

vi. DIVORCE (Mt. 5:31-32; [5:33-37—breaking oaths] also 19:3-10).

a. Now Yeshua moves to a broader application of the Torah, beyond the 10 commandments.

This comes from Deuteronomy 24:1.

—The term for the certificate of divorce *sefer k'ritut* (כְּרִיתוּת), is ironic. Today it is called “a get.” The verb *karat* (כָּרַת), meaning “to cut” is part of the phrase, “to make a covenant,” (literally, “to cut a covenant”). The divorce is a “cutting off” (a breaking) of the covenant of marriage.

—The offense given by the wife to her husband implies sexual immorality (*ervat* (עֲרֻבָה) = means literally “nakedness”). Since adultery was punishable by death, it may refer to some other indecency and some soften it by translating it as “indecency,” or, “failing to please him,” (Etz Hayim), “finds something obnoxious about her,” (The Torah, Plaut).

—For the first husband, the woman is considered to be defiled (*t'me-ah* (טְמֵאָה)—she is off limits to him because she was involved in another relationship.

Yeshua's interpretation bears this out—the woman who has been divorced for frivolous reasons is considered to be an adulteress.

— The original husband was forbidden from re-marrying his wife after she had been divorced again or widowed.

The Torah prohibits “musical marriages,” i.e. wife swapping (Nachmanides in “The Torah,” Plaut). The implication is that **this is a concern for the woman's rights**.

—This was not the Torah instituting divorce. Rather it seems to be a desire to regulate what was already taking place.

—The infraction by the husband is considered as a “*to'evah*,” “an abomination” that defiles the land [literally, “causes the land to be sinful,” (*ta-chati* (טֵאָחֵת)).

—The following context (24:5) gives us additional insight. God considered marriage to be precious and deserving investment of time/energy to build it up during the first year.

b. The rabbis in Yeshua's day followed 2 basic schools of thought on this issue:

—The school of Shammai took a strict interpretation of the Torah, emphasizing **indecent** matter (immorality).

—The school of Hillel took a very liberal reading, emphasizing indecent **matter**, anything such as burning his food (JNTC, Gittin 9:10). The ruling of the school of Hillel became Halachah (law), but the Talmud states that “when a man divorces his first wife, even the altar sheds tears,” (JNTC).

g. In his more expansive teaching (Mt. 19:3-10), Yeshua explains that the granting of the right to divorce was never considered Plan A.

—What is “normal” in God's eyes is the fact that God fashioned Adam and Eve to be one flesh.

Divorce is acting against God's order of creation.

—Yeshua puts the responsibility/ blame for an inappropriate divorce on the husband (“he ... commits adultery,” Mt. 5:31; 19:8).

d. There are two clear grounds for divorce:

—Adultery (sexual immorality in general) means that the marriage covenant bonds are broken

—When an unbeliever married to a believer wants to get out of the marriage, the believer is free (meaning to receive the divorce and as well, re-marry I Cor. 7:12-16).

e. Other possible grounds for divorce/re-marriage (they need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis):

—Where there is a clear case of abuse, one can make a strong case that the marriage bond has been broken

—When a person divorced prior to coming to faith, this sin (inappropriate divorce) can be viewed as being “under the blood”—forgiven and cleansed.

q. **Even when there are clear grounds for divorce, the most important principle to bear in mind is the Lord’s commitment to reconciliation.** To the extent possible, the preferred route is restoration.

h. **The legalistic approach of once married, always married**—there are those who teach that a divorced person has to go back to the original spouse, since the marriage bond cannot be broken. This clearly misses the point of the Torah in Deuteronomy 24:1-4.

—God hates divorce (Mal. 2:13-16)

—Sin has to be repented of

—The Lord extends his chesed to repentant sinners.

vii. OATHS (5:33-37):

a. It is appropriate to swear an oath—God himself swore an oath to the Patriarchs (**Gen. 22:16**)

—“**Swearing an oath**” by the Lord is another way of expressing the phrase “**making a covenant**,” (Gen. 24:7).

—The Lord is committed to “confirming/establishing” the oath He swore. The oath is not merely a collection of words. Because it is his word, He is determined to carry his oath to conclusion (Gen. 26:3).

—The seriousness of his commitment to his oath is described by the phrase, “I swore with an uplifted hand,” (Exod. 6:8/Num. 14:30, NIV, literally, “I raised my hand”). When the Lord speaks about his hand moving in one form or another, this language expresses his power being at work.

—When someone swears an oath, there are powerful words.

b. The Torah mandated that oaths could only be taken in the Lord’s name, because it would be a reminder that **God is watching the transaction.**

—**He will bring judgment** upon the person who breaks the oath (Deut. 6:13; 10:20).

—The Torah takes as a given that the Israelites will swear oaths.

g. The Israelites were warned not to swear “carelessly” or “falsely.”

—**The Lord expected people to fulfill their oaths (Num. 30:2-10).** When Israelites undertook vows, they completed them by bringing a “peace/fellowship offering,” (**Lev. 7:11-16**). We see that the early believers participated in these special vows (Acts 18:18).

—A person who swore “carelessly”/rashly (Lev. 5:4) was guilty of sin and was required to bring a “sin” offering (an offering of purification=**tafj**). This was true when a person did so in **ignorance/ weakness (sh’gagah=hggv)**. Atonement was available (Lev. 5:5-13).

—A person who swore “falsely” was guilty of “**profaning**” the name of God (**Lev. 19:12**). **Profaning (chilul= lwlj)** the Lord’s name brought on God’s severe judgment.

—“Swearing falsely” with God’s name transgresses the 3rd of the 10 commandments where people are prohibited “taking [literally, “lifting up [on our lips]] the Lord’s name in vain” (Exod. 20:7). This is somewhat ambiguous and because of that, it covers both perjury and also an unnecessary/frivolous use of God’s name.

—The rabbis (e.g. Ibn Ezra) explained that **using God’s name in a false oath brings God’s name into disrepute.**

—Because of the principle of building a fence around the Torah, the rabbis mandated that pronouncing God’s name should be avoided and instead be replaced by “HaShem” (the name), “HaMakom” (the Place). We see some of that in Scripture (e.g. the NT) where “the Name” is equivalent to “God,” (Acts 9:14).

—The **point of the commandment** is not the need for euphemism (substituting a different word for “God”), but **living in truth/ integrity (walking in the Light, I Jn. 1:7-9)**.

—This is especially urgent for us who are believers. We sometimes **speak about God’s leading, and allow it to cover up our issues**. We do not always convey the human dimensions (ie. we go through conflict, therefore, God told us to leave).

d. A special category of making vows was a *neder=rdn*, a “votive vow,” directed towards God alone (e.g. Num. 6:2, the “Nazirite vow”—a vow of consecration/separation).

e. Yeshua **addresses the abuses** of making oaths/vows. By the 1st century, Judaism developed an elaborate hierarchy of laws (casuistry) relating to taking oaths—an entire tractate of the Mishnah was devoted to this subject (Shebu’ot).

—What Yeshua is describing is a system where some oaths were less binding (e.g. heaven, earth, Jerusalem, one’s head) versus swearing by God’s name.

—Yeshua explains that each of those other items are still under God’s rule and so swearing by them is equivalent to swearing by God’s name.

—His point is simply that his disciples’ words should be characterized by integrity so that no formal assurance would be needed. The listener should be able to trust the truthfulness of our words without us taking oaths (Blomberg).

—The essence is “let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ [which is also described by the rabbis—“Let your yes and no be both righteous, Bava Metzia 49:a).

—Yeshua’s disciples did not interpret Yeshua’s words to prohibit oaths/vows (Acts 18:18; 21:23).

viii. EYE FOR EYE:

a. The phrase “eye for eye” is often misunderstood, being taken as an encouragement to engage in rank revenge and blood feuds (e.g. Gandhi’s statement, “If we carried out ‘eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth,’ then we would all be blind and toothless”).

b. The phrase comes from a context of instructions for appropriate justice (Exod. 21:22-26; Lev. 24:18-22; Deut. 19:15-21):

—This defines the **principle that the punishment must fit the crime**. It is a re-affirmation of the Noahic Covenant imposition of capital punishment for murder (Gen. 9:6).

—It is understood as guidelines given to the judge who adjudicates the crime/conflict.

g. In Deut. 19 the sub-context is that to ensure that the punishment fits the crime, there must be two **impartial witnesses**. —Furthermore, it is the judge’s responsibility to ferret out the truth or falsehood of the testimony.

Justice being carried out promotes a fear of God among the people and because of that, justice must be severe, to “purge” (*ba’ar=rob*, literally, “to burn”).

d. In Lev. 24:17-22, we see additional aspects of this principle:

—The law **applies both to the people** of Israel and to the alien (foreign Gentiles) who lived among them.

—**different criteria are used** in punishing a crime committed: capital punishment for a murder of a human versus financial restitution for a killing of an animal.

e. In Exodus 21:22-26, we see a similar version of the application of this principle:

—(22:26) A blinding of a servant does not call for the blinding of an offender, but instead, a release of the servant.

—If a pregnant woman is hurt because she is caught in a fight, the outcome may look differently:

If she is harmed herself, then the “eye for an eye” is used as the standard for punishment.

If the impact is only on the baby/fetus, the punishment is meted based on the husband’s demand in court

—Some in Judaism view this as a permission for abortion to save the mother’s life since the death of the fetus is not considered “murder,” and that the punishment is merely a monetary one (Rashi etc.).

—However, this is an “eisogesis” (reading into the text what is not there). The Torah simply states that the accidental death of a fetus versus the death of the mother are punished differently.

—Furthermore, Scripture elsewhere is emphatic in stating that a fetus is not merely a collection of biological tissues. God is actively involved in the life of the fetus as a dedicated human being (e.g. Ps. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:4-5).

h. What these *lex talionis* (‘eye for eye’) principles were designed to do was bring about God’s order to a lawless nation of ex-slaves and to bring his justice.

i. Yeshua is not looking to reverse the teaching of the Torah regarding justice. Instead, He is addressing common misconception about how relationships between people need to take place.

i. Rabbinic law (Halachah) interpreted the teaching of Torah of reciprocal justice (*middah k'neged middah*) as “mandating monetary compensation,” The Talmud (*Bava Kamma*, 83b-84a), in opposition to the Sadducees who argued for a literal retaliation in kind. The rabbis based on the argument that “eye for an eye” could not be applied literally in some cases (i.e. in blind offenders).

—We cannot minimize the need for **reciprocal justice** because the Torah states that following that principle would **remove evil from their community and would serve to compensate the victims** (Deut. 19:19).

—The principle of “eye for an eye” was not meant as a means of providing vengeance for the victim or encouraging vigilante action. Scripture is emphatic that vengeance belongs to God (Deut. 32:35) and the motivating factor should be that of love for their fellow man (Lev. 19:17-18, Wikip.).

k. Yeshua is not looking to reverse the teaching of the Torah regarding justice (vs. “**abrogates an Old Testament command** in order to intensify and internalize its application,” (Blomberg). **We need to understand what Yeshua is NOT saying and what He is saying.**

—Yeshua is NOT abrogating the commands of Torah. In a legal context (which this seems to be), those with judicial authority still need to judge properly, in proportion to the crime. They may rule with mercy, however, the NT is clear that God establishes judicial authority to punish the wicked (**Rom. 13:4**).

—Yeshua is addressing common misconception about how relationships between people need to take place. His instruction, “**turn the other cheek**” **has been perverted to mean that believers need to be doormats.**

—What Yeshua states here is not an absolute command [“always do this; never do this”], because there **are times when believers must resist evil**—e.g. Paul refused to be treated cavalierly because that would demean the cause of Yeshua at that case (**Acts 16:37-38; 22:25-26; 25:8-12**; also James 4:7; I Pet. 5:9).

—In family situations, this does NOT mean that abuse should be tolerated under the guise of being “submissive.”

—“Do not resist” here could be seen as referring to a legal situation. Believers should not be quick to file law suits, in general and absolutely not against fellow believers (I Cor. 6:7).

—It also involved situations in the 1st century where people were compelled to help out soldiers (conscripted to carry military equipment, Blomb.).

—What Yeshua IS saying calls on his disciples to have a **conciliatory attitude even in the face of strife**. That is what Yeshua meant by saying, “go the extra mile.” We are not to operate on a legalistic standard (“he did X, therefore he must be punished with Y”).

—He states, “give to him who asks” [a legitimate need] but He does not commands us to “give everything to him who asks,” (Augustine)

—Yeshua and his disciples emphasized the need for chesed to dominate:
 “mercy triumphs over justice,” (James 2:12-13)
 “love covers a multitude of sins,” (I Pet. 4:8).

ix. LOVE YOUR ENEMIES—now, Yeshua comes to the heart of the matter—it isn’t merely what to avoid doing (revenge) but, to **work positively toward the good of those with whom we are at odds,**” (Blomberg). —This is an extension and an intensification/internalization of what the Torah taught—to “love your neighbor as yourself.”

F. The Torah does state, “Love your neighbor [friend/companion] as your self,”—part of the “Golden Rule,” (Lev. 19:18). It also forbids the Israelite from hating his brother (Lev. 19:17).

—Nowhere does Scripture command or permit us to hate our enemies.

—There are specific (and limited) instances where the Lord commanded Israel to destroy their enemies (Num. 25:17-18)

and himself promised that He would curse their enemies (Gen. 12:3....).

—We see many prayers that petition the Lord to punish His enemies (Num. 10:35; Judg. 5:31), and describe hatred for God’s enemies (e.g. Ps. 139:21) and prayers are directed against those who are God’s enemies (as we see in the Psalms, e.g. Ps. 110:1).

—The Psalms have a number of examples where David calls on God to punish his enemies. These have been called “**imprecatory Psalms,**” meaning “asking God to curse their enemies” (Ps. 55:15; 59:1; 143:12). A better approach is to see the prayers as a request for God, the ultimate Judge, to provide redress where people have been wronged.

—From the NT perspective, there are those who see Yeshua’s instruction here break their teeth on the emphasis of punishment for enemies. They claim that under “grace,” we should not speak about punishment for enemies.

F. In the Jewish community there are those who criticize Yeshua for demanding his followers to do what is unrealistic.

Furthermore, forgiveness is given only when there is a willingness to repent of the sin/crime.

g. WHAT IS YESHUA SAYING HERE ? DOES THE NT NO LONGER SPEAK ABOUT “ENEMIES ?”

—He turns reality upside down in his instructions for his disciples. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, He presents the epitome of a despised enemy (the Samaritan, Lk. 10:29-37), as a potential “neighbor.”

—One point is implied here— **Yeshua is looking for the larger picture—not just judicial redress of grievances, but redemption of the offender.** A Medieval rabbinic writer expressed the same sentiment as Yeshua: “**Pray for your enemy that he serve God,**” (Orchot Tzaddikim 15:c).

h. We find examples in the Scriptures of Israel’s enemies whom God commanded that they be destroyed without mercy.

—Two examples are Amalek, who pursued Israel at its weakest point (Rephidim, Exod. 17:7-17) and the seven Canaanite nations (Deut. 7:1-7). Those nations were set apart for destruction (cherem=Mrj, Jericho in Josh. 6:17-21)

—In those cases, Israel acted as God’s agent of judgment on the pagan nations who had plenty of opportunity to repent (Gen. 15, “Cup of iniquity of Amorites not yet filled”).

q. What Yeshua is addressing is individual versus national relationship. In this case, Rom. 13 comes in—the state has the authority from God to punish the evil doer and engage in war when it is necessary.

—When it comes to personal enemies (ie. David in the Psalms), a child of God is expected to turn

to the Lord for the correct judgment in a case where there is an “enemy.”

We need to be measured in how we use this word, ‘enemy’ to describes someone.

—An “enemy” cannot mean someone who merely offended us, but someone who by their consistent actions reveal a hateful attitude towards us. That is Yeshua’s clear meaning. “An enemy” is someone who “persecutes us—both in Greek (dioko=diwkw) and in Hebrew (radaf=Pdr) convey the sense of **someone who is chasing us** on an on-going basis (meaning of the present tense).

—We can get very touchy and see “enemies” where there are merely struggling people who are not careful with their mouth.

k. With that perspective, Yeshua’s command takes on a whole new meaning. **How do we love someone who is truly “out to get us”?** Yeshua does not give us a manual full of specifics. As He had done all along in the Sermon on the Mount, He focuses on the heart attitude—**if we are willing to love our enemies** (made that decision), the **Lord will show us the practicalities** of what that looks like. He only gives a couple of specifics:

—*Pray for them does not mean asking God to chastise and discipline them.* If He does discipline them, it is his business.

However, “love” means “seeking God’s best for someone.” Therefore, we cannot presume to pray imprecatory prayers for them.

—*Greet them* means a lot more than merely saying, “Hello.” It is connected to the greeting, “Shalom.” In Scripture, the implication is, “may God’s peace/ rest upon you,” (Gen. 37:4, where we see “shalom” used; Mt. 10:13 it is implied). In a Hebraic context it meant to give one’s blessing to another.

l. The greater “reward” comes when we are willing to **love those who are difficult to love**. This addresses the fact that God sees our actions—his camera sweeps across the landscape of our life.

—Because of that, when we face an “enemy” we have to treat him with humility because the only one who has the right to make an ultimate determination is **The Righteous Judge**. We do not have all the facts (more about that in ch. 6). *We have to learn to pull our punches in how we evaluate people—we don’t have all the facts.*

F. The Torah presented rain as God’s covenant blessing to Israel when the nation followed him (Lev. 26:3-4). Yet, God sometimes sees fit to give his blessings to the wicked.

—We, who are the Father’s children, must be willing to do likewise to love our enemies. We need to be “perfect” (shalem=complete) as the Father is.

m. There is an added dimension addressed later in the NT (Eph. 6:12). We have to recognize that in addition to/ **behind the human dynamics of conflict, is the unseen spiritual battle which often manifests itself in the arena of human conflict.**

—We get upended (like turtles) when we forget that fact and when we exclusively focus on the human dimension.

—We know that Satan uses our unresolved anger (Eph. 4:26-27; 31).

—Our fleshly “wisdom” is exploited by messengers of Satan to stir dissension (James 3:15, daimoniwꞑdhβ=demonically inspired wisdom).

—We can conclude that our real enemies are primarily the messengers of evil, sent by Satan to oppose God’s purposes in our lives.

f. **YESHUA DEMANDS THAT ACTS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS BE DONE RIGHTEOUSLY (6:1-18)—**

i. We can do proper acts of charity with improper motives (6:1-4).

a. The section about proper expression of acts of righteousness is a continuation of 5:48 grammatically.

—How are we to be perfect (tamim=teleoi=mature)? Yeshua addressed the needs for care in our relationships.

—Yeshua’s teaching here is “representative but not comprehensive,” (Blomberg), meaning that He could not address every aspect of human behavior but what He knew was needed.

—Now He addresses what was a major tenet in Judaism—*ma’asim tovim* (Mybwf Mycom)—typically, expression of kindness to the poor. In Judaism (NOT MJ) today this is considered one of the 3 keys to obtaining atonement (repentance, prayers, good deeds).

—Also, in a society without a governmental welfare system, the *needs of the poor were provided through the generosity of the community*, which the believers practiced. (e.g. Acts 4:34; 11:28-30)

b. This was in compliance of the instruction of the Torah, that demanded that the poor be provided for (Deut. 15:7-12). God ***demanded an attitude of generosity***. The Hebrew is VERY emphatic (naton titen=Ntt Nwtm)—“you better give.”

—The Torah mandated specific provisions for the poor such as leaving the edge of the field/vineyard unharvested so that the poor could glean (Lev. 19:10; 23:22). Also, the triennial tithe (every 3rd year), was to provide a portion for the poor (Deut. 26:12).

—There were two basic inducements towards generosity: God’s judgment for lack of generosity (Deut. 15:9) and God’s blessing for obedience (15:10).

g. As He has done throughout the Sermon on the Mount, Yeshua goes deep with his listeners, wanting to peel away layers of wrong motive.

—On the positive note, the beginning motive has to be the **commitment to bring glory to God**. We have to recognize that our lives are all about God, not about ourselves.

—When we do deeds of kindness, the recipients not only thank us but they give glory to God (II Cor. 1:10-11; 4:14-15)

— Because we are in partnership with God in the work of his kingdom, **we will rejoice together with him when He empowers us to do deeds of kindness** (“come into your master’s joy,” (Mt. 25:23)).

—We also understand that the *Righteous Judge will reward us in his appointed time*. Scripture is emphatic that obedience brings God’s blessing.

d. Yeshua takes for granted the fact that people did obey the Torah’s requirement to be generous to the poor. He criticizes the self-righteous, hypocritical Pharisees because they sought to gain man’s approval and in so doing, advance their standing in the community (build their ego as well).

—Seeking to build one’s ego and one’s standing in the community through deeds of kindness **betrays a massive ignorance of the basic kingdom principles** mentioned above. Yeshua’s point is that they receive what they were looking for—people’s affirmation. However, that we soon learn is a bottomless pit—we can never have enough.

—How *does this relate to ministries giving reports* about their caring for the poor? It all goes back to the motive—is it for the purpose of self-aggrandizement, or, informing supporters of what God has enabled them to do.

—It is possible to seek to **carry Yeshua’s acts legalistically—pursue the letter of his** “Torah” rather than discerning the spirit of what He is saying. We can see Yeshua’s instruction as an absolute prohibition against saying ANYTHING about our labors/ministry to the needy.

—Yeshua “does not imply that we should not keep track of giving (in our ledger), or refuse to disclose how we spend our money for the sake of demonstrating financial accountability,” (Blomberg). Good stewardship requires “an open book policy,” (our approach @ CYT).

—Yeshua’s teaching tells us not to broadcast what people give to a particular ministry.

—His instruction here has to be *taken together with 5:16* (“that men may see your good works”). There is no contradiction, but different emphasis. In chapter 5, the emphasis is on living out our commitment to the Lord in a dark world that needs His light. Here, it is on the need for having the right motive.

—Yet, his point needs to be taken—it is so easy to stray into the area where we are seeking self-affirmation through our “good deeds,” (hence, Isa. 64:6). This is natural for all of us. However, sooner or later we learn that **the only security we can truly have is through the affirmation we receive from the Lord**. Everything else is gets exposed for what it is—insufficient to carry the weight of our emotional/spiritual need.

e. Was Yeshua referring to a literal blowing of trumpets, or the noise and attention given when someone threw coins into a collection box? He could have been referring to the figurative, as in “blowing your own horn,” (Blomberg).

Congregation Yeshuat Tsion
Bible Study in Matthew May 2, 2012

- ii. What does prayer need to look like ? (Mt. 6:5-14)
- a. Prayer was not new
—There are all sorts of examples biblically of people praying (e.g. Abraham in Gen. 18).
—That is why Yeshua states, “When you pray.” He is expecting that his disciples will pray as He prayed. Yeshua’s life was based on his love relationship with the Father, which involved large amounts of time (Lk. 5:16).
- b. We see prayer was as private but also corporate/public (II Chron. 7:14; II Chron. 20—Jehoshaphat]
- g. Jewish prayer in the first century often involved liturgical prayer at the temple (hour of prayer—Acts 3:1; 10:30; the disciples met for fellowship/prayers, Acts 2:42))
- d. We need for private praying (Hanah, I Sam.1:10)—when we pour out our heart to God; wrestle in prayer (Col. 4:12);
- e. **Prayer: invisible “work” that no one else sees but which nourishes our souls**, establish our roots deep in the Lord, anchors us when storms threaten to wash over us. It keeps us fresh (Ps. 1).
- h. Prayer means doing the work of the Kingdom—it advances as we pray.
—It prepares the ground for the “visible” work
—Prayer: underscores our absolute dependence on the power of God to work God’s plans
- q. **Avoiding endless** / vain (kenos=empty) repetition. Scripture models for us repetitive/liturgical prayers (e.g. Ps. 136), but these are not endless/empty prayers
—*Endless repetition* may be based on insecurity, somewhat *like the prophets of Baal* on Mt. Carmel who were not sure that Baal would hear them, or that he was present (I Ki. 18:25-29).
—*Elijah’s prayer on the other hand was relatively brief and spoken with authority*, as one who knew his God (I Ki. 18:35-36).
—Praying with authority is based on our knowing our boundaries. Otherwise, our prayers are based not on faith, but on presumption. When we do so, we open ourselves up to all sorts of confusion.
—Endless repetition may involve a struggle get the exact phrase, magical formula vs. conversation with God.
It hinders us pray because we need to listen/be quiet (Ps. 46:10). Otherwise, it is a monologue.
- i. **Prayer is based on faith**—foundational trust/confidence in the goodness and power of God
—Prayer requires willingness to persevere patiently and to prevail (e.g. wrestle with God).
- k. **Prayer must be “in the Spirit”** (Eph. 6/Jude).
One view of that is praying in tongues, based on Rom. 8:27. Those who hold to that view see praying in tongues as totally outside of ourselves and completely led of the Spirit.
The problem with that is that there is a strong contrast between doing things “by the Spirit” vs. doing things “by/in the flesh.” Doing things by the power of the flesh produces evil fruit (Gal. 5:19-21). When speaking about “praying in the Spirit”=“praying in tongues,” it implies that otherwise (praying in our known language) is equivalent to “praying in the flesh.”
There is a better way to view “praying in the Spirit.” Anything that we do “by/in the Spirit” is based on the leading/empowering of the Spirit—that includes praying, speaking etc. Our goal should be to be led by the Spirit of God—which is “normal for us who are children of God (Rom. 8:14). This is especially true of our praying, whether we speak in a known language or in

tongues. When we seek the Lord, we should desire to listen and be receptive to the leading of the Spirit in our prayers.

We know that when the Spirit leads us in our prayers, we are praying “on the money,” (according to the Father’s will) and we know we are being heard and answers are coming (**I Jn. 5:14**).

1. IS THE LORD’S PRAYER MEANT TO BE RECITED ? YES, AND, NO.

Yes: Scripture contains examples of liturgical (repetitive) prayers.

No: What Yeshua is giving here is a basic teaching on personal piety. He admonished his disciples not to engage in mindless repetition, which is often what has happened with “Our Father.....”

Mechanics are secondary to heart issues—what Yeshua is laying down is not the precise wording, per se, but the truth about what prayer is about.

The pattern He laid down for our prayers is patterned in the great intercessory prayers earlier (Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel) and seen in the prayers of the disciples (e.g. Acts4:23-30).

