choice that I made, or because of a wrong choice that someone else

made. Or I may be suffering simply because we're living in a sinful world where things keep going wrong. It is as a result of these things that the painful incident has occurred—not because God is bad.

If we choose not to praise God, it allows bitterness to grow in our hearts against God. Then the bitterness will block God's help out of our lives. To prevent this, we must constantly remember God's love and goodness, and praise Him for it.

**When I pray for forgiveness, will God forgive only the 'small' sins or 'all' sins?**

God forgives even the biggest, most terrible sins. He forgives so completely that He doesn't think about our sins anymore.

Did you know that God would have forgiven even Cain in this way—even after he murdered his brother, Abel? However, God couldn't forgive Cain because the man wasn't sorry for what he had done.

Sometimes we're like Cain. We say, "I'm sorry Lord for disobeying daddy," but we're not really sorry. We haven't made up our minds that we will never, ever repeat the sin again.

True repentance is when we make up our minds that we will not repeat that sin again. When we go to the Lord with that attitude, He will forgive us even if we have committed the most horrible sin.

On the other hand, if we don't have this true repentance, God will NOT forgive even the smallest sin.

**What if someone has treated me very badly? Do I have to forgive even such people?**

Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Forgive us for doing wrong, as we forgive others” (Matthew 6:12).

So, I’d need to pray, “Lord, forgive me of my sins in the same way I have forgiven that person who hurt me.”

In other words, if you have not truly forgiven that person, your unforgiveness will BLOCK God’s forgiveness from reaching you because God will forgive you “the same way” (Matthew 6:12) that you have forgiven the other person.

Matthew 6:14,15 says, “If you forgive others for the wrongs they do to you, your Father in heaven will forgive you. But if you don’t forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

So we have to forgive everyone completely, no matter what they might have done to us. When we’re enjoying complete forgiveness from God, we have no right to withhold it from someone else.

However, we cannot do this on our own. We must ask God for divine strength and ability to forgive. Then He will make it possible for us to forgive completely.

**APPLICATION**

This week onwards, make a commitment to spend at least one minute of your prayer time in praising God. This will help you remember always how wonderful God is.

**Challenge:** How many of you can remember some of the qualities that we praised God for, at the beginning of the class? (Go over the qualities once more, so that the children integrate these into their prayer and praise life).

If you have a family prayer time, make praise a part of this family time with God. Your whole family will be blessed by it.

Next week, make sure that you come with a testimony of how you regularly included a time of praise in your personal prayers.



**CLOSE WITH PRAYER**





## *Pray for Others*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach children whom to pray for.
- To encourage a commitment to regularly pray for at least some specific people.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

1 Timothy 2:1-4; Ephesians 6:18,19; James 5:16; Matthew 5:43-48



### MEMORY VERSE

**1 Timothy 2:1:** First of all, I ask you to pray for everyone. Ask God to help and bless them all, and tell God how thankful you are for each of them.

#### **Note to the Facilitator**

There are at least **eight categories of people** that we should pray for. This lesson mentions **six categories only**.

We must pray for:

- Ministry people  
(mentioned in the Attention-Getter)
- Family/relatives  
(mentioned in the Teaching Content)
- The Sick and Suffering  
(mentioned in the Teaching Content)
- The Unsaved  
(mentioned in the Discussion Section)
- The Government (Politicians and Officials)  
(mentioned in the Discussion Section)
- Enemies  
(mentioned in the Discussion Section)



## RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- This week, did any of you add a Praise Time to your personal prayers? What are some of the things that you praised God for?
- What are the six aspects of prayer that we covered last week?
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (1 Chronicles 16:34).



## INTRODUCTION

Last week we looked at some of the important aspects of prayer. Today, we will look at one last aspect of prayer—prayer for others.

Have you ever found yourself frightened and alone? Have you ever felt pain and sorrow? In times like these, you hope there is someone praying for you.

During these hard times, you need someone to pray for you because your problem can only be solved by God. Likewise, you need to be praying for others who are going through difficult times. Today, we are going to talk about how we can do that.



## ATTENTION GETTER

### Activity: Prayer List

The “Prayer List” Coloring Sheet is located in the Student Workbook.

Ask the children to write down the names of three people that they are going to pray for everyday. The list must include:

- Name of one person involved in ministry (Sunday School teacher/Pastor/missionary,etc.).
- One person who is suffering from a serious sickness or is facing a desperate situation.
- One non-Christian whose salvation they would want to pray for.

Ask them to color the Prayer Sheet at home, and continue praying for these three people.



## TEACHING CONTENT

Sometimes when we pray, we are so worried about our own problems and needs that we forget to pray for other people. Have you ever been guilty of this? God wants us to pray about our personal needs and concerns, but He does not want us to forget to pray for others.

Right now I want to show you how your hand can help you to remember to pray for other people. (Hold up your hand.) Can all of you see my hand? This hand is going to teach us about praying for others.

Which finger is closest to me? Yes, my thumb (point to your thumb). This finger reminds me to pray for the people who are closest to me—my family and my dear friends. Ephesians 6:18 says, “Never stop praying, especially for others. Always pray by the power of the Spirit. Stay alert and keep praying for God’s people.” So, I must pray to God to meet their needs and to bless them in every way.

The next finger on my hand is the pointer finger or second finger (point to second finger). With this finger, I point to many things, and this finger reminds me to pray for people that I should point to Christ, people who are not believers. When I see this finger, I can remember to pray for my family members, friends, people in my city and people around the world who need to know about Christ.

Which finger is next? Yes, the middle finger (point to the third finger). This is the tallest finger on my hand. It reminds me to pray for people who are in authority, such as my pastor, my teachers and government officials. It is important to pray for these people, isn't it? In Ephesians 6:19, Paul requested, "Pray that I will be given the message to speak and that I may fearlessly explain the mystery about the good news." So we must pray that God blesses those working in ministry and sharing the Gospel, so that they will receive His wisdom and guidance.

Point to the fourth finger or ring finger. There is something very interesting about this next finger. Doctors and scientists tell us that this is the weakest finger. All the other fingers are stronger than this finger. This finger reminds us to pray for the weak, the sick and the poor. This is why James 5:16 says, "... you can pray for one another and be healed."

Have we talked about all our fingers? No, there is one more finger. This is the little finger (point to the little finger). Do you know what this reminds me to pray for? (Allow responses). Yes, it reminds me to pray for myself and my needs. You see, God wants to hear about our needs and worries. But before we pray to Him about our own needs, we should pray for others.

Quickly review what each finger represents. Point to each finger and ask the children whom it represents.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Note:** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

**The Bible teaches that God doesn't force anyone to accept His free gift of salvation. Then, why do we pray for the salvation of people? Will God force them to accept Him as Lord and Savior if we do so?**

When we pray for a person's salvation, God does not force that person to accept Him as Lord and Savior.

He simply starts arranging all the circumstances in that person's life, so that the person begins to feel a deep need for Jesus. The Lord also uses our prayers to prepare the heart of the person. His/her hardened heart may start to grow softer, so that the person becomes more willing to listen and respond when the Gospel is preached.

Our prayers are important, because they help prepare the person and the circumstances, so that when the time comes for the person to make a lifetime commitment to the Lord, he/she will find it easy to do so.

**The middle finger reminds me to pray for people who are in authority, including government officials. But why should I pray for politicians and officials who are evil and don't follow God?**

Paul sets down the basic reasons why we should pray for our government:

“First of all, I ask you to pray for everyone. Ask God to help and bless them all, and tell God how thankful you are for each of them. Pray for kings and others in power, so that we may live quiet and peaceful lives as we worship and honor God. This kind of prayer is good, and it pleases God our Savior. God wants everyone to be saved and to know the whole truth... ” (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

First, only God can give the politicians and government officials the wisdom they need to run the country properly. So we must pray that He will provide them with His wisdom.

Second, only God can punish them if they are secretly misusing their power. He can correct them so that they take their responsibilities more seriously.

Third, when these people govern with God’s wisdom and are kept in check by Him, there is peace in the country. This enables Christians to worship and honor God by spreading the Gospel easily, so that many hear the truth and are saved.

Did you know that God depends on the prayers of first graders to maintain peace in India? Are you willing to pray for this?

**The fourth finger represents sick or suffering people who need help. What if the bully at school falls sick? Am I expected to pray for him too?**

Jesus taught in Matthew 5:43-48: “You have heard people say, ‘Love your neighbors and hate your enemies.’ But I tell you to love your enemies and pray for anyone who mistreats you.”

Then you will be acting like your Father in heaven. He makes the sun rise on both the good and bad people. And He sends

rain for the ones who do right and for the ones who do wrong.

If you love only those people who love you, will God reward you for that? Even (ungodly people) love their friends. If you greet only your friends, what's so great about that? Don't even unbelievers do that? But you must always act like your Father in heaven."

So we must be willing to pray for even those people who treat us badly. Are you willing to do this today onwards?



### APPLICATION

This week, make sure that you pray for six categories of people:

- Those who need salvation.
- Those involved in God's work.
- Those in the government.
- Those who are sick or suffering.
- Enemies (those who treat us badly).
- Close family and friends.

Next week, come with testimonies of the people you prayed for and how they were blessed.



### CLOSE WITH PRAYER





## *How God Answers Prayer*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach that God answers prayer with a 'yes,' 'no' and 'wait.'
- To show that praying in tongues helps us pray in line with God's will.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

1 Samuel Chapter 1



### MEMORY VERSE

**1 John 5:14,15:** We are certain that God will hear our prayers when we ask for what pleases him. And if we know that God listens when we pray, we are sure that our prayers have already been answered.

**Materials Needed:**

- Photocopies of Traffic Light Coloring Sheet
- Color pencils and crayons (red, yellow and green colors)

**RECAP**

- What did we learn about last week?
- This week, did you pray for the three people that you committed to keep in prayer? What things did you pray for them?
- Name the six categories of people that we should pray for.
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (1 Timothy 2:1).

**INTRODUCTION**

Last week we looked at the importance of praying for others. Today, we will look at the three ways in which God usually answers our prayers.

It is frustrating to have to wait for God to answer prayer. At times, it seems that He moves so slowly. Sometimes, it appears that His answers to our prayers will even come late. But God knows the right time for everything and He knows the right time to answer our prayers.

Today, we are going to discover how God answers prayer. Sometimes He says 'Yes' and the answer comes quickly. Sometimes He says 'Wait' and the answer comes slowly.

Sometimes he says ‘No.’ That is why you must pray according to God’s will to receive answers to your prayers.



### ATTENTION GETTER

**Prepare beforehand:** Bring enough color pencils and crayons to the class (red, yellow and green colors).

Ask the children to turn to the Traffic Light Coloring Sheet included in the Student Workbook.

### Explain:

God answers prayer in THREE ways—Yes, Wait and No. It is similar to waiting at a traffic light:

- The red light tells us to stop so that we will not be hurt in a car accident. God sometimes says ‘NO’ because it is not good for us.
- A yellow light tells a driver to slow down and be cautious. God sometimes says ‘WAIT’ or ‘Slow down’ and we have to wait for the prayer to be answered.
- A green light is a signal for the driver to go ahead. God gives us green lights by answering our prayers with a ‘YES.’

Traffic Light Coloring Sheets: Ask the children to use the right color for each of the three ‘lights.’



## TEACHING CONTENT

### **Bible Story: Hannah and the Birth of Samuel**

Our Bible story today is about a woman who learned to wait on God. She kept praying and never gave up. This devout woman was named Hannah. She was married to a man named Elkanah, who also had another wife named Peninnah. Peninnah had many children, but Hannah was barren and desperately wanted to have a son. Each year when it came time for the annual sacrifice at the temple in Shiloh, Elkanah would give a portion of meat to Peninnah and all her sons and daughters, but he would give a double portion to Hannah because he loved her more. Peninnah was very jealous of Hannah and tried to hurt her by making fun of the fact that she had no children. This went on year after year. I am sure that Hannah asked the Lord each year to give her a baby, but for some reason it was not God's will to give a child to Hannah at that time.

Sometimes God does not answer our prayers as quickly as we would like, for reasons that we do not understand. At times He even says 'NO' if our prayers run contrary to God's divine will for our lives.

Finally, one year when Hannah had finished eating and drinking at the temple, she went to pray. Now Eli the priest was sitting nearby and overheard Hannah praying and weeping bitterly before the Lord. That day she made God a promise, "O Lord Almighty, if You will only look upon Your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget Your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head."

Now as Hannah continued praying before the Lord, she began to pray silently so that her lips were moving, but nothing could be heard. When Eli the priest saw this, he thought she was drunk and began to accuse her. “How long will you keep on getting drunk? Get rid of your wine.”

Hannah then told him that she was not drunk, but was rather deeply troubled because she so desperately wanted to have a son. She was praying out of deep anguish and grief. Eli then said to her, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of Him.”

In less than a year, God answered Hannah’s prayer and gave her a son whom she named Samuel. A few years later Hannah gave little Samuel back to the Lord as she had promised in her prayer. Samuel went to live in the temple and was called of God at a very young age. Samuel became a mighty man of God who lived his whole life in obedience to the will of God.

### **Explain:**

Hannah never gave up on her prayers. At first it seemed that God was saying ‘NO.’ She had to wait a really long time to see her prayers answered. But finally, when the timing was right, God performed a miracle and answered her prayers.

God may say ‘No’ if we pray for something that does not match His will for our lives. At other times, we may have to wait for the answers to our prayers and they will come in God’s correct timing.

However, sometimes God will answer our prayers immediately. God always knows what is best for us, so we must continue praying until we receive an answer.



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Note:** *All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.*

**If there is a long delay in receiving the answer to my prayer, what should I believe? Should I assume that God is saying ‘No?’ Or should I continue to wait?**

The best thing would be to pray in the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:26,27 says, “ ... the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.”

So when we pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit prays through us; and He prays exactly in line with God’s will. We can place the unanswered prayer before God by praying in tongues.

However, we cannot understand what we are saying in tongues. So, we must ask God for the interpretation—the meaning—of what we have prayed. The Lord will either reveal this to us deep in our hearts, or He will speak to us clearly through a Bible verse. Which ever method He uses, we will know quite clearly whether His response to the unanswered prayer request is ‘No’ or ‘Wait.’

If we are still a little doubtful about whether we have heard correctly from God, we can take the advice of elders who are spiritually mature. As it says in Proverbs 19:20, “Pay attention to advice and accept correction, so you can live sensibly.”

**Why does God say ‘No’ to my prayers sometimes?**

Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). So if we pray for something against God’s will, He will say ‘No.’ For instance, in Gethsemane, when Jesus requested the Father to let Him not go to the Cross, the Father said ‘No.’ Jesus willingly submitted to the Father’s will and so must we.

Also, God says ‘No’ if He has something better planned for us. For instance, Abraham asked the Lord to give the promised inheritance to Ishmael. However, God said ‘No’ because He was planning on giving Sarah the baby boy they had been praying for, for 25 years. God said ‘No’ so that He could give them something even better.

Sometimes God says ‘No’ to help us grow in faith. When Moses asked for permission to enter the Promised Land, God said ‘No,’ God was giving Moses a chance to submit to Him and grow in faith. Moses did exactly this—he did not grumble against God but submitted willingly.

(It was probably as a reward for this humble submission that Moses was chosen to enter later on, when he came to the Mount of Transfiguration to talk with Jesus. He was just one of three people from the Old Testament who was given this privilege to do so).

Sometimes God says ‘No’ to help others see our faith in action. For instance, when David asked that his baby boy’s life be spared, God said, ‘No.’ People were amazed when David humbly submitted to God’s ‘No.’ Instead of grumbling or

sulking, he accepted God's decision, and all the people were amazed to see the level of his faith in God. Their lives were influenced through David's amazing response to God's 'No'.

Finally, God says 'No,' if our prayer request is purely selfish. If I ask God for a new video game, He may ask me to adjust with the one I already have. He does not want us to be constantly greedy for more and more material things.

### **How can I know whether my prayer is according to God's will or not?**

2 Corinthians 1:20 says, "Christ says 'Yes' to all of God's promises. That is why we have Christ to say 'Amen' for us to the glory of God."

So, if my prayer is directly related to a promise in the Bible, then I can confidently expect a 'Yes' from God.

- God will say 'Yes' if I ask for victory over temptation (1 Corinthians 15:57,58).
- God will say 'Yes' if I pray for the salvation of family members (1 Corinthians 7:14).
- God will say 'Yes' if I pray for healing (Isaiah 53:4-6).
- God will say 'Yes' if I pray for safety in times of danger (Matthew 10:29-31).
- God will say 'Yes' if I pray for basic needs like food, money for school fees, good friends, etc. (Philippians 4:19).
- God will say 'Yes' if I pray for a good future (Jeremiah 29:11).

- God will say ‘Yes’ if I pray for wisdom (James 1:5).
- God will say ‘Yes’ if I pray for unity (John 17:23).
- God will say ‘Yes’ if I pray for spiritual growth (Matthew 5:6).
- God will say ‘Yes’ if I pray for forgiveness for my sins (1 John 1:9).

When it comes to material possessions, first rank in school, etc., these prayers will be answered with a ‘Yes’ if your attitude is not selfish or greedy. If there is greed, then God may say ‘No,’ or delay answering until your motives change.



### APPLICATION

- This week, make a commitment to pray in tongues for your needs, so that you may pray in line with God’s will.
- Make a commitment to read your Bible daily and learn from God, so that you will know what His will is regarding different things.
- Ask God to take away your selfishness, so that your prayers will focus more on what pleases God.

Next week, make sure that you come with testimonies of how God helped you to pray more in line with His will.



### CLOSE WITH PRAYER





# Prayer

## *What Blocks Prayer*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To teach about the three obstacles to prayer.
- To throw light on the spiritual warfare aspect of prayer.



### SCRIPTURE PORTION

Daniel 10 (Daniel's Prayer and the Fallen Angel of Persia)



### MEMORY VERSE

**James 4:3:** Yet even when you do pray, your prayers are not answered, because you pray just for selfish reasons.

### Materials Needed:

2 glasses and 2 drinking-straws.



## RECAP

- What did we learn about last week?
- What are the five common reasons why God says ‘No’ to our prayers sometimes?
- How must we pray, to be sure that we pray in line with God’s will? (In tongues)
- Recite the Memory Verse for last week (1 John 5:14,15).

## Note to the Facilitator

There are **at least nine obstacles** to prayer. This lesson mentions **three obstacles only**.

Obstacles to prayer:

- Interference by Satan’s forces (illustrated by the Daniel Story)
- Giving up and stopping prayer (mentioned in the Discussion Section)
- Praying with improper, selfish motives (mentioned in the Discussion Section)



## INTRODUCTION

Last week we looked at the three ways in which God usually answers our prayers. Today, we will look at the main obstacles which may prevent our prayers from getting answered.

Of course, the worst obstacle would be to not have a personal relationship with Jesus. Jesus is not obligated to answer the

prayers of unbelievers, as they have not yet entered into a covenant agreement with Him.

However, believers too face certain obstacles, and we will now look at these.



## ATTENTION GETTER

### Prepare beforehand:

Take two glasses and two drinking-straws to the class. Stuff some cotton into one of the straws, so that it obstructs the flow of water

### Activity: Blocked Straw

Fill both the glasses to the brim with water. Pick two volunteers and give each of them a drinking straw. Each of them must finish a glass of water, sucking through the straw. The one who finishes first would be the winner. (One of the children will struggle to finish because of the blockage in the straw).

### Ask:

**When you draw on the straw with your lips, how long does it take for the water to reach your mouth? One minute or two minutes?**

(It doesn't take even a second).

**Then why do you think 'X' (child who couldn't finish) found it so difficult to draw water through the straw?**

*(Allow the children to express their opinions).*

**Explain:**

X found it difficult to draw water from the glass because of a blockage in the drinking straw.

Drinking with a straw is a simple, uncomplicated thing. We suck on the straw and the water automatically flows to our lips. Prayer too is like this. We ask our Heavenly Father for what we need and He gives it to us.

The complication in drinking water arises only when something deliberately blocks the water supply. In the same way, the complication in receiving the answer to our prayers arises only when something or someone deliberately blocks the answer to our prayers.

Today, we will look at an example of this in the Bible

**TEACHING CONTENT****Daniel's Prayer and the Fallen Angel of Persia (Daniel 10)**

The Israelites were captured by the Babylonians and made into slaves. One of the slaves was Daniel, a man who loved God deeply. Because Daniel was very wise, the king made him an important official in his royal court.

Daniel decided one time to spend a few weeks in fasting prayer. He was very sad because the Israelites had lived as slaves many years, and he wanted to ask the Lord to free them. So he stopped eating all fancy foods; he didn't eat any meat or drink any wine. He didn't even put any oil on his head. He didn't do any of these things because he wanted to focus all his time and energy on praying to God.

Three weeks after the fast began, Daniel was praying along with some of the other Israelites, by the banks of the great Tigris River. While he was standing there, he looked up and he saw a man standing in front of him. The man was wearing linen clothes, and had a belt made of pure gold around his waist. His face was bright like lightning and his eyes were like flames of fire.

Daniel was the only one who saw the vision. The men with him didn't see the vision, but they were still afraid. They were so afraid that they ran away and hid. So he was left alone. He was watching this vision, and it made him afraid. He lost his strength. His face turned white like a dead person's face and he fell down unconscious.

Then the man in the vision woke him up and said, "Daniel, God loves you very much. Stand up, for I have been sent to you." Daniel was still shaking because he was afraid; but he stood up. Then the man in the vision started talking again.

He said, "Daniel, do not be afraid. From the very first day you decided to be humble in front of God, he has been listening to your prayers. I came to you because you have been praying. But the Fallen Angel of Persia has been fighting against me for 21 days. Then Michael, one of God's most important angel-princes, came to help me because I was stuck there with the fallen angel of Persia. Now I have come to you, Daniel, to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future."

While the man was talking to him, Daniel bowed low with his face toward the ground because he felt so weak in the presence of the man. Then the man gave him strength and

said, “Daniel, soon I must go back to fight against the fallen angel of Persia. When I go, the fallen angel of Greece will also come. However, Michael, God’s angel-prince, will help me fight over all the evil angels.”

### **Explain:**

God sent a messenger to Daniel as soon as he began to pray. But the messenger could not reach Daniel because the fallen angel of Persia stopped him. So this messenger fought a battle with the demon for three whole weeks. Finally, on the twenty-second day, he was able to reach Daniel.

This happens with us too sometimes. God answers the prayers of His children, but Satan’s forces hold down the answer from getting to their hands. On such occasions, it’s important for us to fast and pray. When we trustingly do this, believing that God will definitely answer us, He will cause the evil forces to be defeated... and the answers will come through.



### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

***Note:*** All discussion questions must be answered by the children, and NOT by the teacher. The guidelines given here are only meant to assist the teacher during the discussion.

#### **Obstacle 1 to Prayer: Satanic forces that delay answers to prayer**

**While Daniel was fasting and praying, the fallen angel of Persia was defeated. In what way is giving up food connected to defeating Satan?**

The Bible doesn't say that Daniel fasted to "defeat demons." He fasted for two reasons (Daniel 10:12):

- to humble himself before God and
- to gain understanding

He wanted to spend time with God, so that God would teach him how to be holy and clean him of the sinful attitudes in his life. He also wanted to try and understand what plans God had for him and for his people.

But the answer to this prayer got delayed, as the fallen angel tried to stop the heavenly messenger from reaching Daniel. However, Daniel did not get discouraged because he had been fasting and praying, and this had made him grow more confident in God.

In the same way, when we fast and pray, we get closer to God. This helps us to hold on even if the answer to the prayer gets delayed. It keeps us from growing bitter against God, and God is able to answer our prayers.

### **Obstacle 2 to Prayer: We Give Up and Stop Praying**

**Hebrews 6:12 says, " ...following the example of those who had faith and were patient until God kept his promise to them." According to this verse, how many days should I wait patiently for the answer to my prayer?**

Wait patiently until God fulfills the promise He has made to you—even if it takes many years.

Probably the greatest reason that some prayers go unanswered is because many give up praying before they

receive their answer. As long as we have the promise of God's Word, be patient and persistent—keep believing, and don't quit, no matter how long it takes! God has a "due season" when He will bring the answer to pass.

### **Obstacle 3 to Prayer: Praying with improper, selfish motives**

#### **Every time my prayer is delayed, does it mean that demons are holding up the answer to my prayer?**

Not necessarily. There may be no direct demonic involvement in the delay.

If there is no answer even after a long time, then apply the lesson that we learnt last week. Pray in tongues to make sure that you are praying according to God's will. If you are praying with the wrong motives, your prayer won't be answered.

For instance, if you are praying, "Lord, help me to get more marks than XYZ in the exam," God may not answer your prayers. This is a selfish prayer; you want to drag down someone else, just to make yourself look good. James 4:3 clearly says, "Yet even when you do pray, your prayers are not answered, because you pray just for selfish reasons."

So, selfishness can become an obstacle to answered prayer



## APPLICATION

Today, we have learnt about three things that could block our prayers:

- Satanic forces that delay answers to prayer
- Giving up and discontinuing our prayers
- Praying with improper, selfish motives

This week, make a commitment to **NOT STOP** praying—even if it takes very long to receive your answer. However, just make sure that you are not praying in a selfish or greedy manner, because God prefers not to answer such prayers.

Next week, make sure that you come with testimonies of how God answered your prayers because you refused to give up praying.



## CLOSE WITH PRAYER

