

## *Six Kinds of Prayer*

This brief study shows us the various types of prayer in the New Testament. It is interesting how the original language has various definitions, making for many possible translations with overlapping descriptions of types of prayer. God has given us many ways and examples on how to pray. There are many reasons and situations in life for prayer. He wants us to fellowship with Him on all occasions with all kinds of prayer.

Eph 6:18 (NIV) –And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with **all kinds of prayers** and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

The New Testament uses six Greek words for prayer. There are other words associated with prayer and worship, but for now I will stick to these six Greek words.

Each of these six forms (or kinds) of prayer differs from each other just as the Roman soldier's lances differ for various applications.

The basic kinds of prayer in the New Testament are: Consecration, Petition, Authority, Thanksgiving, Supplication, and Intercession.

### THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION:

Decision and consecration – commitment. This comes from the most frequently used Greek word for **prayer**, *proseuche*, (pros-yoo-khay').<sup><G4335></sup> The first part of this compound word, “pros,”<sup><G4314></sup> means *face to face*, indicating a close relationship. This word nearly always means an up-front, and personal – intimate contact with someone else. “Pros” is used four times in Ephesians 6:12 to paint a picture of us being face to face with our demonic enemy. We need to get face-to-face with the devil and demons in battle! PROS!

Eph 6:12 (KJV) –For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but **against** principalities, **against** powers, **against** the rulers of the darkness of this world, **against** spiritual wickedness in high [places].

The *second* part of the word *proseuche* is the word *euchomai*, (yoo'-khom-ahee) <G2172> which describes a *wish, desire, prayer, or vow*. Originally, it was to make a *vow* to God, when expressing a need or desire. A person would vow to give something of great value to God in exchange for a pleasing answer to prayer.

The best example of this is found in 1 Samuel 1:11, 19-20. Where Hannah's desire for a child developed into an exchange of her most precious possession. Hannah vowed to give Samuel to God. Often, people seeking an answered prayer would give a gift of thanksgiving in advance. It was a way of releasing their faith in the goodness of God and thanking Him for His favorable reply to prayer.<sup>1</sup>

Most of Paul's followers were Greek, so they understood how powerful this word *proseuche* was. We need to have an *intimate, eye-to-eye, face-to-face* relationship with God!

The idea of *sacrifice* is associated with *proseuche*, "prayer." We should be willing to give everything we own in exchange for answered prayer.

Even though the Holy Spirit convicts our hearts of areas that need to be surrendered to His sanctifying power, He will never forcibly take these things from us. So this particular word for prayer points to a place of *decision* and *consecration* – an altar where we freely *vow* to give our lives to God in exchange for *His* life. We place our lives in His hands in an act of *consecration*.

Since the word *proseuche* has to do with surrender and sacrifice, this tells us that God wants to do more than simply bless us. He wants to *change* us! Therefore, when we know we offer a genuine prayer in faith, we should always include thanksgiving to God along with our prayer, knowing that He hears us.

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1. Rick Renner, *Dressed To Kill* (Tulsa, Harrison House Publishers, 1991) p. 447.

## THE PRAYER OF PETITION:

The Greek word, *deesis* (deh'-ay-sis) <sup><G1162></sup> is the second most used word for prayer.

Eph 6:18 (KJV) –Praying always with all prayer and **supplication** in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Translated “supplication,” *deesis* describes *personal needs or wants*. This is about the very *basic needs for survival*, not for a new house or a faster car. This word *deesis* has to do with *needs being met for a continued existence*.

*Deesis* is a petition or cry for God’s help that exposes the person’s insufficiency to meet his own needs. Praying always, with all prayer and with all *earnest, sincere, and heartfelt petition*.

The Bible tells us, in Hebrews 5:7 that Jesus prayed this kind of prayer:

Heb 5:7 (NIV) –During the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up **prayers** and **petitions** with fervent cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission.

Jesus realized His need so much that He prayed *deesis* with strong crying and tears. He cried out to the Father, in the weakness of His humanity, to meet His basic needs of strength and power. “*Father, hear my humble cry.*”

This word *deesis* almost always is used as *a cry for help*. It is an appeal to God for a special need. It is a ***petition*** for strength to resist temptation or for help during a crisis, or for spiritual power to minister in a certain situation.

“Lord, I need some *help* down here,” is a good prayer.

Where *proseuche*, (pros-yoo-khay') has to do with *surrender* and *consecration*, the word *deesis* (deh'-ay-sis) has to do with *humility*.

## THE PRAYER OF AUTHORITY:

The third most common word used for prayer in the New Testament is *aiteō*, (ahee-teh'-o) <sup><G154></sup> – to *ask, demand, require*.

This Greek word may seem to be a strange word for prayer. It doesn't refer to one asking in humility. This word *aiteo* describes someone who prays in authority, almost demanding something from God! This “asking” comes from a person who knows what he needs, and isn't afraid to boldly ask to receive it!

The *deesis* has to do with spiritual needs and wants, but this word *aiteo* (ahee-teh'-o) is connected to more *tangible* needs, like *food, shelter, money*, etc.

How can you approach God with a commanding attitude, demanding needs to be met? Jesus gave us understanding of *aiteo* in John 15:7.

John 15:7 (NKJV) – “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will **ask** what you desire, and it shall be done for you.”

**Ask** is from the Greek word, *aiteō*, (ahee-teh'-o) <sup><G154></sup> – to *ask, demand, require*. This could be translated, “...*ye shall demand what ye desire....*”

When I first saw this, I was troubled by the notion of “demanding” something from God. However, in context with the whole verse, it is better understood. “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you....” Notice the word “abide” is used twice in this verse. “Abide” means *to stay, dwell, lodge, remain, to remain in constant union with, or to take up permanent residency*. Years ago we would say, “*set up house keepin'*.”

This could be rendered, “*If you permanently and habitually dwell in Me, you will be able to strongly ask for whatever you wish and it will be done for you.*” Jesus knew that if His words had permanent residency in our hearts and minds, we would never ask for something outside His will. He knew that our minds would be renewed to His will.

When you know you are praying in line with God's will (His Word) you don't have to beg for stuff. You can boldly speak in faith and

expect God to deliver your requests (See Hebrews 4:16).

We can see the *aiteo*, (ahee-teh'-o) in First John 5:14-15.

1John 5:14-15 (NKJV) –Now this is the **confidence** that we have in Him, that if we **ask** anything according to His will, He hears us. [15] And if we know that He hears us, whatever we **ask**, we know that we have the petitions that we have **asked** of Him.

“Confidence” is from a Greek word that means to be *blunt*, with *boldness*, to *be courageous*. Along with confidence is “ask,” *aiteo*, (ahee-teh'-o) used three times in First John 5:14-15.

John could have said, “We are *bold, courageous* and *outspoken* when we pray because, *if we ask anything according to His will (His desires for our lives), He hears us. And whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.*” Note that “asking” is connected with knowing the will of God. If you don’t know what the Bible says, you will lack confidence in your asking.

Don’t mistake arrogance for confidence. If you don’t live there, don’t go poking around in the pantry! If it’s not your dwelling place – stay out of the refrigerator!

If the Word of God dwells in you – if the Word is living in your heart and mind, and if His Word is your residency, your prayers will be accurate, and He appreciates your blunt requests. Store in your heart a strong foundation of absolute truth, and you will be able to take hold of the promises of God for you life!

When God’s Word is allowed to take authority in your heart, you allow that Word to transform your thinking. The more your mind is renewed to God’s Word, the more your prayers will be inline with His will for your life. You will be more confident and more powerful for His kingdom.

## THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

The Greek word, *eucharisteō*, (yoo-khar-is-teh'-o) <sup><G2168></sup> describes; *being grateful, an expression of gratitude, saying grace at a meal, or giving thanks.*<sup>2</sup>

Paul was so blessed when he heard about the “faith in the Lord Jesus” and “love for all the saints” in the church at Ephesus, he wrote:

“[I] do not cease to **give thanks** for you, making mention of you in my prayers:” (Eph 1:16)

“I can’t help but *thank God* for you in my prayers” (see Col 1:3; 2Thes 1:3).

“*In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you*” (1Thes 5:18).

When you pray for someone, give thanks – every time. To be thankful is powerful in spiritual battle, and it is God’s will.

There are many other scriptures on the prayer of thanksgiving. (See, outlines on my website.)

## THE PRAYER OF SUPPLICATION:

G1783 enteuxis (ent'-yook-sis) n. 1. an interview. 2. (specially) **supplication**. [from G1793] KJV: **intercession**, prayer.

G1793 entugchano (en-toong-khan'-o) v. 1. **to chance upon**. 2. (by implication) **confer with**. 3. (by extension) **to entreat** (in favor or against). [from G1722 and G5177] KJV: *deal with, make intercession*.

*Enteuxis* (ent'-yook-sis) <sup><1783></sup> (Used **2 times**: “intercession” at 1 Tim. 2:1, and “prayer” at 1 Tim. 4:5, according to God’s will). A noun from *entynchanō* (en-toong-khan'-o) <sup><G1793></sup>, used **5 times**, is translated “dealt” at Acts 25:24, and “intercession” at Romans 8:27, 34; 11:2, and Hebrews 7:25.).<sup>3</sup> To chance upon, to entreat. A falling in with, meeting with, coming together, intercession, prayer, address to God for oneself or others. The

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2. Ralph D. Winter, *The Word Study Concordance* (Wheaton, Illinois, Tyndale House publishers, Inc., 1978), p. 327.

3. Ibid., pp. 263-64.



verb *entynchanō* (en-toong-khan'-o) means to interpolate with familiarity and freedom of access, to interrupt another in speaking, to come to God with boldness. To meet and talk with, in the sense of to intercede, make intercession for or against someone.<sup>4</sup>

Heb 7:25 (NKJV) –Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to **make intercession** for them.

**Make intercession**, *entynchanō* (en-toong-khan'-o); Strong's #1793: To fall in with, meet with in order to converse. From this description of a casual encounter, the word progresses to the idea of pleading with a person on behalf of another, although at times the petition may be against another (Acts 25:24; Rom. 11:2).<sup>5</sup>

This is to *fall into a situation* or to *happen into a circumstance* with someone. This is usually translated as “intercession” but is not what most people think of as intercession. It is not the best rendering, as the definitions do not align with the context. So in the KJV, you will find “intersession” where “supplication” would have been a better translation.

This word *enteuxis* and its various forms (such as *entynchanō*) are usually translated as the word “intercession” in the New Testament. However, *enteuxis* does not necessarily refer to intercession as most people think of intercession (i.e., prayer for other people). The word *enteuxis* rather carries the idea of *one who comes to God in simple, childlike faith, to freely enjoy fellowship in the presence of the Lord*. On expositor has said that this is prayer in its most individual and simple form. It literally means to *fall into or happen upon*. The idea is to *fall into the presence of the Lord* or to *come into wonderful relationship in prayer*. In some places, it has been translated as the word “supplication.”

Indeed, this is the idea reflected in this word *enteuxis* – to *supplicate* with the Lord. This word was used in some classical writings to depict a love relationship between two lovers – two individuals who happened upon each other – who had found or discovered each other – and were now sharing their lives together. The prayer and supplication refers those special times in prayer when God by His Spirit showers us in love and fills us with the knowledge of His life-transforming acceptance.<sup>6</sup>

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4. Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study New Testament, KJV* (AMG Publishers, 1992) pp. 593-95.

5. *The Spirit-Filled Life Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), p.1880

6. Rick Renner, *Dressed To Kill* (Tulsa, Harrison House Publishers, 1991) p. 458.

## THE PRAYER OF INTERCESSION:

G5241 *huperentugchano* (hoop-er-en-toong-khan'-o) v. *to intercede in behalf of*. [from G5228 and G1793] KJV: **make intercession for**.

G5228 *huper* (hoop-er') prep. 1. *over*. 2. (with the genitive case, of place) *above*. 3. (also) *beyond*. 4. (with the accusative case) *superior to, above and beyond, more than*. 5. (causal) *on behalf (of)*.

G1793 *entugchano* (en-toong-khan'-o) v. 1. **to chance upon**. 2. (by implication) **confer with**. 3. (by extension) **to entreat** (in favor or against). [from G1722 and G5177] KJV: *deal with, make intercession*. (This is the word, “*entugchano*” translated “intercession” in Hebrews 5:25 speaking of our permanent high priest, Jesus.)

The sixth Greek word for a type of prayer used in the New Testament is; *huperentugchano* (hoop-er-en-toong-khan'-o) to **intercede in behalf of**, or to **make intercession for**. Found only in Romans 8:26, and does not refer to believers doing anything; but rather the Holy Spirit only.

Rom 8:26 (NKJV) –Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself **makes intercession for** us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

**Intercession**, “*huperentugchano*” is the Holy Spirit’s job! It is only used by the Holy Spirit – not believers. We have had, for the most part, a misunderstanding of intercessory prayer.

*Enteuxis* (ent'-yook-sis) an interview, i.e. (special) supplication :- intercession, prayer. Used 2 times: intercession 1, and prayer 1

From the root word *entynchanō* (en-toong-khan'-o) used 5 times. It means **to chance upon, or confer with**; to entreat (in favor or against), **deal with, make intercession**.

This happens for us when we do not know how to pray. The Holy Spirit has to bypass our intellect in order to do His ministry through us. So, even when you are praying in the Spirit for someone, He is the one who makes intercession.

When the Holy Spirit makes intercession, it is an action that happens



when He prays through us. Our job is actually supplication, *entynchanō* (en-toong-khan'-o) where we meet with the Spirit and He meets *huperentugchano* (hoop-er-en-toong-khan'-o) with whom or what we are praying for, on our behalf.

Dutch Sheets explains it well in *Intercessory Prayer*.

Intercession is not primarily a prayer a person prays, but something a person does that can be done through prayer. Although the word "intercession" has come to mean "prayer" in our minds, its Hebrew word does not necessarily mean "prayer" at all. It has many shades of meaning, all of which can be done through prayer. Intercession creates a *meeting*, Intercessors *meet* with God; they also *meet* the powers of darkness. "Prayer meetings" are aptly named!<sup>7</sup>

So we have different words for the six kinds of prayer and some are not translated as well as possible. Some overlapping terminology can be confusing, but God wants us to know these things. So we study His Word to know him better, in Jesus' name.

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7. Dutch Sheets, *Intercessory Prayer* (Bethany House Publishers, 1996), p.60.