

International Day of Prayer

March 01, 2008

2008 – Resource Packet

In the Morning!

*Written by
Raquel C. Arrais
General Conference
of Seventh-day Adventist
Women's Ministries Associate Director*



*Prepared by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventist
Women's Ministries Department*

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Order of Service	4
Sermon	5
Children Story	11
Extra Resources	12
When you Reclaim Your Mornings for Christ	12
Praying Together Activity	13
Someone is Praying for You	17
Prayer Quotes from Ellen White	19
God Always Answers Prayer.....	21



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH

General Conference
World Headquarters



Department of Women's Ministries

12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, Maryland
20904-6600 USA
Telephone (301) 680-6608
Fax (301) 680-6400
<http://www.adventist.org/gcwm>

My Dear Sisters:

The time has come once again for us to focus on the importance of prayer in our lives and in this ministry. I am particularly excited about this year's *International Women's Day of Prayer* packet which is filled with many resources and ideas you can use to enhance this day. This packet, "In the Morning" was written and compiled by Raquel Arrais, General Conference Women's Ministries associate director and focuses on the importance of spending time with God each day.

Ellen G. White writes "Praying together will bind hearts to God in bonds that will endure..." *Testimonies for the Church* p175. In these days of uncertainty, trials, fear, and turmoil; prayer has become vital to our daily existence and peace of mind. The promise in these words surely gives us courage to face each day knowing that God binds us to Himself and nothing and no one can sever that bond.

As Women's Ministries Leaders the task is yours to encourage your sisters to have a deep and meaningful relationship with God. And what better way to begin than with prayer. The task we have been called to do in touching hearts and telling the world about Jesus is great and it is only by binding our hearts to God's heart will we receive the power we need for this time.

This year we are asking that you pray for your sisters in the North American Division, the Northern Asia-Pacific Division, and the Southern Asia-Pacific Division. In particular we seek your prayers in the areas of family challenges, single women, single parents, and widows. You can visit our website at <http://wm.gc.adventist.org> and find out more about the work in these and other divisions of our world church.

Remember, God is our Jehovah-jireh—our Provider—and He is able to provide all we ask for and so much more. So pray with faith, pray with belief, pray with confidence knowing that "God will supply all our needs..." Philippians 4:13.

Blessings and joy to you,

Heather-Dawn Small
Director

A Suggested Order of Service
Women's Ministries Day of Prayer
March 1, 2008

Prelude

Call to Worship: Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, 701
"Shout Joyfully to the Lord"

Invocation

Hymn of Praise
"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee", SDA Hymnal, 12

Scripture Reading: Psalms 5:1-3

Offering

Prayer for the Offering and pastoral prayer: use this time to pray for the world's women and especially Adventist women as they meet and pray together. Open and close this time with music.

Children's Story

"A Gift of Sacrifice"

Special Music

Sermon: "In the Morning!"

Hymn of Response

"Give me Jesus"
SDA Hymnal, 305

Benediction

Sharing the "Blessing Prayer" members of the congregation move around shaking each other's hand saying:
*"The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you,
and give you peace" Numbers 6: 24-26*

Postlude

Sermon

In the Morning

By Raquel Arrais

Welcome and Introduction to Sermon

Introduction

*In the morning, when I rise,
In the morning, when I rise
In the morning, when I rise,
Give me Jesus.*

*Chorus:
Give me Jesus,
Give me Jesus,
You can have all this world
But give me Jesus.*

This is a beautiful *American Negro Spiritual*, #305 in the Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal.

Each one of us has had restless nights due to stress and worry about the coming day. It happened to David. He had been running from Absalom, and at Manaheim his men were sent out to stop the Israelite army. Most likely Psalm 5 was written that morning. As David got up that morning he felt powerless and knew he had nowhere else to turn but to God in prayer. As we study this song, which is a prayer, notice how David lifted up this prayer to God.

Psalms chapter 5, verse 3, in the NIV says: "In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and I wait in expectation."

The New Living translation expresses it: "Listen to my voice in the morning Lord; each morning I bring my requests to you and wait expectantly."

And the New King James Version reads "My voice you shall hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning I will direct it to You, and I will look up."

Three different versions with the same message

The Morning Factor

There is just something special about starting our day with the Lord. David obviously thought so, not only as recorded in Psalm 5:3, but we find in other places in the psalms that mornings were special times for him.

"But I cry to you for help, O LORD; in the morning my prayer comes before you"
Psalms 88:13 (NIV).

"I rise before dawn and cry for help" Psalms 119:147 (NIV).

Have you ever heard someone say, "I am a morning person"? There are a lot of people who really like mornings, and the reason is because they like quietness.

The world today seems to grow louder day by day, and sometimes our senses seem to be invaded at every turn. Our task is to find moments of silence, of reverence in a world filled with noise. That is why many people look forward for mornings. It is in the morning that they feel more relaxed, and their minds are more organized to start the day. It is in the morning that they find silence in their private world so they can be in their favorite spot while the world still sleeps. Sometimes when we finish a day, there are moments when we think we have no more energy. We are tired, exhausted, looking for rest and a good night of sleep; there is no time for anything else.

1. In the Morning Pray: *"In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice...*

The psalmist's advice for us today is: in the morning pray and give all your cares to Jesus. Why in the morning? One of the reasons is that when we wake up, our mind is rested, calm and free of worries, so if we pray, we not only will have quiet time with God but also we will be able to listen to His voice. When we begin each morning with heads bowed and hearts lifted, we remind ourselves of God's love and His protection.

Ellen White advises us, " *Consecrate yourself to God **in the morning**; make this your very first work. Let your prayer be, 'Take me, O Lord, as wholly Thine. I lay all my plans at Thy feet. Use me today in Thy service. Abide with me, and let all my work be wrought in Thee.'* This is a daily matter. **Each morning consecrate yourself to God for that day.** Surrender all your plans to Him, to be carried out or given up as His providence shall indicate. Thus day by day you may be giving your life into the hands of God, and thus your life will be molded more and more after the life of Christ." Steps to Christ, p. 70

In other words she is saying, when we lose the morning we lose the day. When we lose the day, we forget to pray. When we forget to pray, we lose the way.

2. In the Morning Wait: *"in the morning I lay my requests before you **and I wait in expectation.**"*

This is one more element in the text that David urges us to do in order to get an answer from God: *wait in expectation*. Waiting is very hard to do, especially when years go by and our dreams and plans have not yet been fulfilled. In fact, we may spend much of our lives waiting for direction.

But David says here, I "wait in expectation" Psalms 5:3 (NIV). So many times, we just jump into our prayer "Dear God... thank you for this day... help me to have a good day... please keep me and my family safe... please don't let me do anything bad today... amen" (me, me, me, me, me). And then we run off and

rush around going on with our day. But David says, "I wait. . .in expectation" And again in Psalm 130:6, he says "My soul waits for the Lord."

We need to take time to wait. It is in the waiting that we will actually hear God's voice...we will sense His presence... and we will understand exactly what He wants us to do.

However, here in the Psalm the emphasis seems not to be so much on the waiting and patience, but it seems to emphasize David's total dependence on God. "I wait in expectation." His emphasis is not so much on time as on the person he was waiting for, His God, the one he had total dependence upon!

The *American Heritage Dictionary* offers this definition of wait: "To remain inactive or stay in one spot until something anticipated occurs or to be in state of readiness."

In another words, David is saying, "Do not run. Do not rush. Do not despair. Be still. God knows what is best. Trust in Him."

Ellen White says, "There are precious promises in the Scriptures to those who wait upon the Lord. We all desire an immediate answer to our prayers and are tempted to become discouraged if our prayer is not immediately answered. Now, my experience has taught me that this is a great mistake. The delay is for our special benefit. We have a chance to see whether our faith is true and sincere or changeable like the waves of the sea. We must bind ourselves upon the altar with the strong cords of faith and love, and let patience have her perfect work. Faith strengthens through continual exercise. This waiting does not mean that because we ask the Lord to heal there is nothing for us to do. On the contrary, we are to make the very best use of the means which the Lord in His goodness has provided for us in our necessities." Counsels on Health, p. 381.

In Hebrew the expression "wait in expectation" literally means "look up," waiting for an answer from above with patience even if God is showing you a different plan.

For many of us this is hard because nobody likes waiting *patiently*. Pressure is everywhere, and there is no time to wait in line. But in terms of spiritual growth, waiting patiently helps us to grow in our faith. This is very important because the Christian life is a life of faith.

3. In the Morning Believe

Genuine believers trust God and exercise confidence in God. They believe the Word of God and act upon it no matter how they feel, because God promises a good result. When I'm doing that, I am going forward in a phenomenal way spiritually. When I am not doing that, I am going backward and losing ground and falling away from God.

When God says, "Do not be afraid. Just trust me" (Mark 5:36), He is giving us a lesson of the greatest importance. When praying alone in the presence of God, we must trust implicitly in the love of God and in the power of the Lord Jesus. Jesus gives grace for each new day, and our faith must reach out according to the need of the day. Jesus often taught His disciples how indispensable faith was to true prayer. He will teach us as well. We need to persevere. As Psalm 145:2 (NKJV) says, "I will bless you every day."

It is a step forward in the Christian life when you seek to have fellowship with God in His word each day without fail. Faith and perseverance will be crowned with success if you are really sincere. The experience may be somewhat as follows:

- When you wake up in the morning, set apart a time for prayer and resolve to give God time to hear requests and to reveal Himself. You may share all your desires with God and expect Him to speak to your heart.
- Later on in the day, even if only a few minutes, take time to keep up the fellowship with God.
- In the evening, take time to reflect on the day's work and, with confession of sin, receive the assurance of forgiveness. Then commit yourself anew to God and His service.

What a beautiful way to be in His presence all day.

There is a song we all know very well that helps us to remember how important it is to be in prayer. Let's sing together.

*"Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer
That calls me from a world of care
And bids me at my Father's throne,
Make all my wants and wishes known.*

*In seasons of distress and grief,
My soul has often found relief
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer."*

Dr Larry Keefauver, in his book *When God Doesn't Heal Now*, p. 162 provides a helpful list of ways for a Christian to pray. He urges us to:

- Pray humbly
- Pray boldly, persisting in faith
- Pray continually
- Pray in faith for your need
- Pray for others
- Pray with praise
- Pray in His name and will

- Pray to receive
- Pray with another in agreement
- Pray the Word

We must realize that we have no power on our own to maintain our spiritual life. Daily we need to receive new grace from heaven through fellowship with the Lord Jesus.

In the morning look up, claim God, listen, wait and find help under His wings. There is no better place to be.

Ellen White says, "Make every effort to keep open the communion between Jesus and your own soul. Seek every opportunity to go where prayer is wont to be made. Those who are really seeking for communion with God will be seen in the prayer meeting, faithful to do their duty, and earnest and anxious to reap all the benefits they can gain. They will improve every opportunity of placing themselves where they can receive the rays of light from heaven." Steps to Christ, p. 94

It is so wonderful that in our busy life God does not give up on us. He doesn't stop listening, doesn't stop caring, doesn't stop answering prayers whenever and however we manage to bring them, and He can use even the most hesitant, awkward prayer as a tool for our ongoing redemption.

If we only throw him occasional "flash prayers" or only turn to him when we need something, He will still listen our prayers and take us from there.

If we can manage only 15 minutes a day, He will honor our faithfulness in those 15 minutes and use that time to draw us closer to Him.

If we need a tool to focus our minds and discipline our prayers, He will bless us abundantly through that.

In fact, the more time we spend with Him, the better we will get to know Him, and the more freely His love will flow to our lives.

Conclusion

The brilliant scientist Sir Isaac Newton said that he could take his telescope and look millions and millions of miles into space. Then he added, "But when I lay it aside, go into my room, shut the door, and get down on my knees in earnest prayer, I see more of Heaven and feel closer to the Lord than if I were assisted by all the telescopes on earth." As we draw close to God, he draws close to us. This is what prayer does in our spiritual journey.

Appeal

If you are praying and waiting in expectation for an answer from God, do not give up. Listen to the one who says everything will be all right, and keep praying and waiting. God is not sleeping. He is with you today as you face all your challenges. He is saying to you today, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end" Revelation 21:6 (NKJV). That's why, before we leave today, I invite you to stand up and say, "*In the morning, O Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and I wait in expectation.*"
Psalms 5:3 (NIV)

Prayer

To be in your presence
To sit at your feet
Where your love surrounds me
And makes me complete.
To rest in your presence
Not rushing away
To cherish each moment
Here would I stay
AMEN

Children's Story "A Gift of Sacrifice"

Hannah was a good woman who loved God. But she was sad, for she had no children. Each year, her husband took her to a place called Shiloh, where they worshiped God. And each year, Hannah prayed a special prayer that God would give her a child. One year, she prayed, "Dear God, if You will only give me a son, I will give him back to You, to serve You all his days."

She prayed so hard her mouth moved, but no words came out. A priest asked if she was drunk. "No," she said. "I'm pouring my heart out to God."

"May you find favor in God's eyes," said the priest.

The following year, Hannah couldn't make the trip to Shiloh with her husband because God had answered her prayers. She had a new baby boy named Samuel!

She happily cared for Samuel until he was old enough to leave her. Then she kept her promise to God, and took Samuel to live with the priests in Shiloh. It wasn't easy for her to say good-bye, but each year she made him a special robe to wear as he served God.

It must have been difficult for Hannah to keep her promise, but she did by presenting Samuel to Eli the priest.



She stayed in close contact with Samuel. But she did let go of Samuel and gave him back to God.

It's easy to get "selfish" with the gifts God gives to us. We want to hold onto them, keeping them for ourselves. But, like Hannah, when we give God that which is most precious to us, we can trust him with it. And God always gives back much more

God gave Hannah many more children. And Hannah was happy to know that Samuel was growing up in Shiloh, where he would love and serve God always.

If you are asking something of God, He will listen to you. Keep praying, believing Jesus loves you and never will leave you alone.

Dear Jesus, thank you for hearing our prayers. Help us to hear You and obey You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

When You Reclaim Your Mornings for Christ

When you reclaim your mornings for Christ:

You say "Good morning Lord" instead of "Good Lord, it's morning."

When you reclaim your mornings for Christ:

Your words no longer fall on deaf ears but they rise on eagles wings.

When you reclaim your mornings for Christ:

You no longer wander aimlessly but instead you follow faithfully

When you reclaim your mornings for Christ:

You no longer while away [waste away] the hours, now you redeem the time for eternity.

When you reclaim your mornings for Christ:

You are no longer rejected like an orphan, but you are accepted as a daughter.

When you reclaim your mornings for Christ:

You no longer live in fear but you face fear by the power of the cross.

When you reclaim your mornings for Christ:

You are no longer looked at with suspicion but you are called and then commissioned.

When you reclaim your mornings for Christ:

You are no longer satisfied with survival, you hunger for revival.

When you reclaim your mornings for Christ:

It's no longer us and them, but it's Jesus coming again.

It's no longer who I am, but Whose I am.

It's no longer where I've been, but where I'm going.

It's not about who I know, but Who I follow.

It's not about "Out of my way", but it's about, "Can I help you find the Way?"

(source: www.annointed.net)

Praying Together Activity

Jesus promised that when people gathered together in His name to pray, things would get done.

The activity can be done on Sabbath afternoon program or Friday night. As you plan the weekend of prayer activities, these are good ideas to involve people in prayer, intercession, praise, and adoration.

All the exercises are provided for group use, but you can do them with the church also.

(All the scripture readings are from NKJV).

Activity 1: Two Kinds of Prayer

Scripture

Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: ¹⁰Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' ¹³And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted" Luke 18: 9-14.

Prayer Activity #1

The passage above is about the Pharisee and the tax collector, and the object is for members of the group to pray for one another as they see themselves in the light of both attitudes.

Begin the prayer activity by having the passage read aloud. Then have the group divide up into pairs. One person will pretend to be a very proud religious leader who, like the Pharisee, seems to be "God's man" and is well respected in the religious community. The other person will adopt the attitude of, let us say, a repentant criminal or someone with AIDS. Like the tax collector, he doesn't seem to be "God's man" and is disliked by the community.

So often, we Christians lose the humility our name advertises. This frequently occurs with groups. Can you think of ways in which judgmentalism or a "superior" attitude may be undermining your group's prayers? Close the activity with a time of prayer to ask God to help your group become more humble, especially by

holding ever before you the grace by which we all stand before God, grace truly undeserved and ... amazing.

Hymn: "Amazing Grace", SDA Hymnal, 108

Activity 2 - Remembering People far Off

Scripture

"I Thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, ⁵for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, ⁶being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; ⁷just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. ⁸For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ.

⁹And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God." Philippians 1:3-11

Prayer Activity #2

The apostle Paul has written a letter to Christians whom he had not seen in a long time. They were special to him, and it was a letter of thanksgiving and joy for the ways that the Philippians had helped him. Have everyone in the group think of people who live far away, perhaps overseas or in another state, and let it be the people who have been a good influence in their lives.

Here is a way everyone in the group can send a prayer letter to God for their far away friends or loved ones. Begin by having the above passage read aloud. Then go around the group and have each person pray for a farway friend by putting Paul's prayer in his own words, addressing it to God. Each person may want to stop and highlight one or two of the verses that seem especially appropriate.

You may long to see this friend, yet your love and affection for the person can go up to God in prayer as you remember them in the group. Your love for the person in prayer may result in your friend's greater love and service to God. This is what Paul wanted for his friends, and the way in which he prayed for it is bold and rich.

Hymn: "Near to the Heart of God", SDA Hymnal, 495

Activity 3- Remembering the Suffering

"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. ⁵For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. ⁶Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. ⁷And our hope for you is steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also you will partake of the consolation" II Cor 1: 2-7.

"And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" II Cor 12:9.

Prayer Activity #3

Here the group will pray for people who are hurting or suffering, be it physical, emotional, or spiritual affliction. The object of this group prayer will be both for healing from pain and suffering, and for the person to be comforted by God the Father in the midst of affliction. That is the point of the passages, and it is reinforced by God's revelation that His grace will never be insufficient.

A suggestion, then, is to have the passages read aloud, and then go around the group with each person praying for one or two people. Prayer could be made that the suffering would receive strength, encouragement, and hope, if it is a non-Christian being prayed for, prayer could be said that the person would find God in the midst of the ordeal. Prayer could also be said that the person would have opportunities to be an encouragement to others who suffer in similar ways.

No one likes to suffer, and this is a very practical way to pray for those who are afflicted. You may never know what their hardships are like, but you can empathize in prayer for God to bring comfort.

Hymn: "Blessed Assurance", SDA Hymnal, 462

Activity 4: Remembering Our Mission

Scripture

"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. ¹⁷When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but

some doubted.¹⁸And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen." Matthew 28: 16-20

Prayer Activity #4

Devote a group prayer time to prayer guided by this command. Take time to establish the context for the prayer by having the group read Matthew 28:16-20— out loud. Mention this simple job description Jesus gave to each one of us: Go, make disciples, teach and baptize. Then, pray for the challenges we have today as we touch a heart and tell the word. Ask each one of the group to pray for the six challenges women face: Poverty, Abuse, Illiteracy, Woman's Workload, Threats to Health, Lack of Training and Leadership Opportunities. Close the activity asking the Holy Spirit to enable each one to be involved with our mission: "Touch a Heart, Tell the World."

Hymn: "So Send I You", SDA Hymnal, 578

Source (*Into His Presence: Spiritual Disciplines for Inner Life*, Ian Bunting general editor, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993).

Someone Is Praying For You

Somewhere someone's praying
Down upon their knees
Lifting you before the Throne
With love and gentle pleas

Asking God to give you strength
To face another day
And when the night is darkest
Shine light upon your way

Somewhere someone's kneeling
To whisper your name in prayer
Knowing that you need to feel
God's love and tender care

They intercede on your behalf
Because they love you so
Knowing that you have a need
To their Father they will go

They pray when you're not able
To speak a single word
What peace there is in knowing
Their prayers will be heard

They lay you on the altar
As they kneel there at His feet
Giving all your cares to Him
There at the mercy seat

Our God is always listening
To every earnest prayer

**When we look to Him for help
The answer is always there**

**It's such a comfort to know
That someone prays for you
Placed within His loving hands
Those prayers will see you through**

**As you kneel before the Father
Thank Him for those who care
When you bow before the mercy seat
Whisper their name in prayer**

Author: Linda M. Oliver

Prayer Quotes by Ellen White

IN PRAYER WE SENSE THE PRESENCE OF JESUS.—If we keep the Lord ever before us, allowing our hearts to go out in thanksgiving and praise to Him, we shall have a continual freshness in our religious life. Our prayers will take the form of a conversation with God as we would talk with a friend. He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Often there will come to us a sweet joyful sense of the presence of Jesus.—(*Christ's Object Lessons*, 129.)

IF WE FIND TIME TO PRAY, GOD WILL FIND TIME TO ANSWER.—Every earnest petition for grace and strength will be answered. . . . Ask God to do for you those things that you cannot do for yourselves. Tell Jesus everything. Lay open before Him the secrets of your heart; for His eye searches the inmost recesses of the soul, and He reads your thoughts as an open book. When you have asked for the things that are necessary for your soul's good, believe that you receive them, and you shall have them. Accept His gifts with your whole heart; for Jesus has died that you might have the precious things of heaven as your own, and at last find a home with the heavenly angels in the kingdom of God. {Prayer, 100.1}

If you will find voice and time to pray, God will find time and voice to answer.—(*My Life Today*, 16.)

REJOICE THAT GOD HAS ANSWERED YOUR PRAYERS.—Pray in faith. And be sure to bring your lives into harmony with your petitions, that you may receive the blessings for which you pray. Let not your faith weaken, for the blessings received are proportionate to the faith exercised. "According to your faith be it unto you." "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matthew 9:29; 21:22. Pray, believe, rejoice. Sing praises to God because He has answered your prayers. Take Him at His word. "He is faithful that promised." Hebrews 10:23. Not one sincere supplication is lost. The channel is open; the stream is flowing. It carries with it healing properties, pouring forth a restoring current of life and health and salvation.—(*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 7, 274.)

PRAYER IS NOT ALWAYS ANSWERED IMMEDIATELY.—God has a heaven full of blessings for those who will co-operate with Him. All who obey Him may with confidence claim the fulfillment of His promises.

But we must show a firm, undeviating trust in God. Often He delays to answer us in order to try our faith or test the genuineness of our desire. Having asked according to His word, we should believe His promise and press our petitions with a determination that will not be denied.—(*Christ's Object Lessons*, 145.) {Pr 105.5}

When those who know the truth practice the self-denial enjoined in God's word, the message will go with power. The Lord will hear our prayers for the conversion of souls. God's people will let their light shine forth, and unbelievers, seeing their good works, will glorify our heavenly Father.—(*Messages to Young People*, 315.)

KEEP ASKING, EVEN IF THE ANSWER DOES NOT COME.—Sometimes answers to our prayers come immediately; sometimes we have to wait patiently and continue earnestly to plead for the things that we need, our cases being illustrated by the case of the importunate solicitor for bread. “Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight,” etc. This lesson means more than we can imagine. We are to keep on asking, even if we do not realize the immediate response to our prayers. “I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Luke 11:9, 10. {*Prayer, 111.1*}

We need grace, we need divine enlightenment, that through the Spirit we may know how to ask for such things as we need. If our petitions are indited by the Lord they will be answered.—(*Counsels on Health, 380.*)

SOMETIMES GOD DOES NOT GIVE US WHAT WE PRAY FOR BECAUSE HE HAS SOMETHING BETTER FOR US.—When we come to Him we should pray that we may enter into and accomplish His purpose, and that our desires and interests may be lost in His. We should acknowledge our acceptance of His will, not praying Him to concede to ours. It is better for us that God does not always answer our prayers just when we desire, and in just the manner we wish. He will do more and better for us than to accomplish all our wishes, for our wisdom is folly.—(*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 2, 148.*) {*Pr 113.1*}

That prayer which comes forth from an earnest, believing heart is the effectual, fervent prayer that availeth much. God does not always answer our prayers as we expect, for we may not ask what would be for our highest good; but in His infinite love and wisdom He will give us those things which we most need.—(*Testimonies for the Church, vol. 4, 531.*)

PRAYER BRINGS US INTO CONNECTION WITH GOD.—If we come to God, feeling helpless and dependent, as we really are, and in humble, trusting faith make known our wants to Him whose knowledge is infinite, who sees everything in creation, and who governs everything by His will and word, He can and will attend to our cry, and will let light shine into our hearts. Through sincere prayer we are brought into connection with the mind of the Infinite. We may have no remarkable evidence at the time that the face of our Redeemer is bending over us in compassion and love, but this is even so. We may not feel His visible touch, but His hand is upon us in love and pitying tenderness.—(*Steps to Christ, 97.*)

GOD ALWAYS ANSWERS PRAYER



When your request is not right, God says, "No."

No, when the request is not the best He has in mind for you.

No, when the idea is absolutely wrong.

No, when though it may help you, it could create problems for someone else.



When the time is not right, God says, "Slow."

What a catastrophe it would be if God answered every prayer at the snap of your fingers. Do you know what would happen? God would become your servant, not your Lord. God would be complying with your wishes instead of you serving Him.

When you are not right, God says, "Grow."

Remember: God's delays are not God's denials. His timing is perfect. Patience and perseverance is what we need in prayer:

The selfish person has to grow into unselfishness.

The overly cautious person must grow courage.

The timid person must grow in confidence.

The dominating person must grow in tolerance.

The negative person must grow in positive attitudes.

The pleasure-seeking person must grow in compassion for suffering people.



When everything is all right, God says, "Go."

Then miracles happen:

The helpless alcoholic is set free.

The covetous becomes generous.

The drug addict finds release.

The angry-prone person becomes forgiving and patient.

The doubter becomes as a child in trust.

Diseased tissue responds to treatment and healing begins.

The door to your dream suddenly swings open and there stands God saying, "Go!"



If the Lord has you on hold, hold on!
If the Lord has said "No" to you, thank Him!
If the Lord is molding your heart and mind, go with His change!
If the Lord opens doors that you have been asking Him to open, praise Him!
Be trustful and grateful wherever you are in your life today.
God, who knows what is best for you, has His hands on the situation.

(Source: College University Dialogue, Volume 19 - I 2007)