



# PRAYER

## Does anyone hear our prayers?

*“O Hearer of prayer, to you people of all sorts will come.”—Psalm 65:2.*

**WHAT PEOPLE SAY** It has been said that prayers seem to “rise no higher than the ceiling.” People undergoing suffering may especially be prone to doubt that their prayers are heard.

**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS** “The eyes of Jehovah [God] are on the righteous, and his ears listen to their supplication, but the face of Jehovah is against those doing bad things,” says the Bible. (1 Peter 3:12) Clearly, God does listen to prayers. He is, however, especially inclined to listen to those who follow his precepts. Regarding God’s willingness to hear us when we pray, another scripture states: “This is the confidence that we have toward him, that no matter what we ask according to his will, he hears us.” (1 John 5:14) Hence, sincere supplicants need to understand what types of request are likely to harmonize with God’s will.



## How should we pray?

---

**WHAT PEOPLE SAY** Adherents of various religions—such as Buddhism, Catholicism, Hinduism, and Islam—have been taught to use beads to recite and count their prayers.

**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS** Prayers should spring from the heart and be expressed with sincerity; they should not be learned by rote and repeated mechanically. The Scriptures urge us: “*When praying, do not say the same things over and over again* as the people of the nations do, for they imagine they will get a hearing for their use of many words. So do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need even before you ask him.”—Matthew 6:7, 8.

*“When praying, do not say the same things over and over again.”—Matthew 6:7.*

**WHY IT MATTERS** When prayers are offered in a manner not acceptable to God, the worshipper may well be wasting his time or possibly offending God. The Bible warns that prayers offered by those who refuse to comply with God’s will are “detestable” to him.—Proverbs 28:9.

## To whom should we pray?

---

**WHAT PEOPLE SAY** Some believers pray to Mary or to other entities, such as angels and individuals, who are revered as “saints.” Among these are “Saint” Anthony of Padua, who is said to look after “both spiritual and temporal needs,” and “Saint” Jude, who is considered to be a patron saint of “desperate situations.” Many worshippers pray to such “saints” and to angels in the hope that these entities will intercede for them before God.

**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS** True worshippers should pray to “our Father in the heavens.” (Matthew 6:9) The Bible urges us: “Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving, let your petitions be made known to God.”—Philippians 4:6. ■

*“Search for Jehovah [God] while he may be found. Call to him while he is near.”—Isaiah 55:6.*