Lesson 7



OBJECTIVES

- 1. To find God's mercy in prayer during conflicts with others.
- 2. To discover God's comfort in prayer during trials.
- 3. To receive God's blessing in prayer during times of need.
- 4. To ask for God's wisdom when making decisions.

MEMORY VERSE

"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us."

(1 John 5:14)

PRAYER

- 1. Thank God for guiding and protecting us this week so that we can come to Him in Spirit and in truth.
- 2. Praise God for the prayers He has answered, those He has chosen to delay, and the ones He has turned away.
- 3. Ask God for the wisdom to seek Him through prayer in times of joy or sadness, victory or failure.



Overview

- 1. Jacob's prayer for mercy from Esau (Gen 32:3-12)
- 2. Moses' prayer in affliction (Num 11:4-25)
- 3. Hannah's prayer for a son (1 Sam 1-2:11)
- 4. Solomon's prayer for wisdom (1 Kgs 3:4-15)
- 5. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs
 - Jesus Christ, our God, hears and knows the prayers we offer today.
 - The Holy Bible includes testimonies on the effectiveness of prayer.
 - The Holy Spirit takes our prayers to God and delivers God's providence and guidance.
- 6. Life Application—Prayer Works; Keeping Up with Prayer
 - We can pray in any and every circumstance.
 - Prayer makes the impossible, possible.



Background Knowledge for Teachers

A Bowl of Soup for a Birthright

According to the Talmud, the sale of Esau's birthright took place immediately after Abraham died. The Talmudic dating estimated Esau and Jacob to be around 15 at the time. It is also suggested that the death of Abraham on the same day was appropriate so that he would not witness the demise of his grandson Esau. The lentils Jacob had cooked were meant for his father Isaac because lentils are the traditional meal for Jewish people in mourning.

Barrenness to Birth

In biblical times, women did not have equal status with men. Women were considered the property of their fathers or husbands. Women held subservient roles. A woman couldn't leave her husband because he owned her, just like he owned sheep or goats. Generally, Israelite women fared much better than women in other cultures around them. This was by the mercy of God.

Giving birth gave women a considerable increase in status. Their position was literally saved through childbirth. Unfortunately, however, a barren woman was considered disgraced and cursed by God.

The average Israelite woman nursed her child for two to three years while running the household and caring for her older children. At age three, boys were placed under their father's tutelage and taught from the Torah once it was written. Education was forbidden for girls and women.

Jewish women were given privilege and respect according to the number of sons they bore. This was due to the fact that it was only the sons who remained with the family and increased in wealth. Only sons inherited property and provided for elderly parents.

Sons were definitely the preferred gender, but daughters were not shunned. Daughters in Israel had better standing than in the surrounding pagan cultures. In some cultures, newborn girls were left on mountains to die or given as child sacrifices to false gods.

In Israel, mothers taught their daughters. Girls only learned skills that would make them good wives, essential for when they reached the marrying age of twelve and a half. The Talmud stated that a good wife was the only kind to keep. The Torah viewed a bad wife as bad as leprosy to her husband.



Reaching Out to Your Students

Students may have grown accustomed to hearing that they need to pray and read the Bible to cultivate their spiritual lives. Over time, this phrase might feel like an unattainable slogan instead of an undeniable truth. By studying the circumstances and results of four important prayers in the Old Testament, students can become re-sensitized to the wonders and effectiveness of sharing their hearts with God and trusting Him to provide and lead the way. The same God who listened and granted prayers thousands of years ago is the same God that resides in their hearts and cares for them today.



Opener

5 Minutes

Prayer is like breathing. We might not actively think about it, but if we stop doing it, we will not live. The Bible records all different types of prayers to God. Jacob prayed for mercy from his twin brother Esau. Moses prayed during his trial dealing with countless complaining Israelites. Hannah prayed for a son to dedicate to the Lord. Solomon prayed for wisdom to judge over the people of God. Today, we will learn from these four different prayers so that we can make prayer, like breathing, an indispensible part of our daily lives.



Vocabulary

bosom: chest; somewhere close to one's heart

consecrate: to sanctify, make holy

despise: to hate, not appreciate, look down upon

anguish: extreme pain or sadness; grief

conceive: to become pregnant

wean: to stop feeding a baby his/her mother's milk ephah: a measure for grain (equivalent to 36.4 liters)

feeble: weak



Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

FOR TEACHERS

Distribute Bible Discovery Worksheet #1 to the students now. The students will be referring to it throughout the lesson and filling in the blanks. The answers have been bolded in this section.

Jacob's prayer for mercy from Esau (Gen 32:3-12)

After taking his older brother's birthright in exchange for a bowl of soup, Jacob prepared to meet his twin brother Esau following many years of living far away. He sent messengers ahead to announce his arrival to Esau and ask for his favor.

The messengers returned to Jacob, saying, "We went to your brother Esau. He is coming to meet you with four hundred men." When he heard this, Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed. Why do you think he was scared? Yes, it was because Jacob thought that his brother was still angry with him for taking his birthright. He thought Esau might come to attack him and his family as revenge.

Jacob divided his people, flocks, herds, and camels into two companies. He thought, "If Esau attacks the first company, then the second company can escape." What would you do if you were in Jacob's shoes? You might try to hide, run away, or go around Esau's camp, right?

There was no one that could help Jacob. His only and best option was to turn to God, who had always watched over him faithfully. Jacob prayed, "Oh God of Abraham and Isaac, the Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you.' I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant. When I first crossed over this Jordan River, I only had my staff, and now I have become two companies of people and animals. Deliver me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau. I fear him because he might come and attack my wives, my children, and me. You said, 'I will surely treat you well, and make your descendants as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered because they are many.'"

Moses' prayer in affliction (Num 11:4-25)

After the people had eaten the manna that God had sent them from heaven, Moses heard the people weeping at the door of their tents. They were not satisfied with the heavenly food; instead, they wanted the meat they had eaten back in Egypt. How would you feel if you were God or Moses? You've already done the best to feed this great multitude of people, only to have them complain. The anger of the Lord was greatly aroused, and Moses was very displeased.

Moses shared his suffering by praying to the Lord. He said, "Why have You afflicted Your servant? And why have I not found favor in Your sight, that You have laid the burden of all these people on me? Did I conceive all these people? Did I give birth to them, that You should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, as a guardian carries a nursing baby,' to the land which You swore to their fathers? Where am I to get meat to give to all these people? For they weep and complain to me, saying, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.' I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me. If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now—if I have found favor in Your sight—and do not let me see my wretchedness!"

The Lord replied to Moses, "Gather to Me seventy men of the elders of Israel. These men should be the elders of the people and officers over them. Bring them to the tabernacle of meeting, that they may stand there with you. Then I will come down and talk with you there. I will take of the Spirit that is upon you and will put the same upon them. These men shall bear the burden of the people with you, so you may not bear it alone. Then, you will say to the people, 'Consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, and you will eat meat. You have wept to the Lord, saying, "Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt." The Lord will give you meat, and you will eat. You will not eat for one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, but for a whole month, until it comes out of your nostrils and becomes hateful to you, because you have despised the Lord who is among you. You cried to Him, saying, "Why did we ever come up out of Egypt?' "

Moses said, "There are six hundred thousand men, yet You have said, 'I will give them meat, that they may eat for a whole month.' Will flocks and herds be slaughtered for them and all the fish of the sea gathered for them to provide enough for them?" Would you have believed that it would be possible to feed that many people in the desert? The Lord replied, "Has the Lord's arm been shortened? Now you will see whether what I say will happen to you or not."

Moses went out and told the people God's words. He gathered the seventy elders and placed them around the tabernacle. Then the Lord came down in the cloud, and spoke to Moses. God took the Spirit that was upon Moses, and placed the same upon the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, although they never did it again.

Hannah's prayer for a son (1 Sam 1-2:11)

There was a man of Ramathaim Zophim, in the mountains of Ephraim. His name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. He had two wives: Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.

Elkanah went up from his city yearly to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there. Whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Peninnah and to all her children. But to Hannah he would give a double portion because he loved Hannah, although the Lord had closed her womb.

Peninnah, her rival, provoked her severely, making Hannah miserable because she had no children. Year after year, when Hannah went up to the house of the Lord, Penninah would mock her. Hannah was so upset from her lack of a child that she wept and did not eat. Her husband said to her, "Hannah, why do you cry? Why don't you eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons?" Can you imagine how terribly sad Hannah must have been because she couldn't have children and because of Penninah's bullying?

After they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah went to the temple to pray, where Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle. Hannah felt great sadness and bitterness in her soul, so she prayed to the Lord and wept in **anguish**. Then, she made a vow and said, "O Lord of hosts, if You will truly look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget me, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head."

As Hannah continued praying before the Lord, Eli watched her mouth. Hannah prayed in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk. Then, Eli said to Hannah, "How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away!" Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I haven't drunk wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have prayed until now." Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace. May the God of Israel grant the petition you have asked of Him." Hannah replied, "Let your maidservant find favor in your sight." She went on her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad. When we have given our suffering and grief to God through prayer, trusting Him to do what is best, we no longer feel scared or distressed.

Hannah's family rose early in the morning and worshiped

before the Lord. Then, they returned to their house at Ramah. Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord **remembered** her. In this process, Hannah conceived and bore a son. She called his name Samuel, saying, "Because I asked for him from the Lord."

Elkanah and all his family went up to offer the yearly sacrifice and his vow to the Lord. Hannah did not go up, saying, "Not until the child is weaned. Then, I will take him, so he may be before the Lord and remain there forever." Elkanah her husband replied to her, "Do what seems best to you. Wait until you have weaned him. Let the Lord establish His word." She stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

When Hannah had weaned him, she took him up to the house of the Lord in Shiloh. She brought along three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. After sacrificing the bull, they brought the child to Eli, and Hannah said, "O my lord! As your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood by you here, praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me the prayer I asked of Him. Therefore I also have lent my son to the Lord. As long as Samuel lives, he will be lent to the Lord." Then, they worshiped the Lord there. It was from that point onward that Samuel served as a dedicated servant to the Lord.

Solomon's prayer for wisdom (1 Kgs 3:4-15)

King Solomon went to Gibeon to sacrifice at the great high place. Solomon offered a thousand burnt offerings on that altar.

The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream at night. God said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" How would you answer if God asked you this question, and you could have anything you wanted?

Solomon said, "You have shown great mercy to Your servant David my father, because he walked before You in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart. You have continued this great kindness for him, and You have given him a son to sit on his throne. Now, O Lord my God, You have made Your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in.

Your servant is in the midst of Your people whom You have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. Therefore, give Your servant an **understanding** heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

Solomon's prayer **pleased** the Lord. God replied to him, "Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked

long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words. I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. So if you walk in My ways, to keep My statutes and My commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."

Then, Solomon awoke from his dream. He came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, offered up burnt offerings, offered peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants.

FOR TEACHERS

Hand out Bible Discovery Worksheet #2 to the students now and guide them to fill in the table. Refer to the Teacher Version for answers.



Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of understanding and wisdom. Whatever we may be going through, whatever troubles we may be struggling with, or whatever conflict we may be facing, the Spirit knows, understands, and intercedes with God for our sakes. Whenever we pray, the Spirit is also praying for us to God so that He might help us and guide us. It empowers our prayers. It is with this in mind that we should always seek to obtain the Holy Spirit, and then fill ourselves with the Spirit so that whatever trial we face, we can go through it with God's comfort, wisdom, and guidance.



Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

- 1. Why was Jacob afraid of Esau? He thought Esau was still angry and would attack him and his family.
- 2. What did God promise Jacob? He promised that his descendants would be numerous.
- 3. Why was Moses frustrated? The Israelites were complaining about not having meat to eat.
- 4. How did God solve Moses' problem? He placed the Spirit on seventy elders who could help Moses.
- 5. Why was Hannah sad? She was barren, and her husband's other wife provoked her.
- **6. What did Hannah do with the prayer God had answered?** She brought Samuel to serve in God's temple.
- 7. What did Solomon ask for? He prayed for wisdom to judge the people of God.
- **8. What other things did God grant Solomon?** He granted Solomon riches, honor, and a long life if he walked according to God's ways.



Life Application

10 Minutes

1. Prayer Works

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #1 and guide the students to complete the first half. Then, read the scenarios aloud with the students, and ask them to share their answers to the questions.]

2. Keeping Up with Prayer

[Hand out Life Application Worksheet #2. Emphasize to the students the importance of keeping a regular prayer habit, and then give the students time to complete the worksheet on their own. You can ask the students to share their answers when everyone has finished, or simply tell them to keep this in their notebooks as a reminder to pray always. If the students are having difficulty, you can complete this worksheet yourself as an example and share your answers with them.]



10-15 Minutes

Objective: To remind students to be committed to prayer by placing this scroll on the student's bedroom door.

A mezuzah, which literally means "doorpost in Hebrew," is a small scroll traditionally mounted to every doorpost in a house to mark a family's commitment to creating a Jewish household. Today, the students will be making one for their bedroom door to remind them to pray.

Materials

- Empty matchbox
- Masking tape
- Popsicle stick
- Tissue paper in various colors, cut into 10-15 one-inch squares
- Sheets of white paper, cut into 10-15 one-inch squares
- White glue
- Small paintbrush
- Pen, rubber stamp, glitter glue, or stickers
- Adhesive gems, beads, ribbon, etc. (optional)

Instructions

- 1. Tape the popsicle stick to the back of the matchbox lengthwise. Don't tape the box shut.
- 2. Brush a thin layer of glue on the matchbox, gluing over the tape as well.
- 3. Press individual layers of the tissue squares on the box, skipping the open ends. Keep brushing on glue and pressing layers.
- 4. Add decorations to the matchbox.
- 5. Write a prayer or several prayers on one small square of white paper.
- 6. Roll up the paper and insert it into the matchbox.
- 7. Tell the students to mount the mezuzah on their bedroom door with masking tape.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

- 1. Jacob prayed for Esau's mercy on his family. God promised his descendants would be many.
- 2. Moses prayed about his frustrations with the people. God gave His Spirit to seventy elders to help him.
- 3. Hannah prayed for a son. God granted her a son, Samuel, and she dedicated Samuel to the service of the temple.
- 4. Solomon prayed for wisdom. In addition to wisdom, God granted Solomon riches, honor, and a long life if he followed God's commandments.
- 5. Answers may vary.

FOUR GREAT PRAYERS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The four prayers we learned about today were each a different type of prayer. In the boxes below, write down the biblical definition of the word listed in the first column, and then write what could have happened to each of the people if they had not prayed to God.

Type of Prayer	Biblical Definition	Bible Illustration	Possible Results Without Prayer
Mercy (Jacob)	To show love and kindness, especially when a person does not deserve it.	For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. (Hosea 6:6)	Esau may have attacked, hurt, or even killed Jacob, his family, his servants, and his livestock.
Affliction (Moses)	A state of deep grief, suffering, and pain.	Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all. (Psalm 34:19)	Moses would have been crushed by the great pressure and demands of the ungrateful Israelites.
Prayer for a Special Need (Hannah)	A situation that no human will or power can resolve.	When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; And my prayer went up to You, Into Your holy temple. (Jonah 2:7)	Hannah would have remained childless and been sad and bitter for the rest of her life.
Wisdom (Solomon)	A high level of understanding that comes from God.	If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. (James 1:5)	Solomon would not have been able to rule God's people with understanding and justice.

FOUR GREAT PRAYERS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT (PART 1)

Fill in the blanks as you go through the lesson.

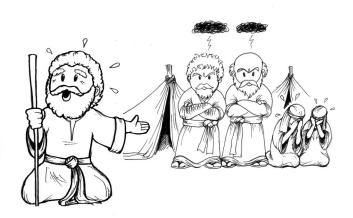


1. Jacob's prayer for mercy from Esau (Gen 32:3-12)

When Jacob prayed to God, he told Him that he was not worthy of the least of all God's ______ me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau" because he was very afraid, and knew that only God could help him.

2. Moses' prayer in affliction (Num 11:4-25)

When the Israelites complained, Moses was very displeased with them and asked God, "Why have You _____ Your servant?" In response, God directed Moses to take seventy elders. He told Moses that He would place His _____ —the same that was in Moses—upon them to empower them so that they could also share Moses' burdens.



3. Hannah's prayer for a son (1 Sam 1-2:11)

When Hannah prayed to the Lord, it was because she was feeling great ______. Her voice was heard by God, because later, after her desperate prayer, the Lord ______ her and gave her a son, just as she had requested.

4. Solomon's prayer for wisdom (1 Kgs 3:4-15)

When God asked Solomon what He should give to him, Solomon prayed for an _______ heart so that he could rule God's people. Solomon's humble request _____ the Lord so much that He not only gave Solomon understanding, He also gave him great wisdom so that many people from around the world came to meet Solomon and speak with him.



FOUR GREAT PRAYERS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT (PART 2)

The four prayers we learned about today were each a different type of prayer. In the boxes below, write down the biblical definition of the word listed in the first column, and then write what could have happened to each of the people if they had not prayed to God.

Type of Prayer	Biblical Definition	Bible Illustration	Possible Results Without Prayer
Mercy (Jacob)		For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. (Hosea 6:6)	
Affliction (Moses)		Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all. (Psalm 34:19)	
Prayer for a Special Need (Hannah)		When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; And my prayer went up to You, Into Your holy temple. (Jonah 2:7)	
Wisdom (Solomon)		If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. (James 1:5)	

PRAYER WORKS

Based on the four prayers in the Old Testament that we studied today, we learned that:

- 1. We can pray in any and every circumstance.
- 2. Prayer makes the impossible, possible.

P	lease	answer	the	fol	lowing	questions.

1. How would each of their situations have turned out if they hadn't prayed to Go	d?
Jacob	
Moses	
Hannah	
Solomon	
2. List three things you would like to pray for and explain why.	
a	
Ь	
C	
3. Describe a time when you or a loved one experienced the power of prayer.	
Testimonies of Answered Prayers	
a. Before a brother started pursuing Christ, he stole his friend's car. After he came	FM -
to believe, he was called before the judge to receive a punishment for his crime While the brother was on his way to the court, he prayed to God and asked for mercy, as he had committed the thievery before he came to know Christ and while he was under negative influences. To his surprise, the judge decided to le him go with a warning never to commit a crime again.	
If you were this brother, how would you have tried to fix this situation on your own? How would that have turned out?	

b. A sister was in great distress because her three small children were very sick with fever. She was alone in a foreign land, it was late at night, and there was no one around to help her. The sister knelt down and started praying for her children. Suddenly, her eldest daughter woke up, her fever gone. The daughter knelt next to the sister, and they both prayed over the two younger children. In a matter of minutes, the fever had disappeared among all three.



When you are sick or in pain, what is the first thing you usually do? How effective is that compared to praying?

c. A brother was making a dangerous journey to his new home. During this trip, he had to sail on a small boat, in the middle of a stormy ocean. As the waves, rain, and wind swept around him and threatened to capsize his boat, the brother prayed to God for deliverance. It was such a tiny vessel on violent waters that his chances for survival were slim to none. Hope was quickly disappearing. The brother commended himself to God, and promised to seek Him wholeheartedly if he was allowed to make it safely to land. The storm ceased, the waves calmed. Within days, he was safely ashore and on the way to his new home.



When things seem impossible to resolve, what feelings crowd around your heart and mind? What difference does prayer make in these situations?

d. During her senior year of high school, a sister faced a very important decision. On the one hand, she could choose to go to a very well-known university with no church or fellow members nearby. On the other hand, she could attend a less famous one close to a church. The decision was very difficult because she had always pictured herself going to the more prestigious school, and her classmates kept telling her what a great opportunity it was. Her parents and fellow church brothers and sisters, though, recommended that she stay closer to church, as college years were often full of spiritual trials, and she may need support from



fellow brothers and sisters. She prayed to God for the wisdom to make the best choice. In the end, her prayers directed her to choose the school near church, and it proved to be one of the best decisions she ever made.

When everyone around us seems to be giving us conflicting ideas, whom do we follow? How does God guide us through prayer when this happens?

KEEPING UP WITH PRAYER

It is important to keep up a habit of praying in order to maintain our relationship with God. Reflect upon your prayer habits, and then complete the sentences below.
I think prayer is important because
When I don't pray, I notice that
It is difficult to keep up prayer every day because
Some ways that I have seen other maintain a good habit of prayer are
Joine ways that I have seen other maintain a good habit of prayer are

E2 Year 2 Book 2 Lesson 7—Four Great Prayers in the Old Testament **Homework Assignment**

Name:	:					Paren	ıt signature:	Date:
Weekly Bible Reading: Bible Reading: Check each box when you complete							What I Learned from the Bible This Week	
that day's reading. Prayer: Check each box after you pray to God that day.					u pray	to Go	od that day.	1
	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
Read								2
Pray								
							Men	nory Verse
				Р	lease v	vrite d	own this we	ek's memory verse. (1 John 5:14)
_								
Four C	Great P	rayers	: For ea	ach of	the fol	lowing	g, explain w	hat they prayed for and what God granted them in the end.
1. Jaco	ob:							
2. Mo:	ses:							
3. Har								
 4. Solo								
Short .	Answe	er						
5. If yo	ou cou	ld ask	God fo	or anyt	hing ar	nd kno	ow that He w	vould grant your request, what would you pray for?