

Seed=Grains of Prayer

A Manual for Evangelical Christians

By Wilhelm Loehe
Lutheran Pastor

Translated from the original German 36th Edition

By H. A. Weller, A.M.
Lutheran Pastor in Orwigsburg, Pa. (1914)

And prayers 29-34, 78, 86, 95, 144, 211

By Benjamin T. G. Mayes, Ph.D.
Lutheran Pastor in St. Louis, Mo. (2006)

With an Introduction by

Henry Eyster Jacobs, D.D., LL.D., S.T.D.
Dean of the Faculty of the Lutheran Theological Seminary
at Philadelphia, Pa.



Cover artwork by Edward Riojas
10385 Byron Center Ave., Byron Ctr., Michigan 49315

Copyright © 2010 by Emmanuel Press
11155 Hubbard, Kansas City, Kansas 66109
www.emmanuelpress.us

All rights reserved. No part of this publication's cover artwork or content may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from Emmanuel Press.

ISBN 978-1-934328-02-6

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|------|
| Introduction | iv |
| Preface to the Emmanuel Press Edition. | v |
| Preface to the First Edition. | viii |
| Preface to the Sixth Edition | ix |
| Introduction to Prayer | 1 |
| I. PREPARATORY PRAYERS. | 3 |
| II. SPIRITUAL DAILY LIFE | 8 |
| A. Psalms. | 8 |
| B. Morning Prayers | 10 |
| C. Daily Prayers | 12 |
| D. Grace at Meat | 13 |
| E. At the Ringing of the Prayer Bells. | 17 |
| F. Hourly Prayers | 19 |
| G. Vesper, or Evening Prayers, for Daily Readiness to Die. | 20 |
| H. Evening Prayers. | 21 |
| III. THE CHRISTIAN WEEK: | 27 |
| A. In General | 27 |
| B. In Particular. | 28 |
| C. Themes for Each Day of the Week | 35 |
| 1) The Lord's Day | 35 |
| 2) Monday. | 65 |
| 3) Tuesday. | 81 |
| 4) Wednesday | 97 |
| 5) Thursday | 108 |
| 6) Friday | 118 |
| 7) Saturday | 128 |
| IV. THE CHURCH YEAR | 144 |
| A. Table of the Movable Festivals Based on Easter | 144 |
| B. Special | 171 |
| C. The Seasons | 172 |
| V. INTERCESSORY PRAYERS | 176 |
| VI. CONCLUSION: Adenda | 192 |
| APPENDIX: Prayers for Children. | 197 |
| A. General Prayers | 198 |
| B. School Prayers | 200 |
| C. Church Prayers | 201 |
| D. Morning Prayers | 202 |
| E. Evening Prayers | 203 |
| F. Grace Before Meat | 204 |
| G. Grace After Meat. | 205 |
| Index | 206 |

INTRODUCTION

There can be no doubt as to the great desirability of a handbook of brief and condensed prayers, in the English language, truly expressive of the faith and life of the Christian religion, as the Lutheran Church understands and confesses it. An attempt is herewith made to supply this want. The prayers are gems of devotion gathered throughout all ages of the Christian Church, which have been brought together, arranged for use, and supplemented by one of the most devout and practical pastors and theologians whom our Church has produced. His exquisite liturgical taste was not confined to the work of providing for public services; but, in various ways, to the cherishing and cultivation of the personal, religious life. These brief prayers, many of which have stood the test of ages of use, like the collects in the service, are seeds of thought, suggestive of more than they directly express, and form a great contrast to the tedious, diffuse and intensely subjective prayers of another type of religious and theological thought. The Rev. H. A. Weller has done well in giving them a proper English form. Their wide circulation in families and for individuals ought to be earnestly promoted. The pastor will find this volume a most important aid for his own devotion and for leading the devotions of others.

Henry Eyster Jacobs
Lutheran Theological Seminary
Mt. Airy, Philadelphia
January 1912

**PREFACE TO THE
EMMANUEL PRESS EDITION**

Almost 100 years after the first English Edition of the Seed-Grains of Prayer and more than 150 years after Wilhelm Loehe's German editions, Emmanuel Press is once again watering the seeds. We will not try to add or detract from the introduction written by H.E. Jacobs or the prefaces already included from the previous editions of this time-tested prayer book originally compiled by the Pastor Wilhelm Loehe. We will simply give the peculiarities of this edition from the preceding.

First, we want to draw attention to the fact that this English edition includes prayers left untranslated in the previous edition. For this we owe our thanks to the Reverend Dr. Benjamin T. G. Mayes. He translated prayers 29-34, 78, 86, 95, 144, and 211. This completes the prayers from Pr. Loehe's original German edition.

Second, we have taken the liberty of clarifying the structure of the major and minor divisions of this prayer book by font format. We felt it added a simple structural clarity which was lacking before. While these changes are minor and do not affect the content, we wanted to make mention of them for those familiar with the previous edition. We feel the simpler, clearer outline format better suits modern readers.

Third, the subject index at the end of this edition references the prayer number and not the page number.

Outside of these minor additions and format changes, we have sought to allow Pr. Loehe to once again plant these reverent, historical, collect-style prayers in Christian homes and congregations. May the Lord bless you through the ongoing, ever-contemporary divine conversation of these prayers. No matter who plants and who waters, it is God who gives growth (1 Cor. 3:5-9).

*Michael Nathaniel Frese
Emmanuel Press
The Festival of the Reformation, 2010*

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

In many devout hearts a desire has asserted itself that we might have in the American Church also a book of devotion, for private and family use, in the tongue in which our children are being educated. Conscious of this desire, the translator has undertaken to set into the English language this precious compilation of the prayers of many saints in the ages past.

He has recognized that, however conscientiously and faithfully his love for these long tested prayers of Christendom constrained him to reproduce the thought and expression of the sainted author, no one who has ever seriously undertaken such a work can comprehend how in every translation of devotional thought and expression, there is something elusive which needs to be fused, moulded, and worn into the daily life-language of the people; and, to translate the language of the heart of one people into the heart-language of another so that, in its new dress, it may effect the same crystal clearness and kindle the same quickening heart-fires, is a task which few ever hope to accomplish satisfactorily. This seems to be especially true of these Seed-Grains of Prayer, suggestive of more devotional thought than they directly express.

Conscious of the many shortcomings, we bespeak the forbearing generosity of the critic, to whom all books are only material challenging the exercise of his wit, and send this volume forth as a granary of seed grains, not altering the title given by its author for reasons set forth in the preface to his first edition. We give it into the hands of all devout Christians with the prayer that He, Who commands and desires all men everywhere to offer up intelligent and acceptable prayers, may deign to make this translation, as He made the original volume to be life-bearing seed grains, which, planted and nurtured by the Holy Spirit in many hearts, shall, under His benediction, bring forth a harvest of true prayer and consecrated devotion, so long as men shall speak the English tongue, grateful everywhere for the privilege of knowing the labor of William Loehe, that devout servant of the Lord and His Church.

Grateful recognition is due to the Reverend Professor Henry Eyster Jacobs, D.D., LL.D., S.T.D., Norton Professor of Theology and Dean of the Faculty of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, Pa., for his valued introduction to the volume.

The Translator
Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania
Epiphany, 1912

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The prayers herein are called Seed-Grains, because they are little grains of seed; like seed grains they are the product of life and, in turn, bear within them the power of life. They are not a product of yesterday; but, even as man has often found long hidden grains of seed which, after centuries, served for the sowing and brought forth fruit abundantly, so these prayers have not lost the power of their nativity. May God add His blessing and prosper the same, that they may be unto all Christian People, precious, even as are the prayers of Avenarius.*

* Habermann

PREFACE TO THE SIXTH EDITION

In the presentation of a new edition of this book, the author has ever kept the same aim in view. By changes and additions he has sought to give his book that form and completeness which might permit it to be stereotyped and make all further changes and additions superfluous. This was particularly kept in view in the preparation of this sixth edition. Would that he might have attained his purpose. The most utilized part of the book may well be that containing the Morning Prayers and the Evening Prayers, yet these alone would not suffice in every place, and a demand for more Saturday Prayers became evident and was duly considered. All that was possible to do to meet this demand has been done. The Festival Prayers, by which a praying soul might sink itself deeply into the import and significance of the particular festival, were especially missed in the earlier editions. Heretofore, strictly adhering to his purpose to have a booklet of short collects only, the author has yielded to a frequently expressed desire of the people, and, along with the earlier festival collects, has set some longer festival prayers together with their prefaces. By reason of this the book has been much enlarged. To the collection of Week Day Prayers very few, four, have been added.

The Introduction, or, How to order Family Devotion, which is found at the beginning of the Week Day Prayers, is another result of many requests. The collection of hymns, and in part also of psalms, was added on motion of a man who is a very dear friend, and well worthy to be an accepted counselor of others, especially in the matter of hymn selections. Perhaps the guide to an order of service, binding upon none, may be a welcome addition to many. The several other minor additions speak for themselves, as well as the greater sequences of the order and rubrics of the separate prayers which appear in many places.

May this sixth edition of the SEED-GRAINS have the blessing of the Lord and be helpful to His Church. Amen.

W. L.
Neuendettelsau, Germany
July 5, 1854

INTRODUCTION TO PRAYER

1. Christian Rules of Prayer, as laid down by Matthesius.

To true, Christian and salutary prayer it is requisite:

1) That a man lift up holy hands (II Timothy 2) and offer his devotions with a good conscience; for God heareth not sinners who are not repentant (John 9).

2) That a man pray in every time of trial and need; for the greater our need, the stronger is our prayer. Therefore also God, in the 50th Psalm, says: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble." (Always and everywhere there is sufficient provocation to prayer if one will but realize it.)

3) That a man pray, cry and sigh from out of the depths of his heart, without hypocrisy, anger, complaint or doubt, even as Moses prayed upon the shore of the Red Sea. Lip-service and mouth-work in which the heart participates not, is a vain service of God (Matthew 15).

4) That a man call upon the one, true and only God as He has revealed Himself at the River Jordan, as Christ teaches in the Gospel (John 16), and in the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6; Luke 11).

5) That a man plead the name, merit, blood, death and intercession of Christ for help, and the support of the Holy Ghost (John 4 and 14).

6) That a man pray with all boldness as Abraham prayed (Genesis 18); with a mighty faith, as the centurion prayed; without murmuring or impatience, continuing instant, as did the Canaanitish woman; and with humility, as did Daniel (Daniel 9).

7) That a man persevere, as Sirach teaches; and set no limit or goal for God, as is said in Chapter 8 of the Book of Judith.

8) He that will thus pray needs first of all to believe that he is reconciled to God through His Son, and must base his pleas upon Baptism and the blood of Christ as well as upon God's command and promise. He must embrace the promise of Christ and the example of all the saints, and remember that God has frequently helped others before us (Psalm 22:34).

If prayer is to be rightly offered, all these things must be well observed and kept: 1. Holy hands and a good conscience. 2. Our need. 3. From the heart, without hypocrisy. 4. Calling upon the

name of the one, only God. 5. In the name of Jesus Christ, who is the soul of all prayer. 6. Boldly. 7. Perseveringly. 8. In faith. Such prayer pervades heaven, as Sirach says; and makes our joy perfect, as Christ witnesses, John 16. It attains help, gives comfort, joy, and a sure defense against all devils and evil men.

I. PREPARATORY PRAYERS

The Lord is in His holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before Him. (Habakkuk 2:20).

From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name, and a pure offering; for My name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 1:11).

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. (Psalm 19:15).

For Grace to Pray Aright

2. I thank Thee, O Lord, my God, for Thine unspeakable favor, that Thou hast not only commanded us to call upon Thy saving name, but, as a Father, hast graciously promised certainly to hear us, and to grant in due season all that is salutary and profitable for our bodies and our souls. I pray Thee, O God, pour out upon me Thy Holy Spirit—the Spirit of prayer—that I may ever love and desire to pray; being daily free to approach Thee, with all confidence, in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ; to bow the knee before Thee in every time of need, as a child well beloved, O most beloved Father, Who art really a Father unto all Thy children in heaven and on earth. Grant that I may always lift up unto Thee holy hands, without fear or doubt, and in full assurance that all my prayers and sighings which come from the heart, are truly heard. Grant also, that when my help delays I shall be patient, not dictating to Thee either time or measure, but to wait and abide Thine own good time; for Thou hast pleasure in them that fear and put their trust in Thy mercy. Finally, O God, rule and remind me by Thy Holy Spirit that I may daily and frequently meditate upon the hour of my death and be momentarily prepared, while I pray sincerely for a blessed departure hence. Amen.

3. Merciful God, we do indeed not know what we should pray, neither how we should present our petitions unto Thee. We are by nature negligent and indifferent to pray, and our little earthly occupations do so easily keep us away from, or at least hinder us in our prayers. To all this come the manifold temptations of the devil, ever ready to make us err on all sides in our prayers. There-

fore, I pray Thee, O Lord, my God, pour out upon me abundantly the Spirit of grace and prayer, that I may boldly surmount every hindrance and pray unto Thee diligently according to Thy will, and obtain all those things that are salutary and needful for me both in soul and body, now and evermore, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, my only Savior. Amen.

4. Merciful, gracious and loving Father in heaven, Thou hast commanded me to pray. Thy loving Son has taught me to pray, and by His gracious vow has promised me a hearing. Thy Holy Spirit frequently puts in my heart a reminder that I shall pray. I know that every good gift cometh from above, from the Father of light; and Thy glory, as well as my own need, demand that I shall pray. I am conscious how prayer is a blessed conversation with Thee, and Thou answerest me in the comfort of holy thoughts. Besides these I have multiplied examples of the saints and of my Lord Jesus Christ that without prayer neither help nor comfort can be attained. Yet, I am negligent and reticent in prayer, depending more upon my own wisdom and works than upon Thy grace and support. O pardon unto me such foolishness, such self-sufficiency and disregard for Thy divine promises. Turn from me the sore punishments which Thou hast threatened unto them that despise Thy grace, when Thou sayest that Thou wilt in turn despise them, and that they who follow after another shall surely have much sorrow of heart. Grant me, instead, the Spirit of grace to pray. Make me to call to remembrance Thy consoling promise: He that calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved; before that they cry I will hear, and while they yet speak I will answer; the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him; whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, that will He do; who among you will offer his son a stone when he asketh for bread? By such Thy promises, Lord, kindle my soul with a flame of sincere and fervent devotion, and let my prayer avail before Thee like the sacrifice of Noah. Let it echo in Thine ear as the bells of gold upon Aaron's robe, and as the harp of David.

O Lord, Searcher of hearts, Who provest our hearts and bowels, Thou knowest how human hearts and minds waver, much more unstable than are the waters moved by the wind. Establish Thou my devotions that I be not swayed by so many and various thoughts. Thou, much better than I, canst quiet the ship of my soul and establish and govern it. Arise, O Lord, to command the winds and waves that trouble my soul, that they be still, and I rest in Thee, beholding Thee with open countenance and abid-

ing in unity with Thee. Lead me into the solitude where I may hear and behold naught but Thee, that Thou mayest converse with me and I with Thee, unheard and unseen of men. By Thy grace remove far from me all that hinders my devotion, be it the world, or the will of my own flesh, or passion, or covetousness, or impatience, or unbelief, or pride, or implacability, or impenitence. Take from me the heart of stone that I may realize Thy Holy Spirit's ardor, love, comfort and most generous answer. Let the Holy Ghost move my heart with desire; let Him cry, call, pray, praise, thank and testify, witnessing unto my soul that I am indeed a child of God. Let Him be the advocate of my soul with unspeakable sighings before Thee, and fill me, as Thy temple, with heavenly thoughts, with divine love and joy. By Thy Spirit, O God, cause me to be in unity with Thy Son, Jesus Christ, that in Him and through Him and by Him, as our head, I may pray acceptably. By Thy Holy Spirit also, cause me to be united and to abide in communion with all believing souls and Thy whole Christian church, that I, together with all Thy church, for the church and in the church, may pray as in Thy sanctuary and be heard in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Before the Lord's Prayer

5. Heavenly Father, gracious God, I am a poor, miserable sinner, unworthy to lift up mine eyes, hands or voice unto Thee in prayer. But, since Thou hast Thyself commanded us all to pray, and hast promised to hear us, giving us from Thyself both the words and manner of prayer, by Thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; I pray, according to Thy promise, grant me the spirit of grace and of prayer, that with fervent heart I cry to Thee for mine own and the needs of all men, in true faith; that my prayer may be heard according to Thy promise. Upon Thy word and command, I come to Thee, rendering obedience to the same, and relying upon Thy Gracious promises; and, together with all Thy blessed Christendom on earth, pray as Jesus Christ has taught me: our Father who art in heaven, etc.*

6. Almighty, eternal, heavenly Father, by Thine only Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, Thou gavest unto the apostles a prayer, which Thou hast caused to be preserved even unto us, wherein it is revealed that Thou desirest men of prayer to pray to Thee in spirit and in truth. Therefore, we poor sinners, lost in error and lacking

* Martin Luther.