

Prayer 4: Summary

1. We have discussed the fact that prayer is not merely an opportunity to ask the Creator for something but rather an attempt to create a partnership with the Creator of the World, in a way that is similar to an encounter between two people, each one with a different set of desires. In order for them their encounter to succeed they must make their desires correspond, to want similar results.

2. The encounter with the Creator enhances the power of life within me. The Creator constantly continues to give life to all the creatures, and my connection to Him (through prayer and by matching my will to His) forms a link between me and the "source of energy," or the "source of life." As is written, "You who cling to your God are all alive today" [Deuteronomy 4:4].

3. As human beings, we serve as representatives of the rest of creation, which remains "silent" and does not have the ability to recognize its Creator (not even living creatures have any way to recognize and show an awareness of God). All of creation acts as "a huge single living organism," and humanity serves as the "mouth" for the entire world. (It is written, "Man is a tiny world, and the universe is a huge man.")

4. Since all the mitzvot must be performed based on a belief in the Creator of the World (and not simply because "these are important actions for the existence of the world and can be arrived at by human logic"), whenever I lack something, such as a livelihood, good health, or something in any other realm, or if I simply want to improve the world in accordance with the commands of the Creator, the very fact that I pray to the Creator shows that I accept Him and want to observe His commandments.

And all of this shows how important prayer is for humanity as a whole.

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"Even though belief in G-d is not mentioned in the list of Seven Mitzvot, there is no doubt that belief is required. After all, if one does not observe all Seven Mitzvot specifically because G-d commanded them in the Torah, the Rambam explicitly writes at the end of Chapter 8 that he or she is not considered to have observed them and is not considered a righteous person among the Gentiles. It is thus clear that a Gentile must believe in G-d and believe that He gave the Torah. The person must therefore ask for a livelihood and good health and so on exclusively from God." [Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Igrot Moshe, Orach Chaim volume 2, 25.]