

Message: 2026-06-20: Our Father אבינו

Introduction

This week we are celebrating our fathers. Now, I don't know if you have heard, but we are actually hosting a big Father's Day party here tomorrow.

Rain or shine, all are welcome in our big tent. We have enough room for us all. Come close out Father's Day with us, worshipping our Father together.

I think this sounds like a pretty fantastic way to celebrate, just saying.

Speaking of fathers, Rabbi Shmuel sent me this clip earlier in the week.

{insert 'Thank you, Dad' video} 1:11 length

So, thank you to all the dads. Being a dad is not an easy task, but it is a noble task.

It has been said that Mother's Day is a day we set aside for honoring moms, but Father's Day is a day we set aside to make sure dads know they can do better. That's not my intent today.

Honestly, I think we could ALL do better. None of us are perfect.

What I would like to do today is to take a little time to talk about our parashah, and to talk about prayer.

בעזרת השם

Be'ezrat Hashem.

With God's help.

So, be'ezrat Hashem, with God's help, we will accomplish together what He has for us this morning.

Parashah Korach

In last week's parashah, the people of Israel had listened to the bad report about the land and rebelled against Adonai which resulted in the 40yrs of wandering in the desert. The entire generation who left Egypt was destined to die in the desert and never enter the land of promise.

In this week's parashah, Parashah Korach, we are given a rather stark example of just how much damage a man can do to his family and friends when he is driven by a lack of gratitude and lack of contentment. Their entire families were destroyed, swallowed by the earth. They were killed by fire and by plague. We also see how their sin corrupted the community and festered there; causing further damage. This parashah is a dire warning against grumbling and complaining and rebellion.

Happy Father's Day. *Yom HaAv Sameakh*

However, in this parashah we also see some good examples of how to deal with adversity; how we should behave both during and after a really difficult time.

How It Begins

The verses I read earlier today from Bamidbar detail the early confrontational stages of Korach's rebellion. However, this rebellion began long before Korach confronts Moshe. By the time we get here, Korach has already gathered several other leaders, Datan and Aviram and On, along with 250 men of Israel. These men are not just Korach's buddies. They are described as "leaders of the community, key members of the council, men of reputation".

There had been some serious lashon hara going on for a seriously long time.

There is a lot that could be said about this, but my comment today is that it is evident that Korach had been complaining and campaigning for a while.

When these men finally gather the courage to come against Moshe, Moshe does two things.

First, he falls on his face.

This is neither the first nor the last time that Moshe reacts to the rebellion of the people of Israel by falling on his face.

Much of the Midrashic commentary interprets this as meaning that he was so grieved by this rebellious discontent after all of the intercession on behalf of the people during their other times of rebellion and disobedience that Moshe had reached the end of his rope, so to speak. He passed out from the shock. He was humiliated. He just couldn't take it any more. Maybe Moshe was burned out.

However, that interpretation does not explain the unnatural way that Moshe responds to this insurrection. All Moshe does in these verses is relay that Adonai will make a decision.

I interpret this to mean that Moshe, in falling on his face, humbled himself in prayer to Adonai. He gives the situation to Adonai, and Adonai instructs him how to proceed. This interpretation is also supported in the traditional Jewish commentary. This is a quote from Rashbam, which is a Hebrew acronym for RAbbi SHmuel Ben Meir, a grandson of Rashi.

HE FELL ON HIS FACE. In prayer, and there it was said to him what he would say to Korah.

Rashbam on Numbers

So, the first thing Moshe does is fall on his face in prayer. The second thing Moshe does is humbly follow G-d's instruction.

Even though Hashem had placed Moshe in the position as leader of Israel with more than enough authority to make a ruling on this matter, Moshe allows G-d to be the righteous judge. Adonai, who is fully mercy and truth (חסד ואמת), will rule on this matter. Justice belongs to Adonai.

When faced with serious conflict, Moshe turned to G-d in prayer, Adonai directed his path, and Moshe walked that path.

Our Lesson Today

This is what I would like to talk about today.

How do we become people of prayer who walk fearlessly in the way that our Father directs us to walk? How do we become people who seek that the Lord's will is done?

As disciples of Yeshua, I think a good place to start is with the prayer that Yeshua taught his disciples to pray.

Lord, Teach Us to Pray

One time Yeshua was in a certain place praying. As he finished, one of the talmidim said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray, just as Yochanan taught his talmidim."

Lukas [Luke] 11:1 (CJB)

That first word addressed to Yeshua can be translated as 'sir' and 'master', but it is overwhelmingly translated as 'lord' in the apostolic writings. The Hebrew used there is Adoni (אֲדֹנָי) and the Greek is koo-ree-us (kyrios). In habesorot, the gospels, we see Yeshua referred to as Rabbi, or my teacher, around 17 times and Lord 48 times. I think this is significant, because I think they are addressing him as Lord because they are seeking an authoritative decision. This disciple is asking Yeshua to teach them, like a Rabbi would, but he is addressing Him as Lord because Yeshua has greater authority than a teacher.

Prayer is one of the most natural and simple things we can do. At its heart, prayer is simply talking with God. It is part of what we were created for. So, is there really a need to study and learn more about something so basic? Although prayer is a simple concept, it is worthy of thoughtful study and lifelong growth.

In today's secular society people often feel unable to pray and assume that the ability to pray is natural to some and lacking in others. Yeshua's disciples had been raised as faithful Jews and had practiced prayer throughout their lives, but Yeshua's talmidim, even though they too felt inadequate in prayer, knew that Yeshua could teach them how to pray. They wanted to follow their Master's example and learn to pray as he prayed. They wanted to honor Yeshua. They recognized that there was still more to learn.

As followers of Yeshua today, we also desire to be true disciples. We want to follow his teachings, imitate his example, and speak his words in our daily lives. We long to pray the way he prayed.

We have two accounts of this prayer in habesorot. These passages in Matityahu and Lukas include what is widely known as the Lord's Prayer, since it was taught by the Lord, Yeshua.

In Lukas, this prayer is preceded by the story about Miriam sitting at Yeshua's feet instead of helping, and it is followed by a parable about persistence in prayer. In Matityahu, it is surrounded by teaching and instruction on how you should conduct yourself with authenticity and humility.

This the way the prayer is recorded in Lukas.

*Father, sanctified be Your Name,
Your kingdom come.
Give us each day our daily bread.
And forgive us our sins,
for we also forgive everyone indebted to us.*

And lead us not into temptation.

Lukas [Luke] 11:2–4 (CJB)

The besorah of Matityahu records the prayer this way, and this is the version that we recite.

*‘Our Father in heaven!
May your Name be kept holy.
May your Kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as in heaven.
Give us the food we need today.
Forgive us what we have done wrong,
as we too have forgiven those who have wronged us.
And do not lead us into hard testing,
but keep us safe from the Evil One.
For kingship, power and glory are yours forever.
Amen.’*

Matityahu [Matthew] 6:9–13 (CJB)

If you are familiar with Jewish prayer, it is apparent that the “Our Father” is a patently Jewish prayer that fits naturally into the context of synagogue liturgy. All of the elements of this prayer may be found in the Judaism of Yeshua’s day. The Avinu shows every indication of intent as a liturgical prayer. By the late first-century, at least, believers already prayed the Avinu liturgically at the three times of daily prayer.

The didache, *“The Teaching of the Lord to the Nations by the Twelve Apostles”*, includes this instruction:

“This is what you should pray three times a day”

Didache 8:3

Yeshua taught his talmidim to pray this prayer, and they took it to mean that they should incorporate it into their daily prayers. It was customary for talmidim to pray in the manner of their rabbi at the end of the daily times of prayer, and this was likely what Yeshua was instructing them to do here. It was a heartfelt prayer for Yeshua’s disciples because it was the unique prayer that Yeshua gave them.

This is why we have also begun including it in our Shabbat prayers.

Our Father Who is in Heaven

The first words this prayer, Our Father in heaven (Avinu sh·baShammayim), open many Hebrew prayers. That phrase, Avinu sh·baShammayim, is a common Jewish way to address God. Addressing God as “Father” draws attention to his compassion. This idea is in keeping with the gentle words of Psalm 103, which comforts us by saying,

“As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him”

(Psalm 103:13).

We say “who is in heaven” simply to differentiate God from a human father.

Holy is Your Name

The next two lines recall the first portion of the synagogue prayer known as the Kaddish. The Kaddish, a famous and ancient Jewish prayer, begins with the words, “Magnified and sanctified (Yitgadal v·yitkadash) be his great name throughout the world which he has created according to his will, and may he establish his Kingdom in your lifetime”

“Hallowed” means “sanctified” or “treated as holy.” Another way to word this line is “Let your name be sanctified.” It is not a declaration or expression of worship; it is a petition.

The Prophet Ezekiel teaches, When they came to the nations, wherever they came, they profaned my holy name, in that people said of them,

“These are the people of the LORD, and yet they had to go out of his land.”
(Ezekiel 36:20)

“Profaned” is the opposite of “sanctified.” As long as God’s people suffer in exile, it seems to the surrounding nations that God is unable or unwilling to fulfill his promises. When God acts on his promises and fulfills them, his name is sanctified:

I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes. (Ezekiel 36:23)

What does it look like when God redeems his people and sanctifies his name?

There is a miraculous ingathering:

"I will take you from the nations ... and bring you into your own land"

(Ezekiel 36:24).

There is a prophetic purification:

"I will sprinkle clean water on you"

(Ezekiel 36:25).

There is a spiritual regeneration:

"I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit"

(Ezekiel 36:26).

In other words, when Ezekiel spoke of God sanctifying his name, he was referring to the new covenant promises of the Messianic Kingdom. Some of these things we have already begun to experience. Most of it, however, we will see when the Messiah returns. This is also the meaning of Yeshua' words. As long as God's redemptive promises remain unfulfilled, his name is profaned. By asking for God's name to be sanctified, we plead for divine intervention in this world and the realization of God's prophetic promises.

Your Kingdom Come

Again, the Lord's Prayer bears similarity to the Kaddish, which asks, "May he establish his kingdom." (*וְיַמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתָהּ*) *v'yamlikh mulkhuteh*

This kingdom refers to the Messianic Era when all humanity will know and accept the sovereignty of God.

Zechariah 14 describes the messianic future, saying,

"The LORD will be king over all the earth"

Zechariah 14:9

Obadiah likewise says,

"The kingdom shall be the LORD's"

(Obadiah 21).

Do these verses imply that the LORD is not currently King?

NO.

The ancient Jewish interpreters were careful to clarify that God is and always has been King but that his kingdom is not yet revealed on earth. In the Messianic Era, “every knee shall bow”, which is why Yeshua refers to the Messianic Era as “the kingdom of God.”

More on this in a minute.

Your Will Be Done

Likewise, “Let your will be done” is a plea for the Messianic Era. In our present age, God hides himself. He refrains from rewarding and punishing. However, in the future world, God’s desires will be expressly carried out.

On Earth As It Is In Heaven

This phrase connects to all three of the previous requests. In other words, we should interpret this as:

- **Let your name be sanctified**—on earth, as it is in heaven.
- **Let your kingdom come**—on earth, as it is in heaven.
- **Let your will be done**—on earth, as it is in heaven.

In heaven the angels who surround God’s throne sanctify his name. In heaven the angels recognize him and revere him as King. In heaven the angels carry out his will perfectly and without hesitation. We desire to see these dynamics of heaven taking place here on earth. These things will happen at the second coming when we see Yeshua “*seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven*”.

So, the first long sentence of the Lord’s Prayer is a plea that the Messianic Era will arrive. This goes hand in hand with what Yeshua taught us: “*Seek first the kingdom.*”

It makes perfect sense that he would tell us to pray in this way.

Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

“Give me something to eat.”

Is that what Yeshua truly meant, or is there a deeper meaning?

The English phrase “daily bread” seems straightforward. However, many modern translations contain footnotes explaining that this phrase can also be translated “bread for tomorrow.”

How can it mean both?

The Greek text is not that clear. The Greek word typically translated as “daily” is *epiousion* (ἐπιούσιον - ep-ee-oo'-see-us) . But this is not the normal way to say “daily” in Greek. What’s more, it is not even a valid Greek word. Even the early church fathers who natively spoke Greek acknowledged that the word was made up. It does not appear in any other Greek literature.

The fourth-century theologian Jerome and several other church fathers occasionally referred to a document called the Gospel of the Hebrews. It was a collection of sayings and stories about Yeshua used by his Jewish disciples, written in the Hebrew language. Unfortunately, this document no longer exists. We only have references to it.

According to Jerome, this version used the Hebrew word for “tomorrow,” not “daily.” In all, the evidence is quite strong that “tomorrow” is the correct reading.

While scholars are aware of this, people are so accustomed to the interpretation in the King James that anything else would seem wrong to them.

Yeshua taught us not to be anxious about tomorrow. Why would we ask for tomorrow’s bread today? But the “bread of tomorrow” is not talking about regular food. As Jerome explained,

The Hebrew Gospel according to Matthew reads, “Give us today the bread of tomorrow,” in other words, the bread that you will give us in your kingdom, give today. So this “tomorrowly” bread is the bread of the Messianic Kingdom. The kingdom is frequently described in terms of a great banquet. Someone reclining at a meal with Yeshua once reacted to his teachings by exclaiming, “Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!” (Luke 14:15). In the book of Revelation Yeshua promises that “to the one who conquers [he] will give some of the hidden manna” (Revelation 2:17).

So, by asking for the bread of tomorrow to come to us today, we are asking for the substance of the Messianic Era to be present in our daily lives even as we live and work in the current age.

We also express the hope that today is the day when we will finally feast at the lavish banquet of the Messianic Kingdom.

And forgive us our debts as we forgive those who Have sinned against us

When people wrong us, we often feel that they owe us something—that they are responsible for the hurt they have caused. In a similar way, when we sin, we incur a debt before God.

However, this phrase in the Lord's Prayer is not merely a request for individual forgiveness. Like many traditional Jewish prayers, it is expressed in the collective voice, speaking on behalf of the entire community.

Yeshua taught his followers to be generous in extending forgiveness and to make forgiveness a priority. By extending grace and forgiveness to others, we release them from the debts they owe us. In turn, we ask God to show the same mercy toward us.

We pray for him to free the world from its bondage to sin and brokenness and to send the Messiah to bring complete and lasting redemption.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil

The Hebrew word for temptation, *nisa-yon*, also means “test” or “trial.” This term refers to difficulties that test our faith. The idea behind this is not to ask that God will prevent us from encountering tests but rather that we will overcome them. What Yeshua meant by “lead us not into” was that we not be given over to their influence.

This line bears a striking resemblance to other Jewish prayers.

For example, one such prayer said in the morning asks,
*Lead us not into the power of sin,
Nor into the power of disobedience or iniquity,
Nor into the power of trials,
Nor into the power of disgrace;
And do not let the evil inclination rule us.*

Many Jewish prayers also ask that we be delivered from evil things, particularly influences that may harm us or sway us to turn away from God. Prominent among these is the “flesh,” the animalistic and selfish drive within each person. In Jewish terminology this is the “evil inclination” or *yetzer hara*

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever

This phrase, too, has a common Jewish form, most likely inspired by the blessing of King David in 1 Chronicles 29:11:

Yours, Adonai, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours. The kingdom is yours, Adonai; and you are exalted as head over all.

1 Chronicles 29:11 (CJB)

This line does not appear in the oldest manuscripts. It appears to be an addition from an early generation of Yeshua's followers. The early Jewish followers of Yeshua understood that the Lord's Prayer looked forward to and expressed hope for the glorious arrival of God's kingdom. The ancient Hebrew prophets spoke of a time when the Messiah would bring peace, abundance, and the full revelation of God's presence—the Messianic Kingdom.

Yeshua began his ministry by proclaiming that the kingdom of God was near and would be revealed as people turned their hearts toward God in repentance. God alone is the true King, yet his reign is not fully visible in the world today. Instead, humanity continues to experience the effects of sin through materialism, corruption, suffering, and death.

Yeshua began a transformative movement of people whose true citizenship belongs not to the present world system, but to the coming kingdom of God. We do not submit our ultimate allegiance to the ways of this world; instead, we remain faithful and look forward to the arrival of our King—the God of Israel and his Messiah—who will restore what rightfully belongs to him.

Today, just as the first Jewish disciples of Yeshua did, we proclaim with faith and expectation: "Yours is the kingdom."

Amen - אמן

Amen is not a conclusion. It does not mean 'the end'.

The Hebrew root letters (mem - nun) mean "truth, faithfulness," which is why the Hebrew word אמן means "It is true, so be it, may it become true" which is why it is used in English as well as Hebrew by those listening to a prayer.

The saying of "Amen" is equivalent to reciting the blessing itself, and such religious value has been attached to it, that it has been said to be superior to the benediction that occasioned the response.

A speaker's "Amen" to his own prayer is itself superfluous, but it is useful as a cue for others to respond with "Amen". Sometimes the person saying the blessing invites the congregation to respond "Amen" by saying *ve-imru Amen*, or *ve-nomar Amen* ("and say Amen" or "let us say Amen").

The use of Amen here is a clear signal that there was an expected response.

Personal Prayer

With the Avinu, Yeshua was not simply adding another liturgical prayer.

The Avinu is both a communal and personal expression of faith. Each section of the prayer points toward the coming Messianic Kingdom: the sanctification of God's name, the establishment of His kingdom, the fulfillment of His will on earth, the provision of "bread for tomorrow" (understood as the blessings of the Messianic Age), forgiveness, deliverance from trials, and the ultimate revelation of God's rule and glory.

It is important to keep in mind that even if this was intended as a formal part of prayer for the disciples of Yeshua, that does not mean that this was not to be a heartfelt prayer.

Praying without understanding or intention, without kavanah, is meaningless. In Matityahu, right before the Avinu, Yeshua teaches how to pray and warns against prayer that is not for the right reasons.

I have a short video from Rabbi Shalom Arush, a chasidic rabbi of the school of Breslov, that illustrates this point.

{insert image and video} 1:18 length

Put your heart into all of the prayers you offer, but it is important to speak from your heart if you want to have a connection with the Creator, Avinu Sh'bashamayim.

Like I said, praying without understanding or intention, without kavanah, is meaningless. When Moshe fell on his face, he did so with kavanah.

Final Admonishment

The Lord's Prayer is ultimately about the kingdom of G-d. It is a prayer for Adonai to rule and reign on this earth, just as he already does in heaven. What

we are asking for is to live according to His righteous rule; His righteous judgement.

*Trust in ADONAI with all your heart;
do not rely on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge him;
then he will level your paths.*

Mishlei [Proverbs] 3:5-6 (CJB)

This is what Moshe did in Parasha Korach. He trusted Adonai with his whole heart. He fell on his face before Adonai. It was quite obviously a prayer from his heart. He did not rely on his own understanding or authority or feelings. He acknowledged Adonai, and he walked according to the way that Adonai showed him. Adonai made his paths straight.

The next verse in Mishlei warns us against relying too heavily on ourselves.

*Don't be conceited about your own wisdom;
but fear Adonai, and turn from evil.*

Mishlei [Proverbs] 3:5-6 (CJB)

When we look at the story of Korach, we see the opposite approach to Moshe in action. He was dissatisfied with Adonai's choices for community leadership and with the portion that Adonai had given him. He did not acknowledge Adonai. He relied on his own understanding. He was conceited about his own wisdom. He directed his own path, and he brought as many people as he could along with him. It led to destruction and death and sickness in his family and in the community of Israel.

*The house of the wicked will be destroyed,
but the tent of the upright will flourish.
There can be a way which seems right to a person,
but at its end are the ways of death.*

Mishlei [Proverbs] 14:11-12 (CJB)

Following his own path is what led to Korach's demise.

Moshe trusted Adonai completely, sought Him in prayer, and followed His direction. Korach relied on his own wisdom, rejected God's appointed order, and led others into rebellion, resulting in destruction.

Trust God wholeheartedly, seek His guidance in prayer, and walk according to His will rather than personal understanding.

The greatest gift we as fathers can give our families is to be men who turn to Our Father in Heaven at all times. The best decision that we can make is to put all our faith, by this I mean the faithful way in which we walk, in Adonai. Let Him lead us and direct us.

As talmidei Yeshua we should also be people who turn to Avinu Shabashamayim at all times and in all situations. Let Him lead us and direct us. By example and with instruction we teach all of those that Hashem has placed in our lives to do the same.

ve-imru Amen

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