



Prayer

Love and Selflessness

Instrument for our spiritual education

Learning about the Bahá'í Faith

Bahá'í Class – Prayer 1

Prayer

Since God is All-knowing, He does not need our prayers to know what is in our heart.

Praying to God has another purpose, teaching us how to love. We learn to turn away from our selves to express our love and to build our capacity to love. As we learn through prayer to love God, our heart is opened to receive God's love.

Prayer

O Son of Being! Love Me, that I may love thee. If thou lovest Me not, My love can in no wise reach thee. Know this, O servant.

(Bahá'u'lláh, The Hidden Words, Arabic 5)

Prayer

Shouldst thou recite any of the revealed prayers, and seek assistance from God with thy face turned towards Him, and implore Him with devotion and fervour, thy need will be answered.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, from a Tablet—translated from the Persian)

Prayer

With God's love in our heart, we receive Divine confirmations. We can act with the assurance of God's guidance and assistance. By relying on God, we can overcome any feeling of weakness or inadequacy, and find the courage to act.

Prayer

At all times we must look at the greatness of the Cause, and remember that Bahá'u'lláh will assist all who arise in His service. When we look at ourselves, we are sure to feel discouraged by our shortcomings and insignificance!

(Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer, dated 12 December 1950)

Prayer

Remember not your own limitations; the help of God will come to you. Forget yourself. God's help will surely come!

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 38)

Prayer

Know thou of a certainty that thy Lord will come to thine aid with a company of the Concourse on high and hosts of the Abhá Kingdom. These will mount the attack, and will furiously assail the forces of the ignorant, the blind....

(Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá, sec 19, p. 43)



Prayer

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All our life we must struggle against self love, the insistent self, the ego, which wants us to turn away from God. We never completely win that battle, and must always be on our guard against pride and selfish desire. This is the purpose of daily prayer, to teach us humility and selfless service.

Prayer

No one is perfect, apart from 'Abdu'l-Bahá. In the world around us and within our minds are many distractions. Prayer is like a mirror reflecting our inner self, that we must constantly polish to remove the accumulated dirt which we discover as we pray.

Prayer and Service

We call for Bahá'u'lláh's help, and He gives us the courage to grow better. When we perform acts of service, we receive Divine confirmations, and we know that any credit for the victories goes to Him. We are only an instrument in His service.



Tomb of Bahá'u'lláh, where we turn in prayer

Prayer

...not everyone achieves easily and rapidly the victory over self. What every believer, new or old, should realize is that the Cause has the spiritual power to re-create us if we make the effort to let that power influence us, and the greatest help in this respect is prayer.

(From a letter dated 27 January 1945 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

Prayer

We must supplicate Bahá'u'lláh to assist us to overcome the failings in our own characters, and also exert our own will-power in mastering ourselves.

(From a letter dated 27 January 1945 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

Prayer

I beseech Thee ... to make of my prayer a fire that will burn away the veils which have shut me out from Thy beauty, and a light that will lead me unto the ocean of Thy Presence.

(Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh* (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 2008), CLXXXIII)

Prayer

We must strive to attain to that condition by being separated from all things and from the people of the world and by turning to God alone. It will take some effort on the part of man to attain to that condition, but he must work for it, strive for it.

(Report of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words as quoted in J. E. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, 5th rev. ed. (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980), p. 89)

Prayer

We can attain to it by thinking and caring less for material things and more for the spiritual. The further we go from the one, the nearer we are to the other. The choice is ours.

(Report of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's words as quoted in J. E. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, 5th rev. ed. (Wilmette: Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1980), p. 89)



Prayer - Chile

Prayer

The true worshipper, while praying, should endeavour not so much to ask God to fulfil his wishes and desires, but rather to adjust these and make them conform to the Divine Will. Only through such an attitude can one derive that feeling of inner peace and contentment which the power of prayer alone can confer.

(From a letter dated 26 October 1938 written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer)

Prayer for Youth

O Lord! Make this youth radiant, and confer Thy bounty upon this poor creature. Bestow upon him knowledge, grant him added strength at the break of every morn and guard him within the shelter of Thy protection so that he may be freed from error, may devote himself to the service of Thy Cause, may guide the wayward, lead the hapless, free the captives and awaken the heedless, that all may be blessed with Thy remembrance and praise. Thou art the Mighty and the Powerful.

(‘Abdu’l-Bahá in Bahá’í Prayers)