



*A Gift For*

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*From*

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STRENGTH *for the* SOUL *from* OUR DAILY BREAD



# Prayer



Discovery House Publishers

*Books, music, and videos that feed the soul with the Word of God*

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# *Introduction*

Since April 1956, millions of readers around the world have found daily inspiration, help, comfort, and biblical truth from the pages of *Our Daily Bread*. Now you can find helpful insights on prayer from one of the most beloved devotionals, compiled into one convenient volume.

We hope that this book will be of help to you and those you know. May it and the Word of God bring strength to your soul.

Other books in the Strength for the Soul  
from *Our Daily Bread* series

*Comfort*

*Hope*

*Grief*

*Peace*

*Trust*

# *Weighing a Prayer*

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*“This, then, is how you should pray:*

*‘Our Father in heaven,*

*hallowed be your name,*

*your kingdom come,*

*your will be done*

*on earth as it is in heaven.*

*Give us today our daily bread.*

*Forgive us our debts,*

*as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

*And lead us not into temptation,*

*but deliver us from the evil one.”* —MATTHEW 6:9–13

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Soon after World War II, a tired-looking woman entered a store and asked the owner for enough food to make a Christmas dinner for her children. When he inquired how much she could afford, she answered, "My husband was killed in the war. Truthfully, I have nothing to offer but a little prayer." The man was not very sentimental, for a grocery store cannot be run like a breadline. So he said, "Write your prayer on a paper." To his surprise she plucked a little folded note out of her pocket and handed it to him, saying, "I already did that."

As the grocer took the paper, an idea struck him. Without even reading the prayer, he put it on the weight side of his old-fashioned scales, saying, "We shall see how much food this is worth." To his surprise, the scale would not go down when he put a loaf of bread on the other side. To his even greater astonishment, it would not balance when he added many more items. Finally he blurted out, "Well, that's all the scales will hold anyway. Here's a bag. You'll have to put them in yourself. I'm busy." With a tearful "thank you," the lady went happily on her way.

The grocer later found that the mechanism of the scales was out of order, but as the years passed, he often wondered if that really was the answer to what had occurred. Why did the woman have the prayer already written to satisfy his unpremeditated demands? Why did she come at exactly the time the mechanism was broken? Frequently he looked at that slip of paper upon which the woman's prayer was written, for amazingly enough, it read, "Please, dear Lord, give us this day our daily bread!"

—HENRY BOSCH

# “Send What Is Best”

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*The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.* —ROMANS 8:26–27

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Two men planted olive trees in their fields. Afterward the one prayed, “Dear Lord, my trees need water. Please send rain.” The showers came! He then petitioned, “They need sunshine,” and God bathed them with sunlight! Later he cried, “Father, my trees need something to make them hardy. Please send a frost tonight.” It came but killed them all. Traveling over to the other man’s grove, he found his olive trees flourishing. “How can this be?” he asked. The man replied, “When I prayed, I didn’t ask for rain, sunshine, or frost, I just said, ‘Lord, you made these trees. You know what they need. Just send what is best!’”

We know there is a place for definite prayer requests. As we recognize certain unmistakable needs, we should pray for specific answers in harmony with God’s will. In such instances we rejoice in these promises: “This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him” (1 John 5:14–15). “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” (James 5:16 NKJV).

However, it is also true that there are times when, as the apostle Paul expressed it, “we do not know what we ought to pray for” (Romans 8:26). It is then that special comfort can be found in the assurance that “the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express,” and “the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will” (8:26–27).

When in doubt, we say with complete trust, “Lord, send what is best!”

—RICHARD DE HAAN

# *How God Answers Prayer*

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*In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, “Please come at once!”*

*Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them. Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, “Tabitha, get up.” She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. —ACTS 9:36–42*

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