

Sisters for Yah

When Prayer is Painful

Prayer is not difficult to understand. In its most basic form, prayer is simply having a conversation with Yahweh. But prayer can be difficult to do! Many believers struggle with prayer. Have you ever suffered, and agonized before Yahweh with a trial so painful, that your entire body, mind and heart ached? Yahshua did, as mentioned in Hebrews 5:7. I know that most of us have too. Some have lost precious loved ones, and now feel a painful empty void that seems impossible to fill. Others have received frightening, life-threatening health diagnoses that could forever change the trajectory of their lives and those of their families. Still others have lost jobs and homes and don't know how they will feed their children.

We are a generation that avoids pain at all costs. This is why there are so few intercessors. Most believers operate on the shallowest levels of prayer. Deep, prolonged prayer can be difficult to sustain. Sometimes the words won't come. Sometimes we realize that our sins might be separating us from our Father. Yahshua experienced this type of deep prayer before Yahweh in Luke 22:45. It involved staying before the Father even when everyone had gone away, or fallen asleep.

There are no shortcuts to prayer. You can read books about it, attend seminars, or paste inspirational mottoes to your mirror to read every morning, but none of these will help unless you make a commitment to pray, and then follow through by doing so! Don't allow yourself to become satisfied with shallow, self-centered praying. Pray for other believers too. And you don't have to be a person of many words either. Some believers keep a notebook handy to write down prayer requests from others. This is a good idea if you're like me and tend to be on the forgetful side.

Some have trouble asking Yahweh for things, because they are afraid that He won't answer the way they are hoping for. This is no excuse to stop praying. Believers are expected to pray and accept Yahweh's will no matter the outcome. Our Father wants to hear from His children! Talk to Him honestly the way you would to a best friend.



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Recorded Faithfulness

Mark 14:9 tells us, *“Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this good news is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”*

We may assume that our expressions of devotion are small and insignificant, but in Yahweh’s eyes they may hold much meaning. Our love and dedication may even create memorials to Yahweh for future generations. Have you considered that what we do now will have lasting impacts that live on forever?

The unnamed woman (thought to be Mary, sister of Lazarus) mentioned in the book of Mark performed a profound act of love for Yahshua. She did not do it to impress His disciples or to gain public attention, or to gain praise from Yahshua. She simply sought to express her love for the Master. The woman did nothing spectacular, really; she performed no miracles. She preached no sermons. Yet Yahshua was so moved by her selfless loyalty that He deemed it worthy of remembrance throughout the remainder of history.

None of us really know what acts of love He may choose to honor through our children and future generations. Abraham could not have known that the day he demonstrated his willingness to sacrifice his only son would be memorialized and would bless many generations who heard of his obedience. David could not have known that his walk with Yahweh would please Him so much that David’s example would bless generations who followed him.

Yahweh can take our faithfulness and begin a spiritual legacy, making it a blessing to others for generations to come. You will never know until eternity all who received a blessing because of your righteous life. This is why it is so important that we all daily express our love and devotion to Yahweh.

Let us hold fast the confession
of our **HOPE**
without wavering, for He who promised is
FAITHFUL.
Hebrews 10:23, NKJV



“WELL, THAT’S JUST HOW I AM”



Many years ago, while in a different religious organization, I witnessed a conflict between two members of the group. As their argument proceeded to get more loud and heated, one of the two expressed how much hurt she was feeling by the cruel words of the other. Sadly, the other replied coldly, “Well, that’s just how I am!” The thought jumped into my head: Yes, that’s just how you are, but is that just how you should be? Thankfully, the two involved were able to make amends. We all have certain personality quirks fashioned by diverse childhood upbringings. These shape who we

are, obviously. But we must not make excuses for bad behavior. We become new creations at baptism, and our slates are wiped clean. Then we must develop righteous character according to Yahweh’s Word. We need to drop our bad behaviors, especially those things that are sin and can hurt others. We need to meditate on Yahweh’s Word to know how to behave properly. When we stand before the Judgment Throne, none of us will be able to defend ourselves by using the appeal, “That’s just how I am!” Rather we must become the person we **SHOULD** be.

What are the desires of your heart?

I love Psalm 37:4: *Delight yourself also in Yahweh, and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

Regrettably, many believers have taken this to mean that Yahweh will give them whatever they want, no matter what it is. Our relationship with Yahweh ought to bring us more joy, satisfaction, and pleasure than any other relationship, activity, or material possession we have. Scripture exhorts us to delight ourselves in Yahweh, finding our greatest pleasure in Yahweh and the things dear to His heart.

I think back to Yahshua's time. The people of His day were under painful Roman occupation. Their lives were not easy. I am sure many of them were hoping that Yahshua would end Roman rule and set up His Kingdom at that time. That was the "desire of their hearts." But we know that didn't happen. They all died without seeing the Kingdom in their lifetimes. We must realize the same will be with us, too. Many of us will die before we see the "desires of our hearts" this side of the Kingdom.

How can we comfort our hearts knowing we may never see our deepest desires fulfilled in this short, and often painful, mortal life? Only as we spend time with Yahweh will we begin to take delight in the things that Yahweh loves. We must allow Him to show us our situation from His perspective. Hopefully, as we adjust ourselves to Yahweh's will, we will begin to desire the same things that Yahweh's heart desires.

Remember that Yahweh will NOT give us everything we ask for. Not all the things we ask for are good for us. Yahweh knows the end from the beginning. Even good human parents try to protect their children and they know not to give their children everything they ask for.

Look at what happens when some parents DO give their children every whim they desire. The children become self-centered, ungrateful, and spoiled.

As we develop a solid relationship with our Heavenly Father, we should find ourselves asking Him for the things He desires. Matters foremost on Yahweh's heart should be preeminent in ours. We will learn not to ask for selfish or foolish things, but for Yahweh's Name to be exalted and His Kingdom to come (Matthew 6:9-10). It is not wrong to put our personal requests before Yahweh, but it is helpful to look at the big picture and accept Yahweh's will. Have you been asking Yahweh to give you the desires of your heart without first seeking to delight yourself in Him? I shamefully admit that I have been guilty of this. But I'm aiming to remedy my shortcomings! Yahweh places important requirements on those who pray; that we seek His priorities and make them our own. As we find joy in Him, we will see what is truly important, and we will long for these things as the Father does.

All of us have needs and desires, and our Father wants to give us good things. But we need to seek first the Kingdom. There is coming a time when our physical fleshly desires won't even matter anymore. Our material possessions will be like dust in the wind. It is better to build up treasure in the Kingdom where moth and rust will not destroy. Why? because eternity is forever.



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Broccoli Rice

2 cups cooked white rice
2 cups broccoli florets
1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
1/2 cup milk
1 T. butter
1/4 cup sour cream
1/2 t. salt

Steam the broccoli florets until fork tender, not mushy. Mix with the rice. Melt the butter and mix in the milk and salt. Add the cheese and sour cream. Fold into the rice and broccoli mixture. Excellent as a side dish. Or you can add cooked chicken to make it a main dish if you'd prefer.



Comforting Winter Potato Soup

3 pounds scrubbed potatoes, peeled and cubed (see note below)
8 slices turkey bacon, cooked and drained
1 large, chopped onion
1 jar (7 ounces) roasted red peppers, drained and chopped
1 celery stalk, sliced thin
6 cups chicken broth
1/2 t. garlic powder
1/2 t. seasoned salt
1/2 t. pepper
1/8 t. rubbed sage
1/3 cup flour
2 cups heavy whipping cream
1 cup shredded parmesan
2 T. fresh, finely-minced cilantro

Boil the potatoes in water until fork tender. Drain well in a colander. Place the potatoes back in the pot. Add the next 9 ingredients and simmer gently about 10 minutes. In a separate bowl, whisk the flour with the heavy whipping cream until smooth. Add to the pot and simmer until slightly thickened. Stir in the parmesan and fresh cilantro.

Note: I prefer to leave the skin on my potatoes for extra nutrients, but as you prefer. Serve the soup with crackers or bread on the side.