

## 9 Categories of Prayer

Ruth Moffett, *Du'a: On Wings of Prayer*

“A careful analysis, by this author, reveals that there are nine ways in which man turns his heart to God or practices “the presence of the spirit of God.” P. 17

1. Supplication. “This is a humble, earnest entreaty, with a sense of dependence upon what is greater than ourselves. ‘He verily loveth the one that turneth towards Him.’”
2. Compunction. “An uneasiness of mind arising from wrongdoing. It is the sting of conscience, a sense of remorsefulness.”
3. Aspiration. “The longing, usually unexpressed, for what is above one’s present attainment, a yearning for what is pure, noble, and spiritual. . . . We all have these longings within us that lead us to pray for guidance and assistance from on High.”
4. Intercession. “an entreaty on behalf of others”
5. Gratitude. “Thankfulness and appreciation for favors and bounties received. Gratefulness wells up in the heart and finds expression in prayer.”
6. Meditation. “We are told that meditation is continued, concentrated thought and reflection upon the mysteries of inner and outer phenomena.”
7. Oblation. “This may be described as the act of offering something as a sacrifice in worship. . . . advanced souls have learned to sacrifice the self-consciousness to the God-consciousness and to give the self in hallowed consecration and joyous dedication. ‘In a word,’ affirms ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, ‘nearness to God necessitates sacrifice of self, severance and the giving up of all to Him. Nearness is likeness.’ Service to others without thought of selfish gains, is oblation to God. ‘This is worship: to serve mankind and minister to the needs of the people. Service is prayer.’ P. 19
8. Adoration. “It is the act of rendering divine homage, of expressing veneration and reverence to the Divine Being. It is a joyful, spontaneous outpouring of deep feelings of love, admiration, awe, and devotion.
9. Communion. “This is a combination of several of the foregoing urges. It is the spirit’s interchange of inter-communion with God. It is conversation with God. The soul longs to receive wisdom and open to the illumination of the Christos, Logos or Divine Spirit. ‘As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.’”

### Discussion

‘Abdu’l-Bahá encourages us to “chant *supplications* together”.

- In addition to *supplications*, which other categories of prayer lend themselves to group chanting?
- Which categories are suitable for devotional gatherings?