

## Morning and Evening Prayers<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Luther's Morning Prayer

We give thanks unto thee, heavenly father, through Jesus Christ thy dear Son, that thou has protected us through the night from all danger and harm; and we ask thee to preserve and keep us, this day also, from all sin and evil; that in all our thoughts, words, and deeds, we may serve and praise thee. Into thy hands we commend our bodies and souls, and all that is ours. Let thy holy angel have charge concerning us, that the wicked one has no power over us. Amen. (11)

### 2. Luther's Evening Prayer

We give thanks unto thee, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, thy dear son, that thou has this day so graciously protected us, and we ask thee to forgive us all our sins, and the wrong which we have done, and by thy great mercy defend us from all the perils and dangers of this night. Into thy hand we commend our bodies and souls, and all that is ours. Let thy holy angel have charge concerning us, that the wicked one has no power over us. Amen. (11)

### 3. Melancthon's Morning Prayer

Almighty, eternal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of heaven and earth and man, together with thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, thy Word and Image, and with thy Holy Spirit: Have mercy upon us and forgive us our sins for thy Son's sake, whom thou has made our Mediator according to thy wonderful counsels, and do thou guide and sanctify us by thy Holy Spirit, who has poured out upon the apostles. Grant that we may truly know and praise thee throughout eternity! Amen. (3)

### 4. Prayer for the Morning

We render unto thee, O heavenly Father, most hearty thanks, by thy dear Son Jesus Christ, that this night past thou has granted<sup>2</sup> of thy fatherly goodness to preserve us from all evil, and to give our bodies rest and sleep: We now most entirely ask thee that, as thou has raised up our bodies from sleep, so that likely though will deliver our minds from the sleep of sin, and from the darkness of this world; that we, walking the light of thy blessed Word, may do only that which is pleasant in thy sight, profitable to our neighbors, and healthful to our souls. Amen. (21)

### 5. Calvin's Morning Prayer

Grant that we may hear thy voice in the morning, since we have hoped<sup>i</sup> in thee. Show us the way in which we should walk, since we have lifted our souls

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<sup>1</sup> These prayers, with exceptions noted, are taken from *Prayers of the Reformers*, compiled by Clyde Manschreck. Muhlenburg Press, 1958, pp. 109-115.

<sup>2</sup>"Vouchsafed."

unto thee. Deliver us from our enemies, O Lord; we have fled to thee. Teach us to do thy will, for thou art our God. Let thy good Spirit lead us in the right way.

O God, our Father and Savior, who of thy goodness has watched over us during the past night, and brought us to this day, grant also that we may spend it wholly in thy service. Let us not think, or say, or do a single thing that does not tend to thy service and submission to thy will, that thus all our actions may aim in the glory of thy name and the salvation of our brethren. And as thou do give the light of the sun to this world, so enlighten our minds and hearts by thy Spirit that he may guide us in the way of thy righteousness.

To whatever purpose we apply our minds, may the end and the intention be thy honor and service. May we expect happiness only from thy goodness. Let us not attempt anything, O God, that is not pleasing to thee. Grant us also, Lord, that while we labor for the maintenance of this life and its concerns, we may raise our minds above them to the blessed and heavenly life, which thou hast promised to thy children.

Be please also, in manifesting thyself to us as our Protector, to strengthen us against the assaults of the devil, and deliver us from all the dangers which continually beset us in this life. But seeing it is a small thing to have begun well unless we also persevere, we entreat thee, O Lord, to be our Guide and Directors not only for this day for the days of our lives. Increase the gifts of thy grace until we wholly adhere to thy Son Jesus Christ, who is the true Sun lighting our minds. IN order that we may obtain from thee these great and manifold blessings, forget, and out of thy infinite mercy, forgive our offenses, as thou has promised that thou will do to those who call upon thee with a sincere heart. Through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen. (20)

## 5. Confession of Sin

Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done and we have done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us.

But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou those who confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent; according to thy promises declared unto mankind in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for His sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life; To the glory of thy holy Name. Amen. [Thomas Cranmer, *Prayerbook of the Church of England*, 1549 edition.]

## 6. What Hope Is (Calvin's Catechism)

Hope is nothing else than the expectation of the things that faith has believed to be promised by God. Faith believes God tells the truth; Hope expects God will demonstrate his truthfulness at the opportune time. Faith believes God to be our Father; Hope expects He will always act as such toward us. Faith believes eternal life to be given to us; Hope expects that it shall be revealed at some time. Faith is the foundation on which Hope rests; Hope nourishes and maintains Faith. Because no one can expect and hope anything from God, except he or she will have first believed

his promises. On the other hand, it is necessary that our feeble faith be sustained (lest we grow weary and fail). So patient hope and expectation keep faith.<sup>3</sup>

### *7. Hinnunter ist der Sonnen Schein*

Sunk is the sun's last beam of light,  
And now the world is swapt in night,  
Christ, light us with Thy heavenly ray,  
Nor let our feet in darkness sway.

Thanks, Lord, that Thou throughout the day  
Has kept all grief and harm away;  
That angels tarried round about  
Our coming in and going out.

Whate'er of wrong we've done or said,  
Let not the charge on us be laid;  
That, though Thy free forgiveness blest,  
In peaceful slumber we may rest.

Thy guardian angels round us place,  
All evil from our couch to chase;  
Our soul and body, while we sleep,  
In safety, gracious Father, keep. Amen.  
- Nicholas Herman, 1560 (44)

### 8. Calvin's Evening Prayer

O Lord God, who has given man the night for rest, as thou has created the day for his work, we ask thee to give our bodies a night of rest that our minds may awake to thee and our hearts be always full of thy love. Let us never forget thee, O Lord, nor thy goodness. Let the remembrance of thy mercy be always engraven on our minds. Grant that our sleep may not be an indulgence but only serve to strengthen us that we may be more alert in thy service. Be pleased to keep us chaste in body and mind and safe from all temptations and dangers that our sleep may turn to the glory of thy name. But since this day has not passed away without our having in many ways offended thee through the proneness to evil, just as all things are now covered by the darkness of the night, so, O Lord, let everything that is sinful in us lie buried in thy mercy; Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (20)

### 9. *O Lux, beata Trinitas*

O Light, O Trinity, most blest!  
True God, supreme and ever blest!  
As now the sun of day departs,

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<sup>3</sup> John Calvin, *Instruction in Faith* (1537). Translated with historical foreword and critical and explanatory Notes by Paul T. Fuhrmann. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1959, pp. 55-56.

Outpour Thy beams upon our hearts.

To Thee at morning our hymns we praise,  
At evening offer prayer and praise;  
And Thou our glorious theme shall be;  
Now and through all eternity.

As darkness deepens, Lord, do Thou  
A night of quiet rest bestows;  
From all our sins grant us release,  
And bless us with Thy perfect peace.  
- Ambrose, Luther, 1543 (45)

## Table Prayers

### 1. A Table Prayer of Luther

The eyes of all wait upon thee, O Lord: and thou gives them their meat in due season. Thou open thine hand, and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

[Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer and after this prayer:]

O Lord God, heavenly Father, bless unto us these thy gifts, which of thy tender kindness thou has bestowed upon us, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.  
Luther (43)

### 2. A Table Prayer of Luther

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endures forever. He gives food to all flesh: He gives to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry. He delights not in the strength of the horse; he takes not pleasure in the legs of a man. The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.

We give thanks to thee, O God our Father, for all thy benefits, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with thee lives and reigns, forever and ever. Amen. (43)

### Prayers of Philip Melanchthon<sup>4</sup>

1. Almighty, eternal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Creator of heaven and earth, and man, together with my thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, thy word and image, and with thy Holy Spirit, have mercy upon us, and forgive us our sins for thy Son's sake, who thou hast made our Mediator according to thy wonderful counsels, and do thou guide and sanctify us by thy Holy Spirit, which was poured out upon the Apostles. Grant that we may truly know and praise thee throughout all eternity!

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<sup>4</sup>These prayers are taken from Clyde Leonard Manschreck, Melanchthon: The Quiet Reformer. New York and Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958, pp. 308, 316.

**2. O Almighty, Eternal God of Truth, . . . I confess and I am deeply sorry that I am sinful and have so often sinned against Thee. I implore Thee to forgive me all my sins, be gracious unto me, and justify me for thy beloved Son's sake, whom thou didst decree to be our Redeemer. With thy Holy Spirit purify my heart and guide my soul that I may truly know, adore, and be obedient unto Thee, O God of Truth, Eternal Father, Son and Holy Ghost . . .**

**Almighty, eternal, everliving God of Truth, Maker of heaven and earth, and Creator of men, together with thy eternal beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who was crucified for us and raised for death, and with thy Holy Spirit, everliving, pure and true: O God of wisdom and goodness, mercy and justice: O Savior bountiful, righteous, and faithful, through whom life and light are given: Thou hast said, "I do not desire the death of a sinner, but that he be converted and live," and "Call on me in time of trouble, and I will deliver you :"** To Thee do I confess myself a miserable sinner, burdened with many iniquities, for I have greatly sinned against thy holy commands, and I am heartily sorry that I have offended thee. For the sake of thy dear Son, have mercy on me, forgive me all my sins, and make me righteous through Jesus Christ, my Lord, thy Son, thy eternal Image and Word, whom thou didst send into the world to be for the world a Sacrifice, Mediator, Redeemer, Deliverer and Savior, according to thy wondrous wisdom and mercy which is past our understanding. Sanctify me with thy holy, living Spirit of purity and truth that through thy Spirit I may truly know thee as the only God, the omnipotent Creator of heaven and earth and men, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; that I may know thy Holy Spirit of truth and purity, my living Comforter; that I may firmly believe in thee, obey thee, give thanks to thee, reverently fear and call upon thee, and come at last in joy to behold thy face and worship thee forever. In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed. Deliver me through thy righteousness. Turn me, O Lord, unto righteousness and eternal life. Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth!

**Mercifully preserve and rule our churches, our country, our schools. Give the blessings of peace and order. Direct and protect our leaders and those in authority; gather unto thyself and forever keep a Christian Church in this land. Purify and unite us with thy Holy Spirit that we may be one in thee, truly knowing and calling upon thee through thy Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, who tasted death on the cross for us and rose again.**

**Almighty, eternal Son of God, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, though thou art the eternal Word and Image of the father, our Mediator and Redeemer, who died for us and rose again, with all my heart I give thee thanks, for thou didst take upon thyself the nature of a man and became my Deliverer, didst suffer physical pain, didst die and arise again. And now thou art pleading for me. I beseech thee, look graciously upon me and have mercy, for I am alone and in need. I beseech thee, look graciously upon me and have mercy, for I am alone and in need. Through thy Holy Spirit increase in me the light of faith, help me to overcome my weakness; guide, protect and make me pure. In thee do I put my trust, O Lord; let me never be ashamed.**

**Almighty, Holy Spirit of truth and purity, our living Comforter, enlighten me, direct me, and sanctify me. Strengthen the faith in my soul and heart, and grant me a sincere trust. Sustain and guide me that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, that I may see the will of the Lord, that I may forever be in**

God's holy temple, and with a joyous heart give thanks unto him, and in the assembly of his eternal church honor and praise him forever. Amen.<sup>5</sup>

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### **3. A Prayer of Becon**

For this thy bountiful goodness in feeding us at this time, we heartily thank thee, most merciful Father, desiring thee to feed our souls likewise with that meat which perishes not, but abides into everlasting life; that we, being fed both in body and soul at thy merciful hand, may do that always which is pleasant in thy sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Becon (21)

### **4. A Prayer of Becon**

O heavenly Father and merciful God, which opening thy hand replenishes all living creatures with thy blessing, and gives meat to the hungry in due season, we acknowledge our meat and drink to be thy gifts, prepared by thy fatherly providence to be received of us from the comfort of our bodies with thanksgiving: We most humbly ask thee to bless us and our food, and to give us grace so to use these thy benefits, that we may be thankful to thee, and liberal to our poor neighbors, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. Becon (21)

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<sup>5</sup> This prayer was offered by Master Philip for the last time "on 19 April 1560, and after he had had his hair cut and had put on three clean linen shirts, as was his custom. His fever mounted and his feet remained cold. Audibly and fervently he prayed the prayer he was in the custom of using" in his daily prayers. *Ibid.*, pp. 316-317.

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## SOURCES

*(The numbers correspond to the numbers given in parentheses at the end of each prayer.)*

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2. *Martin Luthers Sammtliche Werke* Erlangen). Vol. 56: 318, 320, 326, 332, 335, 338, 345, 347, 357f.
3. *Corpus Reformatorum, Philippi Melanchthonis Opera, 28 vols., ed. By Bretschneider and Bindweil (1834-1860)*. 5, 541; 6, 458, 574, 611; 7, 1075; 8, 578, 776; 9, 158, 336, 747, 1055; 10, 116, 118, 284ff, 292, 628f, 644, 959, 984; 11, 708, 750, 763, 798, 854, 889, 907, 954, 1010, 1168f; 12, 100f, 350; 21, 866f; 23, lxxxviff, 68f, 74, 198, 255, 288, 338, 382, 557; 28, 422f, 450, 554, 566. Six of these prayers appeared in *Melanchthon: the Quiet Reformer*, by Clyde Manschreck (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958). Used by permission of the publisher.
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6. John Calvin, *Sermons on Job*.
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9. *Writings of John Knox* (London: Religious Tract Society, n.d.).
10. Otho Wermullerus, "Hope of the Faithful" and "Treatise on Death," in *Writings and Translations of Bishop Coverdale* (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1841).
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17. Martin Luther, *Latina litania Correcta*, 1529; WA 30<sup>III</sup>, 29-42.
18. John Calvin, *Sermons on Acts*.
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  22. Thomas Cranmer and his associates. These were prayers to replace the petitions in the Missal of Sarum which had objectionable features (1549, 1552).
  23. Austrian Church Order, 1571.
  24. Martin Luther, *Hymns*, 1529.
  25. F. A. Koethe, *Philipp Melancthons Werke* (1829-1830), I-VI.
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  29. John Calvin, *Sermons on Matthew*.
  30. *Brunswick-Luneburg*, In die Pentecostes (1564).
  31. *Tr. Catherine Winkworth*, 1858.
  32. Leon and Elfrieda McCauley (eds.), *The Book of Prayers* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1954).
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  34. Martin Luther, *Taufbuchlein verdeutscht* (1523).
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  37. Church Order, Calenberg, 1569
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  48. Bucer, *Consultation*, 1543. Based on Luther's *Taufbuchlein verdeutscht* (1523).
  49. Martin Luther, *Das Taufbuchlein* (1526).
  50. Luneburg Church Order, 1564.
  51. Martin Luther, *Hymns* (1524), tr. A. Russell.
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