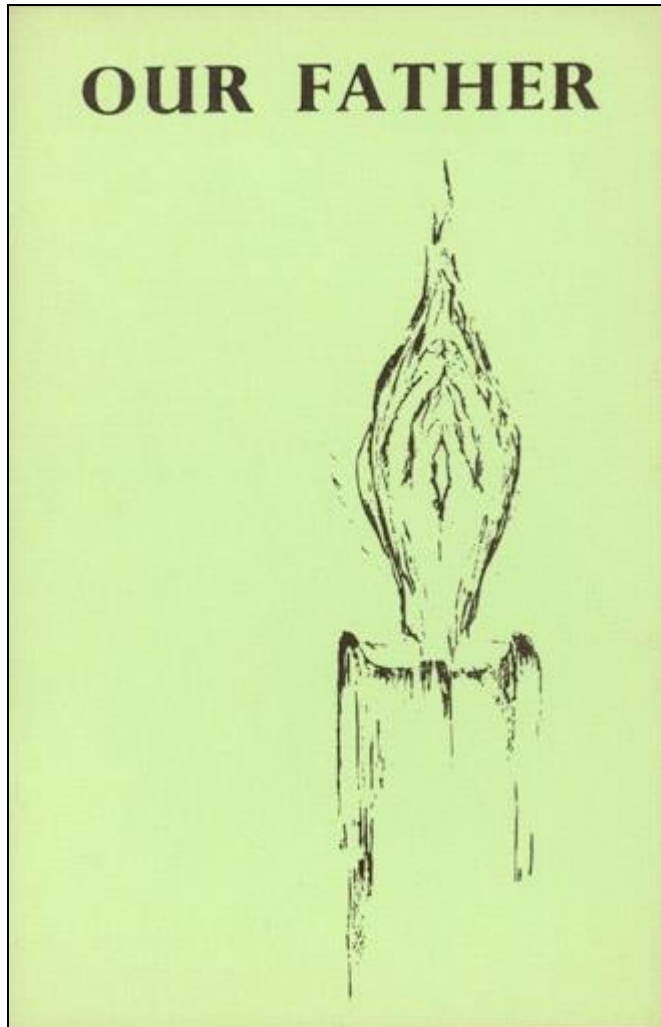


OUR FATHER



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AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

So much has been written upon the Lord's Prayer that it seems unnecessary to add to the list. None the less, I have been moved to set down a few personal prayers which have their source in the immortal words.

Jesus gave His disciples a new rule of prayer rather than a new prayer. We could visualize the Lord's Prayer as a discipline planned out like the rungs of a ladder mounting up to the Heavenly Kingdom for which we pray.

First, we recognize God as our Father because in creating us He loved us. We then acknowledge our dependence upon Him and hallow His Name. We realize our need of His Kingdom which we can reach only by obedience to His Will. God grants our daily requirements, we need ask for nothing more; except mercy. For this we have to pay the price: give to others the forgiveness we ask for ourselves. To the attainment of Heaven belongs the overcoming of evil, the determination to say: get thee hence, Satan.

If in the prayers the 'I' is used in preference to the 'we,' it is to underscore the need for each one of us to recognize our personal commitment in bearing each day our individual responsibility for the coming of the Kingdom.

In our Father is our unity and our oneness as we worship Him in spirit and in truth.

I MONDAY MORNING

Our Father, Who art in Heaven

TO Thee, my Creator, the cause of all my life and being, I dedicate this day. To Thee, to whom I owe my life in all its forms, I give myself wholeheartedly. From Thee come my thoughts, my power to think, to rationalize and put my ideas into action. To Thee I owe my body and my feelings; from Thee I have my hands and feet, my eyes and my tongue. I yearn this day to use all that I am to that purpose for which Thou hast created me.

Thy child I long to be in thought and word and deed, to love Thee with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind.

Father, Thou art everywhere and yet nothing encompasses, nameless because no name is worthy of Thee, Thou Infinite One, who in Thy heavenly glory can yet comprehend my finite need and boundless longing, hear my prayer: let this day bring me closer to Thee.

AMEN

II MONDAY EVENING

Hallowed be Thy Name

AS I turn me to rest, my soul doth magnify the Lord. From the depth of my grateful heart I thank Thee for all the opportunities of this day. Thy Holy Name have I sought ever to hold within my heart. Forgive me wherein I have failed in worthily bearing witness to Thy glory.

Thy Name I dare not utter, too holy is It for my sinful lips, yet upon it do I dwell. In Thy Name have I found the strength and the patience to love and to laugh, to sorrow and to cry with my fellow man.

Thy Name to praise has been my goal. Though far short have I fallen of this my desire, yet to it again I turn.

Foot weary and sore at heart, my comfort lies in the Name of Jesus as in It also now I find my rest.

I pray Thee, let the Holy Name, even as I sleep, dwell within my loving heart.

AMEN

III TUESDAY MORNING

Thy Kingdom come

AS the new day dawns and new opportunities lie before me, Thy humble servant, let me never forget Thy Kingdom. Send me, I pray Thee, as one of Thy emissaries, that there where I am Thy Kingdom may have a staunch witness.

Such as I am full of fault and ineptitude, take me, use me, where most I can be of use. Let me, like the rain worm, do my share of moving some grain of soil in Thy vineyard; that I may partake in some small way in Thy redeeming work. Let me, O Lord, bring that particle of soil upon which my shadow falls back into Thy Kingdom, because I am Thine.

Throughout this day let me not look hither and yon in vain search, but make me conscious, I pray Thee, O Lord, that Thy kingdom is within me through Jesus Christ, my Lord and my God.

AMEN

IV TUESDAY EVENING

Thy Will be done

THY will have I sought throughout this day, a willing instrument have I tried to be. Both joy and sorrow, recompense and penalty, have I done my utmost obediently to accept, and gratefully have lived each hour such as it has come to me, seeking to react as Thou of me wouldst want.

I sorrow over those moments when I have let my own willfulness triumph over Thy demand. Pardon, I pray Thee, the temptation I had to shirk the unpleasant, to dodge the issue. The spirit is truly willing, but the flesh is weak.

O Lord, Thou, who knowest so well how weak we are, strengthen me to do Thy will in all things and let no lesson in obedience pass me by.

Let not this night's rest, O Lord, be to my shame or my weakness, but to my strengthening so that in all things and at all hours of night or day I, Thy will may do.

AMEN

V WEDNESDAY MORNING

On earth

AS it were in heaven let my day be. In all I undertake let this be my guiding motif—Thy will on earth to carry through in what I say and what I do. Help me to help others and so to forget myself. Teach me to make this earth more pleasing in Thy sight. Help me to be brave and patient, loving and understanding; yet let none of these virtues divert me from doing on earth as in heaven would be done to honour Thee.

Let me, dear Lord, judge myself and my motives correctly so that I can make the right decisions in Thy sight. Let me seek no selfish aim. Let nothing come between me and Thee, neither those I love nor my loyalties. Let me first seek what to Thy Glory is, O Lord, then can I but be fair to all and even to myself.

Let me not put off what to-day is to be done, for now and here is the appointed time and place; every hour, every minute is the golden opportunity. To know and fulfill on earth Thy will. This earthly day I dedicate to Thee, O Christ!

AMEN

VI WEDNESDAY EVENING

as in Heaven

ON earth this evening, O Lord, have I come closer to heaven for each day, each hour more of Thee I learn. Patiently having striven to be true to Thy word have I seen Thee reflected in all things, in the sun and rain, in the smile of a child, in the fresh breeze, in the stillness of heavy air, in my work, in my contact with other men. Everywhere is the work of Thy hands, all we have wrought we have made out of Thy material. For all these things I bless and glorify Thy Name. As the shadows close around me and night covers the earth and all things turn to their rest, I close my eyes in utter thankfulness for all that life has given me up to this hour. My soul overflows with gratitude for all Thy loving kindness.

In peace and confidence I lay me down to rest fearing no hurt, for this very ground upon which I lie is Thy footstool and thus blessed of Thee and a foreshadowing of heavenly bliss.

AMEN

VII THURSDAY MORNING

Give us this day

THIS day is all I ask for, O Lord. Give me the strength for the hours as they come one by one. For my sustenance let me ask for that only which I need, Thy will to fulfill. Let me have enough of the spiritual and the material so that I may help all who knock at my

door and send none empty away. Show me how to share the blessings of this day with my neighbor. Teach me to fear neither the good nor the bad, to bravely live them both to the full, through both working out Thy will. Let no lack of generosity hamper my actions. Let my heart never be so small that it cannot love and forgive. Let me have the humility truly to rejoice over every minute and what it brings. I know full well how undeserving I am; yet, let me seize every opportunity to turn every hour to Thy glory. Walk with me this day as Thou didst with Luke and Cleopas to Emmaus. Let Thine Angel guide me and show me what Thy demand of me is for this day.

AMEN

VIII THURSDAY EVENING

Our daily bread

FOR all I have had this day I bless and thank Thee, O Lord. At no time has my need been left unsatisfied; only in those hours when I turned from Thee have I known want. I thank Thee, dear Lord and Master, for all that this day my brethren have shared with me. I thank Thee for sun and air, for house and food, for dear ones and friends, for every hour that has been mine. I thank Thee, also, for the hours of pain and stress that have widened my understanding. I thank Thee for the darkness that has made me see the light more clearly. I thank Thee for the enmity that has taught me to forgive.

How rich I am! How much hast Thou given me. Each day is added to all I already have. How generously hast Thou dealt with me! From the hour of my birth to this evening hour so much, so much hast Thou given me I cannot count it, I can but humbly thank Thee for Thyself: my daily bread.

Glory be to Thee, O Christ our God.

AMEN

IX FRIDAY MORNING

Forgive us our trespasses

FULL of fault am I, my sin is ever before me, I start out Thy debtor in every way. I strive to keep straight but ever and again I fall. My one hope lies in Thy mercy. Yet, O wonder,

were it not for sin I would not have known Thy loving kindness, the power of Thy forgiving love through Jesus Christ, my Lord.

As I start out upon this day seeking to come closer to Thee in all I do, it is the knowledge of Thy power to turn even my faults to good purpose that gives me the strength to go forth and do my work. In my past lie many transgressions I cannot of myself put right. The weight of them lays heavily upon me. But Thou hast said: 'Come unto me all that are heavily burdened.' To Thee I come, O Lord, humbly praying that this day may pass without sin and that I may make retribution, ever remembering the pain Thou didst suffer for me and all mankind, and thus keep to the true and only path that leads to Thee.

AMEN

X FRIDAY EVENING

As we forgive those who trespass against us

AS I forgive, I ask to be forgiven! As I forgive *N* (think of the person you most dislike), how little mercy I deserve, for how little am I able myself to forgive! Were I to be judged as I judge others, what hope do I have?

O Lord, move my heart to love and forgiveness. Teach me true compassion, with kindness to look upon my neighbors' faults. Still within me the aggravations of this day and my unjust criticisms, let me see myself as I truly am, help me to judge my own reactions rather than dwell upon those of others. Help me to banish from my heart and memory all resentments, anger and annoyance. Even there where my dislike is justified, temper my feelings with charity and contrition for my own share in the world's sin. May I this night and at all times forgive seventy times seven and be worthy of Thee and not have to fear Thy judgment, for Thou art faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

AMEN

XI SATURDAY MORNING

Lead us not into temptation

FROM temptation spare me, O Lord. Let me not fall a victim to the wiles of the enemy who stands ever ready to guide me amiss. Let me distinguish the pearl without price and not be dazzled by the tinsel and the gold. Teach me to guard my tongue from useless words. Help me always to ask myself: is this of good report? Am I by saying or doing this working for the Kingdom of Heaven? Or am I serving Satan and his angels? Give me clear eyes and judgment that I may throughout this day make the right choice. Where there is darkness, let me see light; in the midst of turmoil let me find the core of stillness. Let no fear enter my soul, but teach me bravely to face every problem and all enmity and never let me compromise with evil. Let me never forget that man does not live by bread alone, but by Thy word. Let me owe no man anything but love so that in loving one another we may fulfill Thy law and set temptation at naught.

AMEN

XII SATURDAY EVENING

But deliver us from evil

O LORD God, let me give the evil one no grounds to have a hold on me, neither waking nor sleeping. In this world of tribulation I shall have no fear because Thou hast overcome the world and its prince.

I trust myself under the guardianship of Thine Angel; let him cover me this night with the feathers of his protection that I may rest secure from any assault of the enemy. I shall not fear the terror that walks in the darkness. As through this day Thy loving kindness has shielded me, even so this night be my safeguard, O my gentle Lord.

I thank Thee and bless Thee for all the good things of this day, for the protection of my dear ones, for the numerous blessings that we, all Thy creatures, have experienced this day, especially for those moments when we have overcome the wiles of the evil one.

I entrust all my nearest and dearest to Thy loving care. Because the Lord is my light and the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Glory be to Thee, O Christ.

AMEN

XIII SUNDAY MORNING

For Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory

THY Kingdom, O Lord, I seek. Thee do I praise and glorify. All that is, is Thine. Thou hast made it all: all life, all things, all thoughts reflect Thee. Thy loving kindness, Thy mercy lay upon all things. Yet none of these things hold Thee who art beyond thought or comprehension. Only Thy love transcends all unknowing and reaches me who am but one of Thy humble children. How grateful am I to the Grace that made me one of the human race! Let me be worthy of my brethren and of Thy Saints.

This day hast Thou set aside for rest because on this day Thou lookest upon Thy creation and found it good. We, only we, have misused our blessing and brought sorrow and death into our lives. But Thou art Love and Light and Life and through the resurrection of Thy Son hast given back to this day its holiness and wholeness. Holy, holy, holy art Thou, O Lord, God of Hosts!

AMEN

XIV SUNDAY EVENING

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

THOU, who art Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, Thou, who art the inn on the road and the end of the road, bless me at the close of this day. If it is to be my last, dear Lord, forgive what I have done amiss, for in Thy mercy do I trust. Of myself naught am I. Finite and small, I lay me in Thy Hand to hold and shield me and, if Thou wilt, take me to Thee. Only this have I to recommend me, that Thou has made me; nothing have I to give Thee, for all I have has come of Thee; only my love is mine own to give or to withhold. Lord our Father, accept my love, the truest and purest that I can give. Love Thou Thyself art; herein lies my own link with eternity that I love Thee and so am part of Thine own, Thou who werest, art and ever shalt be.

Glory be to Thee, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, both now and ever and unto ages of ages.

AMEN