**Prayer Nuggets**

**1. Holy Smoke**

* In **Revelation 5:8** we see the prayers of the saints are contained in golden vessels.
* In **Revelation 8:3-4** we see that the smoke of the incense and the prayers of God’s people ascended to God.
* There is a golden altar up in Heaven just like there was a golden altar in the Tabernacle in Moses’ day.
* In the Tabernacle the incense used was a formula specified in **Exodus 30:34-35** which contained three sweet spices and frankincense.
* This sweet incense was holy unto God and God said that He would meet with Moses because of it (**Exodus 30:36**).
* Wow, isn’t that wonderful?
* Putting together these verses from the Books of Exodus and Revelation we see that God meets with (listens to) our prayers.
* What’s more is that **Psalm 141:2** tells us that prayer is like incense.
* The incense mentioned in Exodus was not to be used by the Israelites for personal use as it was holy unto the Lord and anybody who did would be cut off from their people (**Exodus 30:37-38**).
* Uzziah found this out. He was sixteen when he became king and at first was a good king but then pride got the better of him (**2 Chronicles 26:1-15**).
* He then burnt incense which was the role of the priest and became a leper until the day he died (**2 Chronicles 26:16-21**).
* So we can see that God took this incense (and therefore prayer) very seriously.
* Prayer is not something to be trifled with but it is holy unto the Lord.

**2. A Certain Place**

* In **Luke 11:1** Jesus was praying in a certain place.
* Many people, including myself, have a certain place where they go and pray and meet with their Heavenly Father.
* It is good to establish a place of prayer – a place where you do not get bogged down with the issues of life.
* I believe this place needs to be established by God.
* For example, Abraham had a place told to him by God (**Genesis 22:3, 4, 9**) which was Moriah (**Genesis 22:2**).
* After the miraculous substitutionary sacrifice Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah Jireh (**Genesis 22:14**).
* Jehovah Jireh means more than just ‘God will provide’.
* It means ‘the Lord will see (to it)’.
* This is why **Genesis 22:14** ends with “…In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen”.
* What shall be seen? Our salvation.
* We could say it another way, ‘On this mountain Jesus will be seen’. And He was!
* Sometimes we can be rather trite when we say “Jehovah Jireh my provider” and relate that just to God providing us with money or whatever else we need.
* It is much more than that.
* In fact when Abraham called the place Jehovah Jireh there was no reference to money! Abraham, by faith, saw the salvation that would come through the substitutionary death and resurrection of Jesus, the true Lamb of God.
* Moses had a place where he met with God. It was on Mt. Sinai (**Exodus 33:21-23**).
* I love that God said there was a place *by* Him (**Exodus 33:21**).
* God wants us to be *by* Him.
* Moses wanted to see God’s face but God’s glory was too great for him to see (**Exodus 33:20**).
* Moses was only allowed to see the ‘back parts’ of God (**Exodus 33:23**).
* Whilst this Hebrew word means ‘the back’ it can on occasion mean ‘a time to come’.
* This is interesting because it tells us that when we get in the place to meet with God He will, on occasion, show us ‘a time to come’ or ‘the future’.
* In other words God will reveal to us something that we need to know about our future.
* But as we have seen this only happened to Moses when he was in the presence of God in the place that God called him to.
* This seeing into the future was something Abraham experienced when on Mt. Moriah.
* Remember that **Genesis 22:14** ends with “…In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen”.
* What shall be seen? Our salvation.
* We could say it another way, ‘On this mountain Jesus will be seen’. And He was!
* Jesus said in **John 8:56** that Abraham rejoiced to see his [Jesus] day.
* But when did Abraham see this day?
* The only time was when he was on Mt. Moriah – Abraham saw into the future!
* What can we learn from all of this?
* God wants us to pray in a certain place, to be by Him and to experience His presence and when we do God will show us things to come so that we can pray prophetic prayers. Amen.

**3. What Prayer is Not**

* When Jesus taught about prayer He mentioned what it was not (**Matthew 6:5-7**).
* This must have come as quite a surprise to the Jews of the day who often prayed long and repetitive prayers.
* Prayer is not about getting from God for:
	+ ourselves (prayers of petition) or
	+ others (prayers of intercession)
* Yes, of course we can ask for things when necessary to do so but this is not the primary purpose of prayer.
* Jesus told us to seek first the Kingdom of God (**Matthew 6:33**).

**4. Try a Prayer Sandwich**

* A prayer sandwich is:
	+ Praise - Request - Thanksgiving

**5. Different Kinds of Prayer**

* As we have seen in another study there are different kinds of prayer – prayer of intercession, prayer of faith, prayer of petition etc.
* It is helpful to think of these kinds of prayer as kinds of keys.
* Keys need to be different because they need to open different locks.
* We need to know which key opens which lock.
* For example a car key won’t open your front door!
* Likewise, the prayer of intercession is needed to pray for someone’s salvation – not the prayer of faith.

**6. God Wants to Answer Prayer**

* A popular concept of prayer in some denominations is to ‘storm’ or ‘bombard’ heaven with our prayers.
* But why?
* God is more willing to give than we think (**Matthew 7:11**).
* Notice that God gives to those who ask Him, not bombard Him.
* Much of this teaching comes from a wrong understanding of the story about the unjust judge (**Luke 18:1-8**).

**7. Why Does Prayer Often Seem to Work Quicker for a New Christian?**

* Simply put, new Christians are ignorant of all the wrong teaching there is about prayer and they pray simply from the heart.
* And God sees their heart (**1 Samuel 16:7**).
* A new Christian is a new babe in Christ (**1 Corinthians 3:1**).
* It is important to notice that God does not correct them in their ignorance but encourages them by answering their prayer.
* They are then encouraged to study the Bible and grow (**1 Peter 2:2**).
* Likewise, when a small child is learning to walk or play a sport you do not expect them to be perfect the first time.
* You do not rebuke them for their mistakes but encourage them to progress.
* No parent who receives a birthday card from their four year old child would chastise them for wrong spelling or back-to-front letters.
* No, but you would expect better from a 14 year old child!
* A person who has been a Christian for ten or more years should have been taught how to grow in prayer.
* Sadly, this is not always the case and many are left to ‘work it out for themselves’.
* These Christians are maturing but incorrect learning hinders their prayer life.
* You can’t pray ‘baby’ prayers when you have been a Christian for twenty years and expect results.
* Likewise, a twenty-year old person should not expect to get a job if they fill in an application form with back-to-front letters and wrong spelling.

**8. When God Doesn’t Show Up**

* Sometimes during difficult situations when we pray God doesn’t answer our prayers – or at least that is what we think.
* We ask for God but He doesn’t speak.
* Those are often the times when we are being tested.
* A teacher doesn’t speak during a test – you use what the teacher has said during the lessons.
* Have you been paying attention in class?