

Petition Form

Introduction

The prayer of petition requests favors from God. It is one of the most heavily attested types of prayer in scripture, finding its way into many other biblical forms—for example, psalms of lament, prophetic intercessions, and miracle stories.

Structure

Element	Example (Psalm 28)
1. Invocation	¹ To you, Lord, I call
2. Petition	my Rock, do not be deaf to me. If you fail to answer me, I will join those who go down to the pit. ² Hear the sound of my pleading when I cry to you, lifting my hands toward your holy place...
3. Thanksgiving for petition granted	⁶ Blessed be the Lord, who has heard the sound of my pleading. ⁷ The Lord is my strength and my shield, in whom my heart trusted and found help.

Content

The petition for God's favor sometimes includes the memory of God's favors in the past and/or thanksgiving for the petition granted, but it may be as simple as an invocation of God and a request.

Function

Petitions, like laments, could be individual or communal, and so could have functioned in all manner of personal and congregational circumstances to evoke the response of God. During the period of temple sacrifice, petitions could be accompanied by ritual offerings.

For Further Practice

Exod 2:23

Pss 28; 31; 57

Matt 26:36-46