

Prayer Power

Scripture Reading — Revelation 8:1-5

The smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of God's people, went up before God from the angel's hand.

Revelation 8:4 —

During a visit to the temple of Naristan in Japan, I witnessed a Buddhist fire ritual. Worshipers were invited to write their prayers on slats of wood. Amid chanting and the beat of drums, those sticks became the fuel for the ritual fire. The rising smoke symbolized the rising prayers of the worshipers to the “Unmovable Wisdom King.”

The scene reminded me of the worship described in Revelation 8, in which the twenty-four elders, symbolizing the church, hold bowls of incense representing the prayers of the people. An angel, holding a censer, offers the prayers up to God.

People everywhere have an inner need to pray. So, what's the difference between the prayers of Christ's people and the prayers offered through that fire ceremony? The difference is that Christian prayer is offered in the name of the triune God. It is prayer offered to the Father, through the Son, and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer is essentially conversation with God. Prayer as a human ritual isn't enough. Our prayer needs to be offered to the God who invites our fellowship, welcomes our praise, and is delighted to show repentant children the joy of his forgiving grace. Prayer needs to be directed to the God who truly listens to his children.

Prayer is so important that we need to practice it “continually” (see 1 Thessalonians 5:17).

Prayer

Lord, thank you for hearing our prayers. May they be a sweet offering of praise and intercession to you, our triune God, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Christianity](#), [Discipleship](#), [Prayer](#), [Praise](#), [God](#)

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