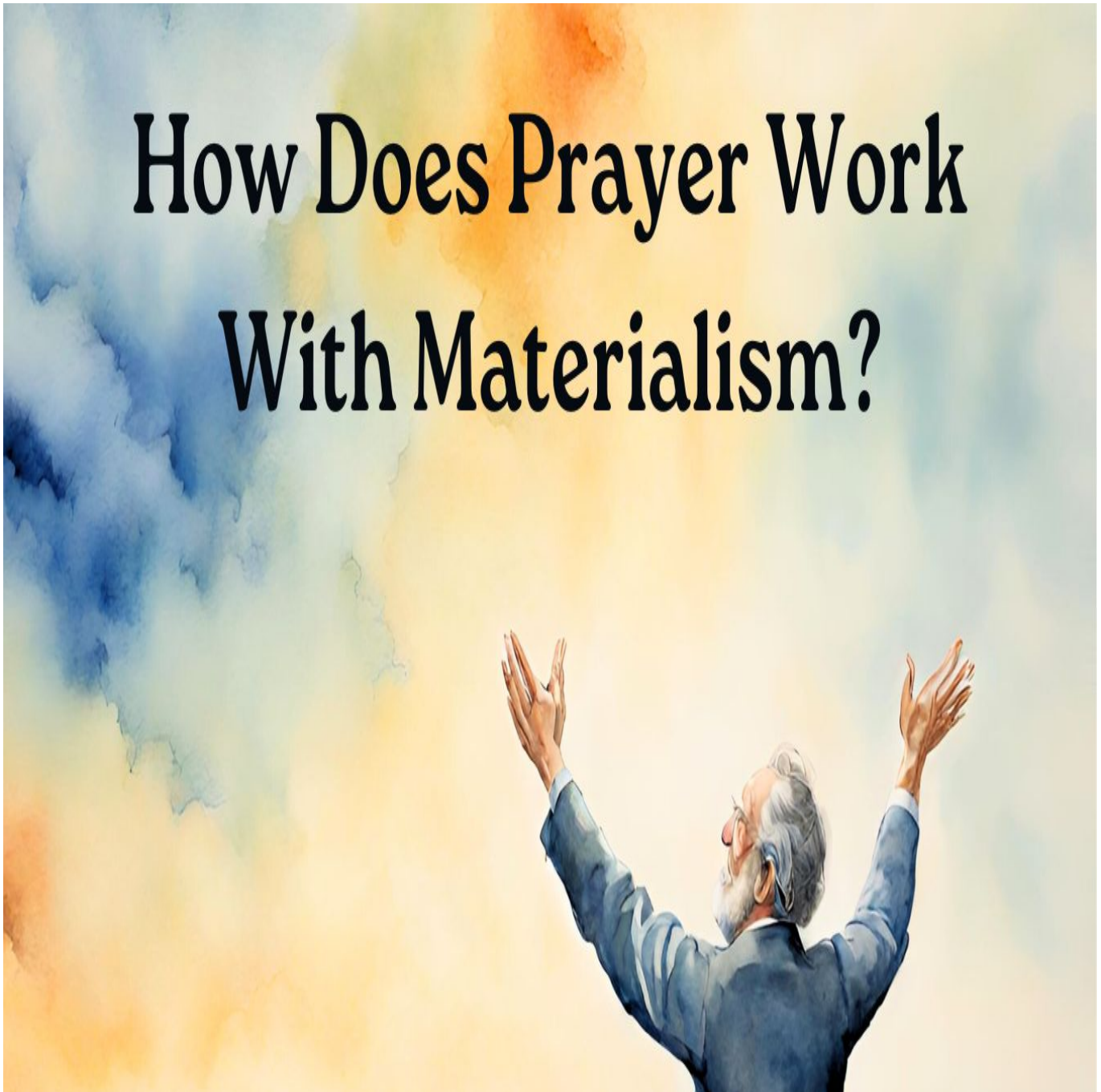


How Does Prayer Work With Materialism?

Description



(Note: While this answer is directed to Seventh-day Adventists, the Scripture evidence found in the videos below should be compelling for all Christians, regardless of denomination.)

Question:

How does prayer work in relation to [materialism](#)? What are the principles involved in making prayers ascend to heaven? How can we, in reality, know that God hears our prayers?

Answer: (by [Trent Wilde](#))¹This was originally written in December 2020, but revised for broader circulation in May 2024.

This is a great question! It is indeed the case that materialism ([the forgotten philosophical foundation of Seventh-day Adventism](#)) demands an understanding of prayer and its workings that is different from the popular conception. I'll give a straightforward explanation as an answer, and then to become acquainted with the evidence upon which my answer is based, I recommend for you to watch the videos below.

First, I need to point out that while people often view prayer as a "spiritual practice" or as some sort of "pure" mind-to-mind telepathic communication with God, the "prayer" of Scripture is not like that at all. In fact, the words for "prayer" in ancient Hebrew just mean things like "ask" and "intercede." And these words are not just used in relationship to God, they are used for people asking things of other people as well. Ancient Israelites didn't have a word like "prayer" that they only used for "talking to God."

Furthermore, ancient Israelites didn't pray merely mental prayers. When they talked to God, they did so audibly just like when talking to anyone else. There are many instances of people talking to God in Scripture, yet there is no instance of purely mental prayer. The closest example that people might point to is Hannah praying in the temple, but even that wasn't a purely mental prayer. It says that her lips were moving, but no sound came out due to her being so distraught.

As to how these prayers reach the ears of God, the clear picture described both by Ellen White and by ancient Scripture is that God does not listen to everyone's prayers all at once in real time. Rather, angels hear prayers and take the report to heaven. And even then, there is a chain of command among angels—they are organized. It isn't like every angel keeps flying back and forth, working independently from others, so that each angel would go directly from a person to God and back. The line-up of angels in heaven waiting to talk to God would be too long. Instead, angels organize prayers and present our requests to Christ who, in turn, presents them to our Father in a condensed and purified way. As an example, let's say 1000 people prayed for the same thing. It would be unnecessary, and even a waste of time, to present each prayer word-for-word to God. Instead, it could simply be reported that 1000 people asked for a given thing, and of course, record would be kept as to who they are.

Furthermore, I should add that prayer does not, in and of itself, have any inherent power; it isn't like magic. Yet, making our requests to God really can make a difference. The principalities and powers of darkness claim this world as their own and they are able to point to the fact that humans serve them as evidence of their right to do as they will in human affairs. When we vocally take our stand on the side of Christ and make our requests for our God's will to be done, Christ and His angels are able to point to us as evidence that God has a people who recognize his rule and authority as well. Yet, if we serve sin, Christ can't claim us as his own servant; Satan claims us if we follow his ways. But if we follow the ways of truth and righteousness, our requests are made

known in the heavenly councils and no wicked power can claim us and gain a right to rule us. By living righteous lives and speaking aloud our requests to God, angels of light and angels of darkness take note of our allegiance, and angels assigned to the task make sure that our petitions are heard in the courtrooms above. Thus, we can participate in bringing about real change in the political interactions between the warring governments of Christ and Satan. We can impact which side is able to hold sway over us and, so long as all other conditions are met, over other people, places, and circumstances as well.

In the following two videos, you'll find evidence that Scriptural prayer is not merely mental, but that it is bodily communication expressed through the normal organs involved in producing language. You'll also see evidence of the role of angels in recording our prayers and presenting them before God.

Learn more about: [Materialism](#) [Prayer](#) [Angels](#)

- 1 This was originally written in December 2020, but revised for broader circulation in May 2024.