



THE INTELLECTUAL OBLIGATION TO PRAY – PART 2

I. No Specific Biblical Requirement Regarding Frequency or Format of Prayer

1. Rambam, Laws of Prayer 1:1

<p>It is a positive Torah commandment to pray every day, as [Exodus 23:25] states: "You shall serve G-d, your L-rd." Tradition teaches us that this service is prayer, as [Deuteronomy 11:13] states: "And serve Him with all your heart" and our Sages said: Which is the service of the heart? This is prayer. The number of prayers is not prescribed in the Torah, nor does it prescribe a specific formula for prayer. Also, according to Torah law, there are no fixed times for prayers.</p>	<p>מִצְוַת עֲשֵׂה לְהִתְפַּלֵּל בְּכָל יוֹם שְׁנַאֲמַר (שְׁמוֹת כג כה) "וְעַבַדְתֶּם אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם". מִפִּי הַשְּׁמוּעָה לְמַדּוֹ שְׁעִבּוּדָה זֶה הִיא תְּפִלָּה שְׁנַאֲמַר (דְּבָרִים יא יג) "וְלִעֲבֹדוֹ בְּכָל לְבַבְכֶם" אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים אִי זֶה הִיא עֲבֹדָה שֶׁבֶלֶב זֶה תְּפִלָּה. וְאִין מְגִן הַתְּפִלוֹת מִן הַתּוֹרָה. וְאִין מִשְׁנָה הַתְּפִלָּה הַזֹּאת מִן הַתּוֹרָה. וְאִין לְתְּפִלָּה זְמַן קָבֹועַ מִן הַתּוֹרָה :</p>
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2. Kesef Mishnah, loc. cit.

<p>...nor does it prescribe a specific formula for prayer: That is to say, the format of prayer itself...rather, [from the standpoint of the Written Torah], one would pray in a spontaneous and free manner.</p>	<p>וְאִין מִשְׁנָה הַתְּפִלָּה הַזֹּאת מִן הַתּוֹרָה. כְּלוּמַר מִטְּבַע הַתְּפִלָּה הַזֹּאת וְהוּא מְלֻשׁוֹן וְשִׁנְתָם אֵלָּא בְּאֵי זֶה נֹסֵף שִׁיזְדַּמְן לְאָדָם בּוֹ .</p>
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II. Prayer Guidelines for Bnei Noach

3. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, Igrot Moshe, Orach Chayim 2:25

<p>As to whether a Ben Noach is obligated in prayer, clearly, he is not, because prayer is not enumerated among the mitzvot that Bnei Noach were commanded, as listed in TB Sanhedrin 56a, nor is it mentioned by the Rambam in Chapter 9 of the Laws of Kings, where he lists the mitzvot that Bnei Noach are required to perform. Regarding whether a Ben Noach has fulfilled a mitzvah when he or she prays to the Blessed L-rd, it appears as such, as it is expressed in the verse (Isaiah 56:7), "for My House will be a house of prayer for all of the peoples", and, as</p>	<p>לְעִנְיַן בֶּן נֹחַ אִם מְחֻיֵּב בְּתְפִילָה פְּשוּט שְׂאִינוּ מְחֻיֵּב, דְּאִינוּ נִמְנוּ בְּמִצְוֹת דְּנִצְטוּוּ בְּנֵי נֹחַ בְּסִנְהֶדְרִין נ"ו/ב וְכֵן לֹא הִזְכֵּר בְּרַמְב"ם פ"ט מֵהַלְכוֹת מַלְכִים שְׁחוֹשֵׁב מִצְוֹת שְׁנִצְטוּוּ בְּנֵי נֹחַ. לְעִנְיַן אִם יֵשׁ לוֹ מִצְוָה כְּשֶׁמִּתְפַּלֵּל לַהֲשִׁי"ת נִרְאֶה שִׁישׁ לוֹ כְּמִפּוֹרֵשׁ בִּקְרָא בִישְׁעִיה (נ"ו/ז') כִּי בְּתֵי בֵּית תְּפִילָה לְכָל הָעַמִּים וּפִירֵשׁ"י שֶׁם וְלֹא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְבַדָּם, וְאִם הוּא לְגֵרִים שֶׁהִתְגִּירוּ הֵם כִּיִּשְׂרָאֵל מִמֶּשׁ זֶה הִיא נִקְרָא לְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְבַדָּם לְכֵן בְּרוּר שְׂקָאֵי גַם לְבְנֵי נֹחַ שֶׁלֹּא נִתְגִּירוּ וּמִקִּיָּימִים רַק מִצְוֹת שֶׁהִיבִין בְּנֵי</p>
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<p>Rashi explains there, “and not only for Israel alone, but for <i>gerim</i> as well”. If, by “<i>gerim</i>”, Rashi implies people who have converted, then it would mean that the Temple is only for Israel (since converts are considered “Israel”). Therefore, the verse must be referring to non-Jews who have not converted but are fulfilling the commandments incumbent upon Bnei Noach. If so, here is explicit proof that even though they are exempt from the commandment to pray, when they do pray, they earn the reward of a mitzvah.</p> <p>(Regarding public prayer, e.g., in schools), if the <i>nusach</i> (text) was composed by priests, even if there is not even a hint to their faith, one should not say it, whether by himself or with non-Jews, since the text likely accords with their faith.</p> <p>A Ben Noach, who is considered as “one who is not commanded but nevertheless performs a mitzvah” when he or she prays, if he or she does so in thought but does not verbalize the prayer (which would prevent a Jew from fulfilling the mitzvah or prayer), he or she does not receive reward.</p>	<p>נח, וא"כ הרי הוא כמפורש שאף שפטורין מתפילה מ"מ כשמתפללין להשי"ת תעושיין מצוה.</p> <p>אם ניסח התפילה חברו כומרים שאף שאין בה שום רמז ניר לאמונתם אין לישראל לאומרה אף בעצמו וכ"כ עם הנכרי דממילא היו נוסח זה לאמונתם.</p> <p>בבן נח שיש לו שכר כאינו מצווה ועושה כשמתפלל איך הוא כשמתפלל בהרהור שישראל אינו יוצא כו' פשוט שכיון שאינו עושה כדין המצוה גם בן נח לא יקבל שום שכר.</p>
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III. Intellectual Obligation: Prayer and Blessings

4. TB Tractate Sotah 10a/b

<p>“And he shall plant [vayitta] the tents of his palace between the seas and the beautiful holy mountain; and he shall come to his end, and none shall help him” (Daniel 11:45), indicating that the word <i>vayitta</i>, and he planted, is also used to indicate pitching tents.</p> <p>The verse there states: “And he planted an <i>eshel</i> in Beersheba, and called there [vayyikra] on the name of the L-rd, the Everlasting G-d” (Genesis 21:33). Reish Lakish said: Do not read this word literally as “vayyikra,” and he called, but rather as</p>	<p>“ויטע אהלי אפדנו וגו'”.</p> <p>“ויקרא שם בשם ה' אל עולם”. אמר ריש לקיש: אל תיקרי “ויקרא”, אלא “ויקריא”. מלמד שהקריא אברהם אבינו לשמו של הקדוש ברוך הוא בפה כל עובר ושב. כיצד? לאחר שאכלו ושתו, עמדו לברכו. אמר להם: וכי משלי אכלתם? משל אלהי עולם אכלתם! הודו ושבחו וברכו למי שאמר והיה העולם.</p>
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<p>vayyakri, and he caused others to call. This teaches that Abraham our forefather caused the name of the Holy One, Blessed be He, to be called out in the mouth of all passersby. How so? After the guests of Abraham ate and drank, they arose to bless him. He said to them: But did you eat from what is mine? Rather, you ate from the food of the G-d of the world. Therefore, you should thank and praise and bless the One Who spoke and the world was created. In this way, Abraham caused everyone to call out to G-d.</p>	
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5. Genesis 39:2

<p>And his master saw that the L-rd was with him, and that the L-rd made all that he did to prosper in his hand.</p>	<p>וַיִּמְצָא יוֹסֵף תָּנוּ בְּעֵינָיו נִשְׁעָרַת אֱתוֹ וַיִּפְקְדֵהוּ עַל-בֵּיתוֹ וְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא נָתַן בְּיָדוֹ:</p>
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6. Rashi, loc. cit.

<p>that the L-rd was with him: for the Name of Heaven was constantly on his lips.</p>	<p>כִּי ה' אִתּוֹ. שֵׁם שָׁמַיִם שָׁגוֹר בְּפִיו:</p>
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7. TB Tractate Berachot 35a

<p>Simple logic: it is forbidden to enjoy the benefits of this world without making a blessing.</p>	<p>סְבָרָא הוּא: אָסוּר לֹא לְאָדָם שְׂיִהְיֶה מִן הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה בְּלֹא בְרָכָה</p>
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8. Rashi, loc. cit.

<p>The logic is, if one derives benefit from the world, he or she must thank the One who created that benefit.</p>	<p>סְבָרָא הוּא דְכִיוּן דְנִהְיֵה צָרִיךְ לַהוֹדוֹת לַמִּי שֶׁבְרָאֵם</p>
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