

COVERING  
*your*  
LIFE  
*in*  
PRAYER

ERWIN W. LUTZER



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## **COVERING YOUR LIFE IN PRAYER**

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To my lovely wife, Rebecca,  
who covers my life and that of our extended family  
with regular, believing prayer.  
“Her children rise up and call her blessed;  
her husband also, he praises her:  
‘Many women have done excellently,  
but you surpass them all’” (Proverbs 31:28-29).



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# Praying from the Abundant Riches of Scripture

Often when we pray for others, we either fall into meaningless repetition, or submit a grocery list of requests to God, hoping that He'll respond to our wishes and desires. When we've finished praying, we end up being unsatisfied, fretful, and uncertain as to whether or not we can trust God with the assignment we've just given Him.

My personal experience has been that such “need-based” praying is often boring, filled with uncertainty, and reduces prayer to a meaningless exercise.

What if we changed our perspective on prayer and began to pray Scripture? What if we echoed back to God that which we know is His will? Wouldn't that stimulate our faith, bring glory to Him, and rid us of the repetition that Jesus warned us about when He said, “When you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition” (Matthew 6:7)?

Years ago I discovered that when I pray Scripture, I anticipate my time of prayer with excitement, wondering exactly what I would pray next. Best of all, praying in this way sinks deep roots into God's promises and His will. Such prayer is effective not just in moving God's heart toward us, but in giving us a deep and settled satisfaction of knowing that we've just connected with our heavenly Father.

Will you join me in praying Scripture for ourselves and others?

God has blessed Rebecca and me with eight lovely and lively grandchildren. Long ago I gave up on the idea of simply listing their names before God and asking Him to “bless” them. What I've chosen to do is pray for each one of them one day a week beginning from the eldest to the youngest (I pray for two on Saturday!). And each week I choose a passage of Scripture to pray on their behalf. In other words, I use the

same passage for each child, but adapt it to their needs and ages. So while I pray the same verse each day of the week, I'll adapt the passage for each child individually—mentioning other concerns and requests in the process, yet keeping the Scripture passage as the core of the prayer.

I encourage you to do the same for your children, your spouse, your friends, and for yourself. As you do, you'll discover in the course of time that you are praying for both your and their spiritual and material needs. Of course I hope that whole families can unite around these passages and pray them. I encourage you to choose seven (or more) people for whom you'll pray each as you follow along on this prayer journey.

Praying the same verse for various people during the week should in no way exhaust the praying you should do each day. Rather, this will help you get started on a journey that I hope will last a lifetime. An added benefit is that you'll probably have memorized the verses by the time the week is over!

Throughout the next 52 weeks, we will alternate between the Old and New Testaments as we pray passages of Scripture. The beauty of praying in this manner is that there is an abundance of promises, prayers, and verses all through the Bible that can be adapted for prayer. What I present in this book is only a sampling of the vast resources of Scripture.

Are you ready to begin?



Spread out your petition before God, and then say,  
“Thy will, not mine, be done.”  
The sweetest lesson I have learned in God’s school  
is to let the Lord choose for me.

*D.L. Moody*



Week 1

## A Prayer Against Fear and Greed

*“After these things the word of the LORD came to  
Abram in a vision: ‘Fear not, Abram, I am your shield;  
your reward shall be very great.’”*

—GENESIS 15:1

Let’s understand the importance of this promise! Four powerful kings of the north plundered the five kings of the south (near the Dead Sea) and carried off all the treasures of the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah.

When Abraham learned that Lot was among the captives, he rallied 318 troops and pursued the attackers all the way north to Dan (about 140 miles!). Then he continued his pursuit all the way to Hobah (another 100 miles!). In a night attack, he rescued the plundered possessions as well as the frightened captives—Lot among them.

As for the king of Sodom, he was so grateful to Abraham for bravely rescuing the people from his city that he wanted only his people returned to him. As for the possessions, Abraham could keep them for himself. But Abraham refused this offer, saying he didn’t want the king of Sodom to be able to say that he made Abraham rich. Abraham was trusting God alone for any wealth he might receive.

This leads us to the promise of Genesis 15:1: “Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great.”

God gave these words to Abraham because: (1) Abraham might be tempted to live in fear that the kings he’d defeated might retaliate and organize a raid against him. Furthermore, (2) Abraham had just said no to a great deal of wealth that could have legitimately been his. God said that He would reward Abraham.

Indeed, the Lord Himself would be Abraham's reward. What an encouragement these words were!

Let's take the promise God gave Abraham and adapt it as a prayer for someone we love—someone who is experiencing a time of doubt and fear. And let us pray it for ourselves too.

### **A Prayer to Begin Your Time of Intercession**

Father, I pray today for \_\_\_\_\_. I pray that You'll be a shield to them, protecting them spiritually and physically. Let no evil person do harm against them. Also, personally, guard their emotions from the enemies of fear and doubt. I pray that they will rest in Your promise of protection and that their hearts will be filled with a quiet confidence that You are with them, beside them. Help them to flee to You as their refuge and strength. Replace fear with trust and peace.

Also, I pray that they might be kept from the greed that would spoil their relationship with You. Like Abraham, protect them from foolish "get rich quick" schemes or using deceit to earning money. Above all, let us be motivated to seek Your face and not just ask for blessings from Your hand. Let us all be faithful and content with You as our great reward.

I pray in the powerful name of Jesus, Amen.

Week 2

## A Prayer for God's Presence in the Midst of Injustice

*“Joseph’s master took him and put him into the prison, the place where the king’s prisoners were confined, and he was there in prison. But the LORD was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. . . . The keeper of the prison paid no attention to anything that was in Joseph’s charge, because the LORD was with him. And whatever he did, the LORD made it succeed.”*

—GENESIS 39:20-21,23

Think of the significance of this remarkable account.

Joseph is imprisoned, based on a false accusation. Potiphar’s wife tried to lure him into sexual sin, and when he refused, she scorned him and had her husband throw him in jail.

Yet God displayed His grace to Joseph even as he was incarcerated in a primitive, harsh dungeon. God was with Joseph when he was exalted in Egypt, and here, we see God with Joseph to bless him even in the darkness of the cavern—with his feet in shackles and his neck in irons (Psalm 105:17-18).

God is with us in our promotions and our demotions; He is with us when we are hired and when we are fired, when our salary is increased and when it is decreased. God walks with us through times of blessing and injustice, exhilaration and sorrow.

Life can be cruel, and even our friends can be ready to betray us. And, in this litigious society, truth is twisted and frivolous lawsuits are often filed with the worst of intentions. Like Joseph, we must maintain our integrity with the sure confidence that God is watching, orchestrating and caring for us.

God uses injustice in the lives of His children. He does not leave us when everyone else does. He knows both sides of every story. Best of all,

He even knows the hidden motives of every heart. Our friends might not understand; our enemies will intentionally distort, malign, and slander without cause. But God knows all and assures us that vengeance belongs to Him.

As far as Joseph was concerned, he had no reason to believe that he would ever get out of prison. He had no attorney to represent him; there were no laws to which he could appeal. He was stripped of his dignity, reputation, and rights. Yet God had a surprise for Joseph. One morning he was whisked out of the cell to interpret pharaoh's dream, and before he knew it, he was riding on a chariot, second in command to the pharaoh himself.

God might also surprise us by delivering us from false accusations. Meanwhile, if we continue to find ourselves the victim of injustice, we can be reminded of the words frequently spoken by Corrie ten Boom: "There is no pit so deep that God's love is not deeper still."

After giving praise to God and yielding yourself to Him, adapt these verses to pray for yourself or a friend when you are distressed by injustices done to you or them.

### **A Prayer to Begin Your Time of Intercession**

Father, I pray today for \_\_\_\_\_ and ask that You might give them great faith even if unjustly treated; show them steadfast love and favor in the sight of all who know them. Help them to resist sexual sin even as Joseph did. And when mistreated at school or work, help them to remember that they need not avenge themselves because You are the avenger of all wrongs.

Give them such obvious integrity that others might trust them implicitly because they recognize that You are with them. Father, we know that integrity, once lost, is difficult to restore, so help them to resist all temptation that would compromise their moral and spiritual values—even when under pressure. And whatever they do, cause them to succeed in a way that reflects Your glory and favor.

Finally, may we always remember that Your presence is with us, even as You were with Joseph. May this assurance of Your constant presence keep us from sin and loneliness. Help us to enjoy Your company.

We pray in Jesus' name, Amen.