



Prayers of the Ancients

120 daily meditations
from 2,000 years of
Christian devotion

Foreword

Wayne Zeitner

In the summer of 2001 we took our young family to Mount Rushmore, arriving at sunset on a cloudless evening. As I sat and looked up at the sober faces of four U.S. presidents, the evening stars began to appear.

Soon I sensed that I was being examined. Beneath George Washington's silent gaze, I felt my life being measured against a standard from another time.

That encounter with four witnesses in the clouds pierced me... and the gentle reproof I received at that mountain cathedral still echoes within me.

Those who have gone before us are now in heaven's grandstand. But when they were on this earth their eyes looked at the same stars I saw in South Dakota. Their minds, like ours, reeled with questions of meaning and significance. Their hearts cried out for relief and understanding. Thankfully, some among them left us a record of their own encounters with the Ancient of Days.

My friend Eddy Duhan has been captivated by the writings of brothers and sisters from long ago. He updates them for us in an effort to slow the hands of time. I pray that the words of a second-century lyricist, of ministers and deacons and poets, of Puritans—men and women from England and America—all resonate within your soul. And may you rediscover a timeless God who is making all things new.



*Make me to understand the way of thy precepts: so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.
Psalm 119:27*

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THE ODES OF SOLOMON

These are the earliest known Christian hymns and psalms—dating from the 2nd century. Written in Aramaic, this collection is comprised of forty-two odes. The anonymous author is thought to have been a Jewish-Christian—and no relation to King Solomon. The Odes were likely chanted without instrumental accompaniment.

EPHREM THE SYRIAN

The most prolific early writer, Ephrem was born in 306 in Nisibis (modern-day Turkey) into a Christian family. Baptized as a youth and ordained as a young man, he immediately started composing hymns...many of which were mini-sermons. Fleeing Persian invasions, Ephrem and his flock fled to Edessa where he taught and wrote until his death in 373.

AURELIUS AMBROSIUS OF MILAN

Born 337 in Trier, northern Italy, Ambrosius followed his father into public office, becoming governor in Milan in 370. His hasty election as Bishop prevented violence during a tumultuous power struggle in 374. Saint Ambrose devoted himself to prayer and scripture, growing into an accomplished preacher and writer. He brought allegorical interpretation to the western church, and pioneered the study of Christian typology.

ROMANOS THE MELODIST

Born in 490 to a Jewish family in Damascus, Romanos was baptized a youth, ordained in Beirut and ministered in Constantinople. He is said to have spontaneously chanted his first—and most famous—hymn, *Kontakion of the Nativity*, after seeing a vision during an all-night vigil service. Romanos lived at the Monastery of Kyros until his death in 556.

CÆDMON THE MELODIST

The Celtic Saint Cædmon's birth date is unknown, though he died in 680. Historian and 8th century monk Bede wrote: "In the Monastery of this Abbess was a certain brother remarkable for the Grace of God to make religious verses. Out of scripture, he put forth sweet and humble poetical expressions in English, his native language. By his verse the minds of many were excited to despise the world, and aspire to heaven."

GIOVANNI FRANCESCO DI BERNARDONE

Born in 1181 in Assisi, Italy, young Francis lived a privileged life befitting the son of a successful cloth merchant. But in 1204 he had a vision that caused him to renounce material wealth. He and his followers lived a simple life of poverty, but were cheerful and full of songs, making a deep impression on all who heard them. From canonization in 1228 he has been known as St. Francis of Assisi.

THE PURITANS

Puritanism began in 17th century England as a reform movement against secular and superstitious tendencies in the Church of England. Their political demands were foiled, but their fierce devotion to Jesus Christ and their rejection of worldly corruption had enormous effects upon England and—following the Great Migration to Massachusetts in the 1630s—also on America. Their hallmark was intense self-examination and high standards of personal Christian behavior.

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

Upon their discovery between 1947 and 1956 these famous documents confirmed the accuracy of the Old Testament, being 800 years older than the then-oldest manuscripts. But only forty percent of the scrolls are Biblical—the majority containing other Jewish writing, including poetry and praise.

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I Feel It Is Heaven

a Puritan prayer

I feel it is heaven to please thee
To be what thou would have me be
Pure as Christ is pure
Holy as thou art holy

Be pleased to live and move in me
Breathing in my prayers
Inhabiting my praises
Speaking in my words

I feel it is heaven to embrace thee
To know the love thou hast planted in me
Before I loved thee
Thou first loved me

Thy bountiful goodness helped me believe
Awakened my faith to a glowing flame
Moving in my actions
Growing me in grace



*The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
Romans 8:26*

Prayers of the Ancients

Grace To Satisfy

Ephrem the Syrian

Make me whole and I will be whole
Only wise and merciful physician
Heal the wounds of my soul
Open my eyes to thy eternal design

I am like a waterless land
There is nothing I can say or do
Thou O Lord, who know the heart
Know my soul thirsts after thee

My mind is like a prisoner
It seeks the only Savior
Grant thy grace and truth
Increase it in me as a kind Father

O giver of light, impart to my heart
Just one drop of your grace
Consume all my evil thoughts
That thy love may burn like a flame



I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me...
Psalm 3:4

God By Nature

Aurelius Ambrosius of Milan

Thou God, by nature
Are uncompounded
Joined to nothing
Composed of nothing
And nothing happens by accident
To thee

In the depths of the sea
In the heavens or on earth
Thou cannot be measured or seen
I can but follow thee by faith

Only possessing
In thy Nature
That which is divine
And ever complete
And everywhere present
At the same time



*Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.
Revelation 9:6*

Wandering Children

a Puritan prayer

O eternal source
Author and Creator
Thou made man capable
Of knowing his maker
But degeneracy has overspread
Our human race
Rendering us forgetful
Glory turned to disgrace

Call thy wandering children back
Impress on us a sense of thee
Give bounties to the indigent
Restoration to the sin-sick
Love to the prodigals
Joy to the sorrowing
And by thy Spirit's breath
Blow off the ashes of unbelief

Fill the garden of my soul
With the wind of thy love
From thee proceed all good purposes
All good desires from above
To glorify thee and to bless men
The great end of my being
To gather fruits to thy kingdom
Is my greatest calling



*Thou shalt call me 'My Father,' and shalt not turn away from me.
Jeremiah 3:19*

Living Water of Eternity

The Odes of Solomon

As the wind glides
The harp strings speak
So the Spirit
Speaks through his love

It was from the beginning
And will be 'til the end
That what should be known
Has been given us

Our spirits praise his Holy Spirit
By the living water of eternity

His praise he gave us
On account of his name
It spread over the earth
And filled everything

It went forth as a stream
And became a great river
And held back from death
We who drank living water



Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give shall never thirst...
John 4:14

He Took What Is Mine

Aurelius Ambrosius of Milan

He took what is mine
To impart what is his
That He might fill me with his nature
That he might fill me with his love

He took what is mine
To give what is his
That he might fill me with his mercy
That he might fill me with his grace

And he granted me a seat in heaven
For in Christ I am forgiven
The Word of God forgives my sin
Who took and gave with his own hand



Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows...
Isaiah 53:4

Prayers of the Ancients

There Is A River

Aurelius Ambrosius of Milan

Blessed be God the Father
And blessed be our Lord and Savior
The only-begotten Son of God
Filling with thy loving kindness

Confessing thee, O Son of God
Are everlasting and very God
All powerful and wise
Immortal, full of grace

There is a river which runs like a torrent
Making glad my peaceful soul
The fullness of this stream lifts its voice
That I might drink of the living Christ

Now seated in the stern of heaven
Steering in the teeth of the waves
That I may not be shaken
By the force of the raging surge

I hold fast the rudder of faith
For the sea is vast and deep
And Christ is my secure harbor
From this world's heavy storms



*He...said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.
Mark 4:39*

Prayers of the Ancients

Exodus

Cædmon The Melodist

Far and wide throughout the earth
Echoes the reward of a heaven-bound life
Thy beloved shall after death gain lasting peace
Granted to all who answer thy call, O Christ

Thou Lord of Hosts, thou King of Righteousness
Hath showered me in this wilderness
Working in my sight great wonders
Blessed of God, I make ready to bless others

I lift now the shield of faith, and not afraid
Looking to thee, beholding a marvel
Christ with outstretched arms hath made a way
Destroyed sin and death, defeated the devil

Earthly joy is fleeting, oft stained with sin
Exiled in long days of anguish, I wait
Homeless, tarrying at this dusty inn
Mindful that a day of wrath awaits all men

Thou Lord thyself shall judge all hearts
Then lead the souls of righteousness
To heaven in light, life and joy forever
With thee to dine in blessedness



*The fine linen is the righteousness of saints...they are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.
Revelation 19:8-9*

The Voice Of The Prodigal

Romanos the Melodist

Having foolishly abandoned
Thy paternal glory
I squandered on vices
The wealth thou gavest me
Master and Lord of the ages

O compassionate Father
I cry unto thee
With the voice of the prodigal
I ask that thou save me
Master and Lord of the ages

Receive me O Lord
As one repentant
And make me
As one of thy hired servants
Master and Lord of the ages



I will arise and go to my father..
Luke 15:18

The One Hope

Ephrem the Syrian

Thou, O Victor, pierced by nails
On the cross call out to sinners
Saying come freely and receive forgiveness
To thee I lift unrelenting prayers

O my Savior turn away thine eyes
From all my lawlessness
By thy sufferings heal my sores
That I may glorify thy kindness

O all-good One
Whose kindness is greater
Than the deceit of the world

Strengthen my miserable soul
With hope in thy kindness
For my soul is weak
It holds on only by thy mercy
And it hopes to find comfort in thee



It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

Lamentations 3:22

Prayers of the Ancients

Before The Cross

a Puritan prayer

Before the cross
I kneel and see
The crown of thorns
Thy hands and feet
Thy blood is the blood
Of incarnate God
It holds infinite worth
Beyond all thought

Sin is my malady, my monster, my foe
Chaining me captive in my own soul
I walk here humbly, yet not in humiliation
Triumphing gloriously as an heir of salvation

Infinite must be the evil
To demand such a price
The bruised body
The dying cries
Sinner that I am
Why would the sun give me light?
Thy love endured my curse
Thy mercy bore my stripes



*He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief..
Isaiah 53:3*

Prayers of the Ancients

Make Me An Instrument

Anonymous Franciscan Prayer

Lord make me an instrument of thy peace
Where there is hatred let me show thy love
Where there is injury thy healing grace
Where there is doubt true faith in God above

Lord make me an instrument of thy peace
Let me bring hope where there is despair
Let me shine thy light where there is darkness
Where there is sadness joy in praise and prayer

O Master grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console
To be understood as to understand
To be loved as to love with all my soul

Lord make me an instrument of thy peace
In giving I receive from thy hand
In pardoning am I set free
In dying to self am I born to eternal life



In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves...
Philippians 2:3

Look Upon Me

Ephrem the Syrian

O Most Holy look upon me
Abominable and unclean
Who has blackened soul and body
With stains of the unredeemed

Cleanse the passions of my mind
And my wandering thoughts
Bring my senses into order
Free me from my evil heart

That I might be made worthy
To glorify and praise thy name
Visible and invisible
Christ our God for all creation



Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Psalm 51:7

Prayers of the Ancients

All Sufficient King

a Puritan prayer

All sufficient King
When I come into thy presence
The glory of thy perfections I can see
Conscious of thy greatness
At the throne of thy eternal empire
Ten thousand times ten thousands minister to thee

Thy goodness hath always led me
From birth watched over me
At thy table thou hast fed me
Drawn curtains of love around me
Cared in all conditions for me
And every morning gave new mercy

Suffer me to not forget
Thy greater blessings coming yet
The earnest and foretaste of immortality
Holiness and wisdom
Strength and peace and joy
All these in Christ were given me



His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness...

II Peter 1:3

Prayers of the Ancients

This Is My Heaven

a Puritan prayer

To take him
To receive him
To possess him
To love him
To bless him
In my heart
In my soul
In my life

This is my heaven on earth
To live as Jesus would live
To be as Christ in this world
My heart and mind centered on him

In this world
He has given me
A beginning
And one day
I will be perfected
In the heavens above
To know his will
And to hold it in love



*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard...the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
I Corinthians 2:9*

Hymn On Creation

Cædmon The Melodist

Now let me praise the keeper
Of heaven's kingdom
The might of the Creator
The work of the Father

How each of his wonders
Were established to begin
By the eternal Lord
For the sons of men

First the keeper of mankind
Created the roof of heaven
And afterwards made
The earth for all men



*The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.
Psalm 24:1*

Christ Himself

Aurelius Ambrosius of Milan

Christ Himself
Is our mouth
Through which we speak
To the Father

Christ is our eye
Through which we see
The Father seated
Upon his throne on high

Without his intercession
Neither we nor all his saints
Have anything with God
Anything with God

Christ is my right hand
By which I offer
All my praises
To the Father



*He saves them to the uttermost that come unto God...he ever liveth to make intercession for them.
Hebrews 7:25*

Prayers of the Ancients

My Heart Was Raised Up

The Odes of Solomon

My heart was raised up
And enriched in his love
I now walk in his power
With a good name above
Standing firm in his will

For the sake of those in need
Besieged by misfortunes
Lord do not take thy word from us

Thou knoweth not vanity
And vanity knoweth thee not
For thou art perfection
Thou speakest only truth

Dark thoughts are but dust
Like the foam of the sea
The vain pursuit of happiness
Brings only poverty
Help me Lord to understand
The mind of the Most High
Lead me home by thy right hand
And I will honor thy great name



*I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.
Psalm 91:2*

Prayer of St. Ephrem

Ephrem the Syrian

O Lord and Master of my life
Grant me not an idle spirit
One of discouragement
Or of lust for power
Or of speaking empty words

Yea my Lord and King
Grant that I may see
My own transgressions
And not judge my brother

But bestow upon me
The spirit of chastity
Of meekness
Of patience
And of love for thee

For thou art blessed
Unto ages of ages
For all eternity



Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow...bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down...

Psalm 141:4-5

O Fountain of Loving-Kindness

Ephrem the Syrian

O fountain of loving-kindness
With eternal love for mankind
In word and deed I am careless
And only lay waste to my life

O all praised and all good Lord
Renew me as I grow old
Save me from becoming prey
To the corrupter of souls

Open to me thy compassionate Son
Direct my thoughts to repentance
Overlook my sinful failings
Show me the life in thy commandments

O my creator and my judge
Hear the prayer of these defiled lips
Make me an heir of glory
That I may obtain all the promise



If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive...and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

Prayers of the Ancients

The Pearl

Ephrem the Syrian

I saw in a pearl the mysteries
Of the kingdom and its majesty
The bright one that cannot be clouded
The truth undivided

Son of God and Lord of lords
Thou who art in all things
May the peace within thee
Become ours O king of kings

The Son was incomprehensible
He was wholly light
I saw his overflowing graces
And his hidden things made bright

He came up from the sea
From the living tomb
Like the pearl of greatest price
And purer than the sun



The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man...who found one pearl of great price...

Matthew 13:45-46

Prayers of the Ancients

Under His Care

a Puritan prayer

O Lord God, thou hast commanded me
To believe in Jesus
And

Flee to no other refuge
Wash in no other fountain
Build on no other foundation
Receive from no other fullness
And rest in no other haven

To rejoice under his care
Who is

Too kind to injure
Too wise to err
Too tender to crush

May I feel my need
Of a prince, a savior
Implore of him repentance
Forgiveness, love, holiness, pureness

To have the mind of Jesus
To show the world his likeness
And to tread in his footsteps



*Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.
Psalm 25:6*

Prayers of the Ancients

Unceasing Praise

a Puritan prayer

In public and in private
In sanctuary and in home
May live each moment in prayer
Like incense rising to thy throne

Driven by my need, beckoned by thy promise
Called by the Spirit into thy holy presence
My great sin reveals thy greater grace
And my soul offers unceasing praise

Until Christ shall reign supreme
In every word and thought and deed
Purify my heart to overcome the world
I'll ever cling to the cross that fastens me to thee

With this feeble faith
I fall at Jesus feet
For when guilt is most terrible
There is mercy yet for me

I have nothing of my own with which to repay
And there thy mercy in Christ is most free
By speaking peace to my contrite heart
And causing thy goodness to pass before me



*A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.
Psalm 51:17*

His Rest Is Forever

The Odes of Solomon

I was rescued from my chains and fled unto thee O my God
Thou art the right hand of salvation and my Helper
Thou hast restrained those who rose up against me
No more are they seen

I had been despised in the eyes of many
But thy face was with me
And saved me by thy grace
I acquired strength and help from thee
A lamp thou set on my right and my left
So there be nothing in me that is not light

I was covered with the cloak of thy Spirit
I removed my garments of pride
Thy right hand healed my soul
And made me mighty in truth, holy in righteousness

I became thine by the name of the Lord
Justified by thy kindness
Whose rest is forever



Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth...
Psalm 37:7

Thy Gentle Showers

The Odes of Solomon

Thy gentle showers bathe me in serenity
I am shaded 'neath a cloud of peace
Guarding me at all times
Thy tender care is salvation to me

Those around me were distressed and trembling
From their councils came only smoke and fury
But my heart was tranquil in the Lord
He was to me more than shade
More than foundation

As a child nurtured by his mother
I was refreshed by the dew of the Lord
Enriched by his favor
At rest in his perfection

I spread out my hands to ascend
I directed myself toward the Most High
And I was redeemed



The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day...
Psalm 121:5-6

Prayers of the Ancients

Paradise

The Odes of Solomon

When my heart was pruned
Its flower appeared, producing its fruit
And grace sprang up

He uncovered my inner being
And filled it with his love

Glory be to thee O God
The delight of thy paradise is forever
Thou art like the sun upon the face of the land
Blessed are the ones planted in thy garden

Along his paths did I run
Inhaling his peace
Standing upon the rock of truth
I beheld the fruitful trees
Rooted in an immortal land

I turned toward the Most High God
To the living water that will not cease
The Lord himself renewed me
And possessed me by his light



*In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.
Psalm 16:11*

Divine Holiness

a Puritan prayer

Great was thy work of creation
Speaking us into being with a word
Greater far was thy work of redemption
Costing thy Son's shed blood

I shall possess perfect redemption
When freed from the presence of sin
I shall be as thy angels, O God
When I see thy face in heaven

To glorify thy name, to bring thee pleasure
The reasons thou created us
As the sunshine warms thy blessed earth
So we are purified by thy divine holiness



*For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.
Habakkuk 2:14*

The Meltings Of Thy Heart

a Puritan prayer

May I feel the meltings of thy heart
In the manger of thy birth
In the garden of thine agony

May I love thee as I am loved
In the cross of thy suffering
In the tomb of thy resurrection

Thou gavest thyself for me
May I give myself to thee

Thou died for me
May I live for thee
In every moment of my time
In every movement of my mind

May I feel the meltings of thy heart
In thy heavenly intercessions



*It is Christ who died, and is also risen...at the right hand of God making intercession for us.
Romans 8:34*

Prayers of the Ancients

The Throne Of Grace

a Puritan prayer

I bless thee for the throne of grace
Where thy favor freely reigns
Opened through the blood of Christ
I enter thy holy place
Where thou invitest me to pour out my needs
I find thee ready there
To give more than I could ask or think
Fast bound from worldly care

Flooding my mind with thy peace
My acts of worship, life
My food, the precious word
My defense, the shield of faith
My drink, the streams that flow
Down from thy glorious throne
My meditation, sweet
My heart, to thee alone

But I am unworthy to meet thee there
I enter before thee a sinner
Condemned by conscience and thy word
Ignorant, weak in danger
My soul is drawn out to thee
In longing and desire
Give me Jesus son of God
He is my mediator



Come boldly to the throne of grace...obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

Prayers of the Ancients

Help Me To See

a Puritan prayer

O Lord forgive me
For serving thee in sinful ways
By glorying in my own strength
By trusting in presumed grace
By ministering for temporal gain
By accepting others' praise

These special evils of righteous sin
Are base as any breach of thy law

Help me to see
That faith is stirred
By grace that does the deed

Help me to see
That faith brings a man
Nearer to thee
Help me to see
What faith sees
And knows abundantly

Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Faith centers upon thee
As in thy commands and promises
All hidden power faith can see
Help me to abhor myself
In comparison to thee
And keep me in faith that works by love
And by grace that serves effectually



He must increase, but I must decrease. He who comes from above is above all...

John 3:30

Prayers of the Ancients

Creation Song

Duban eʒ Schreiner on Psalm 104

He wraps himself in light
As with a garment
He spreads out the heavens
And walks on the wings of the wind

He sends forth the springs
From the valleys
They flow between mountains
The birds of the air
Dwell by the waters
Lifting their voices in song

Singing glory, glory
Glory to the Lamb
All praises and honor forever

He made the moon for its seasons
The sun knows its setting
He looks at the earth and it trembles
He touches the mountains
And they smoke

I will sing to the Lord all my life
I will sing praises to my God
As long as I live
Praises to the Lord O my soul



*The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works.
Psalm 104:31*

Prayers of the Ancients

My Still-Sinning Soul

a Puritan prayer

God my Father, good beyond measure
Who knoweth my still-sinning soul
O break it, wound it, bend it, mold it
That I cause thee not grief, but pleasure

Many times have these lips confessed
Having served thine adversary foul
In deeds vile, wretched, miserable, blind
Though I wish to bring fruit fit to bless

Show this cold heart the repugnance of sin
Which removes me from thee and all good
May I hate it, abhor it, bewail it, flee from it
Grant forgiveness and cleanse me within

Thy loving Spirit yet strives with me
Working deep and abiding repentance
In warnings and whispers — startling providences
'Til at last I have found fruitful grief

Tho' I tremble and mourn and lament and distress
Tho' I sin, do I yet love thee
And through these tears may my weary eyes see
Thy ever-saving cross



*Blessed be the...Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort...
II Corinthians 1:3*

Prayers of the Ancients

Brother Sun, Sister Moon

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

Praise to thee my Lord, with all thy creatures, for it is right
Especially sir brother sun, by whom thou giveth light

Praise to thee my Lord, with sister moon and stars at night
Precious and fair in the heavens, thou hast made them bright

Praise to thee my Lord, with brothers wind and air
By whom thou cherish all, through moods both stormy and fair

Praise to thee my Lord, with sister water
So useful and humble, so precious and pure

And praise to thee my Lord, with brother fire
By whom thou giveth light and warmth, playfully strong, beautiful to admire

Praise to thee my Lord, with sister earth
By whom thou sustain us with flowering fruit and herb

Praise to thee my Lord, with those you pardon in love
Blessed are they who endure in peace, to be crowned from above

Praise to thee my Lord, here with us unto death
Blessed are they it finds doing thy will, praising thee in every breath



*...the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness.
1 Corinthians 10:26*

Thy Deeds Are Wonderful

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

Thy deeds are wonderful
The only Lord God who is holy
Thou art great and thou art strong
The Most High, thou art almighty

Lord God all good and knowing
Thou art King of earth and heaven
Lord God true and living
Thou art the Three and the One

Thou art love and thou art wisdom
Thou art humility and endurance
Thou art rest, thou art peace
Thou art joy and thou art gladness

Thou art justice and moderation
Thou art all my riches
Thou art protector, my guardian
Thou art beauty and gentleness

Thou art courage, my hope
Thou art faith and my consolation
Eternal life, most wonderful Lord
Thou God Almighty have become my salvation



Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised...the joy of the whole earth.

Psalm 48:1-2

I Am Not What I Appear To Be

Ephrem the Syrian

My passions in the dark are not hidden from thee
Who knoweth the deep sores of my soul
O heal me dear Lord that I may be whole
Enlighten these eyes that they see

Captive, bound, I who had been set free
As one fallen into the hands of thieves
Thou alone on the earth can help me
None other has power to heal

My mind is clouded with unrighteous thoughts
Marooned in my own desert
I am weighed down, weary, burdened
Break my chains with bolts from heaven

I am not what I appear to be
Though fully known to thee
Yet forgiveness and love and mercy
Still do flow by thy grace unto me



*He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
1 John 1:9*

The Lord Directed Me

The Odes of Solomon

The Lord directed me by his word
He opened my heart by his light
To proclaim his peace to the nations
Who placed within me immortal life

Praise God in the high places
For His kindness to those far off
Changing hearts of all who come
The Son captured them
Then set the captives free
To bring his Father glory

Traces of light shone on our hearts
The dispersed were gathered together
We received his life and were saved
Becoming his own people forever



*No more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.
Ephesians 2:19*

Thy Dwelling Place

The Odes of Solomon

He who descended from on high
Who ascended from regions below
Who gathers what is in the middle
Who scatters, unbinds, overthrows
Destroys the seed of evil
Vanquishes the dragon with seven heads
He levels the way for those who believe
All authority is in his hands

Thou wast there and helped me
Incorruptible was thy way
In every place was found thy name

Thy right hand lifted us from the graves
Separated us from the dead
Covered our bones in flesh
Thou hast become our head
The world was brought to corruption
But everything will be renewed
Thy Rock is the cornerstone of thy kingdom
Thy holy ones have become thy dwelling place



You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood..."
1 Peter 2:5

Prayers of the Ancients

The Light Of Truth

The Odes of Solomon

I went up into the light of Truth
Carried in his winged chariot
Chasms I passed through
Gulfs assailed me not

He led me and bid me come
To his haven of salvation
Error fled from him who is upright
And I stood in the place of immortal life

He saved me from cliffs and valleys
The poison pains of death
The way of the deceivers
There is no truth in them

He who is Truth gave me rest in his garden
In the planting of his right hand
In the care and blessings of his lips
In the understanding of his mind

Let the Lord alone be glorified
Because he has planted me
Watered, endowed and blessed
Let the Lord be glorified



*I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.
John 14:6*

Prayers of the Ancients

One Hour Of Faith

The Odes of Solomon

One hour of faith in thee is better
Than all days and years without
None who put on thy grace shall be rejected
Thy heart is given to those who believe

Shower upon us thy gentle rain
Open thy bountiful springs
Supply us with milk and honey
For thy blessings bring no regret

Thy gifts are freely given
Never to be drawn back
Thy seal is set upon us
We are known as thy possession

Thy fellowship we have received
Not that thou needed us
But we are ever in need of thee
Thou O Lord, art the Maker of all



*For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever.
Romans 11:36*

Open Up Thy Heart

The Odes of Solomon

Open up thy heart
Let thy love abound
Bring forth fruit
Rise up and stand
On holy ground

Keep the mystery
Keep the faith
Know him in truth
Turn not away
He imprinted his seal
On thy face
Abide in the Lord
Pray and increase

Let the silent speak
Let the despised rise
Their righteousness will be lifted up
And they shall receive
The knowledge of the Most High



*I have...ordained that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.
John 15:16*

Prayers of the Ancients

A Cup Of Milk

The Odes of Solomon

A cup of milk was offered me
And I drank the sweetness
Of the Father
And the Son
And the Holy Spirit
This is the Lord's kindness

He was born of a virgin
Who labored and brought forth a son
By the father's great power
This is the Lord's manifestation

We who received the cup
We are in his perfection
We possess his life
We are the Lord's redeemed



*His Son...by whom he made the worlds; is the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person.
Hebrews 1:2-3*

Prayers of the Ancients

A Prayer

Aurelius Ambrosius of Milan

O God

Thou who gave thy servant grace
To proclaim righteousness on earth
And to share in thy reproach
For the honor of thy name

Grant to me and all thy servants
Faithfulness in thy Word
That we may be partakers
Of glory through Jesus our Lord

Who lives and reigns with thee
And the Holy Spirit
One God

Now

Forever

Amen



*He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.
Philippians 1:6*

Prayer Of Penitence

Aurelius Ambrosius of Milan

O God

I who presume to stand
In the presence of divine majesty
Have mercy upon me, a man
A sinner smeared in foulness and impurity

Forgive this unworthy one
Polluted by sins
Do not enter into judgment with thy servant
No one living is justified in thy sight

Remember, O Lord, that we are flesh
Weighed down in faults and desires
There is no other source of help than thee
Our life is hidden in thee, O Jesus Christ

Thou who wills not the death of a sinner
Have promised us eternal life in heaven
With our Lord Jesus Christ
And the Spirit, and thee forever
Amen



*If our earthly house dissolves, we have a building of God, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.
II Corinthians 5:1*

Prayers of the Ancients

In Brightest Hours

a Puritan prayer

Lord God Almighty
Whose arm cannot be stayed
Whose reach extends
Throughout eternal space
Holy is thy wisdom
Thy mercy, power and ways
Yet I am allowed to stand before thee
And give thee my praise

In brightest hours may I make ready for darkness
Teach me in good health to forget not my sickness
In my living prepare me for death

O immortal one
Revealed as thou art
In the person of thy Son
Lead me to repentance
Save me from despair
My offenses are numberless
All my works hang on thy care
Hoping in thy grace that flows
My soul seeks rest only in thee
And as I see the one who was pierced
I see one slain for me
And by me



*Thou hast made man a little lower than the angels...crowned him with glory and honor.
Psalm 8:5*

Prayers of the Ancients

To Be Like Thee

a Puritan prayer

My God I thank thee
Who helped me to see
That blessedness
Comes not from receiving

But from my giving forth
Of thy virtue and glory
That I am near good
When only I am near to thee

Thou art my magnet, my attraction
To be like thee, a glorious thing
The purpose of grace, to share thy glory
Where I partake of thy comfort and blessing

In thy every providence I feel thee close
How that in thy creation, in thy gifts
Thy hands are shaping me
Thou my earthly support, my eternal release



*Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord.
Ephesians 5:8*

Prayers of the Ancients

Love Beyond Compare

a Puritan prayer

With thee as pilot of my future
I hoist my sail, draw my anchor
To the waters ahead and the changing skies
Thou hast mercifully veiled my eyes
If storms of tribulation come
Thou wilt be with me in them
If tempests of persecution
I shall not drown

Thou art good when giving
And good when taking away
When the sun shines upon me
Or night steals the day
Truly thy goodness went with me
Through all these years
Leading me through the wilderness
With love beyond compare

If a painful end be my lot
Grant grace that my faith fail not
In retreating may I advance
Gaining headway when beaten back
Thy face I see sooner if I die
Making no provision to be cast aside
Glorify thyself in me, thru comfort and thru trial
Always for thy use as a chosen vessel



*It is the Lord your God who goes with you; He will not leave you or forsake you.
Deuteronomy 31:6*

Warrior Of Faith

Cædmon The Melodist

The all-just God, the Lord of heaven
Is with me
Strengthening my heart with grace
Granting triumph by his might and wisdom

Therefore I thrive in all my dealings
The Lord God prospereth me with his hand
In all my ways, O Lord, grant me favor
In word and deed with friend or foe

Since I am wretched and in exile
I pray for thy promise and thy pledge
That according to thy kindness
Thou wilt be to me a faithful friend

To thy people be thou gracious
Thou judge of mortal fates
To those who persevere, thy treasures
Within thy borders, the warrior of faith



*Blessed be the Lord my strength which teacheth my hands to war:
Psalm 144:1*

Prayers of the Ancients

Thanksgiving Hymn

the Dead Sea Scrolls

I thank thee O Lord
Thou dealt wondrously with dust
And mightily toward this creature of clay
For the sake of thy glory
Thou purified a man of sin
And made him holy to walk in thy way

Now flow hymns of praise and thanksgiving
From my heart as a fountain everlasting
I will extoll thy name all the day long
And worship thee in the land of the living

I thank thee O Lord
For upholding me by thy strength
For pouring thy Holy Spirit upon me
Now because of thy mercies
I sing of thy goodness
And I thank thee, my God
I thank thee



It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises...

Psalm 92:1

Nothing Is Hidden

the Dead Sea Scrolls

I was shapen in clay
Kneaded in water
Ground in shame
A source of pollution
An edifice of sin
A straying spirit
With no understanding of Him

Fearful of righteous judgment
Nothing in me hidden nor absent
By thy mercies and great goodness
Thou strengthened my spirit
In the face of the scourge
Hath purified my erring soul

Thou hast created
Breath for the tongue
It bringeth forth sound
To tell of thy glories
Thy wonders recount
That thy name may be praised
By the mouth of all men
That they may know thee
And declare thy marvels
In the presence of all



With my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations.

Psalm 89:1

Prayers of the Ancients

Blessed Be The God Of Israel

the Dead Sea Scrolls

When the sun rises
In the firmament of heaven
We shall gather together
We shall bless and say
Blessed be the God of Israel

Peace be upon thee
Thou light of the day
Blessed be the God of Israel

At the feasts of joy
And the appointed times of glory
We shall gather together
We shall bless and say
Blessed be the God of Israel

At the gates of light
To illuminate the world
Blessed be the God of Israel



He was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 1:8-9

Prayers of the Ancients

From Eternity

the Dead Sea Scrolls

Thou art longsuffering in all thy judgments
Righteous in all thy deeds
Nothing is known lest thou permit
Nothing is done that thine eye cannot see
Thou hast spread the heavens for thy glory
The stars to their paths
Heaven's lights to their mysteries
And the clouds to their tasks

Thou hast created the earth by thy power
By thy might the depths of the sea
Thou hast fashioned all their inhabitants
Thou art before all things, from eternity

And to the spirit of man
Whom thou formed in this world
Givest thou dominion o'er the work of thy hands
These things I know
By wisdom which cometh from thee
For thou hast unstopped my ears
That thy word of truth may reach me



All things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things...
Colossians 1:16-17

Diadem Everlasting

Dead Sea Scrolls

I pray thou place on my head
A diadem in everlasting glory

Sanctify my seed
In glory without end

Renew thou for me
The covenant of everlasting priesthood

May thy unending blessing
Be the crown upon my head

Sanctify me
For the house of holiness

Lift thy countenance
Toward all my congregation

Judge thou all peoples
By the words of thy lips



Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life...

Psalm 23:6

Prayers of the Ancients

The Upright Cross

The Odes of Solomon

I extended my hands to my Lord
In the uplift of my hands is his sign
And my spreading arms the upright cross
That was lifted up holding the Righteous One

As the arm of the bridegroom over the bride
So is his arm over those who know him
As the bridal chamber crowns the home
So his love anoints the ones he has known

Death saw him and shattered
He descended as far as its depths
Its power broken, its grip released
Unable to endure his face

Those imprisoned ran to him
Son of God have pity on us
According to thy kindness
Free us from this darkness

His name he placed upon our heads
Thus are we now free and are his
He holds the faithful in his heart
Who were saved when we heard his voice



He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.
Ephesians 4:10

Prayers of the Ancients

My Voice Reached Him

The Odes of Solomon

I stretched out my hands toward the Lord
To the Most High I raised my voice

I spoke with the lips of my heart
He heard me when my voice reached him

My countenance rejoiced in the Lord's pleasure
My spirit exults in his love

My nature is renewed when he shines upon me
When fearful I trust Him and my redemption is assured

He alone possesses immortal life
Those who receive it are incorruptible

And so his Word came to me
Granting the fruit of my labors

And by the grace of the Lord
He gave me rest



*He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.
Psalm 145:19*

Grace Incorruptible

The Odes of Solomon

Thy grace was swift
Dismissing the corrupter
Out of the heavens to a mountain peak
Calling from one end of earth to the other

He drew all those who obeyed him
They did not see him as the evil one
He corrupted all their works
And the world fell before him

O thou sons of men, return
And their daughters, come
Get thee wisdom in the ways of truth
And be saved from destruction

God will enter into me
And will make me to know his will
His promise is a new name
And grace incorruptible in his new world



*An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.
1 Peter 1:4*

Prayers of the Ancients

Our Table

Ephrem the Syrian

We who are showered with his gifts
Give glory to his essence

We who have tasted of his goodness
Give thanks for his grace

I drank deeply at his spring
Thus my praises overflow

We who are filled at his table
Exalt him with our psalms

Blessed is the All-Good One
Who set forth with his hands
To make our table glorious

We who love the fruit of the vine
Sing hymns of thanksgiving

We who partake of his holy wine
Praise him again and again

We who drink from his cup
Have come to love his ways
And with all the heavenly host
Lift up the sounds of praise



O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

Psalm 34:8

Word Of God Come

Aurelius Ambrosius of Milan

Let the Word of God come
Let it enter in my heart
As an all-consuming fire
Refining for a fresh start

Let the Word of God come

Burn the wood, the hay, the stubble
The heavy lead of iniquity
That this earthen vessel be bettered
Consume thou all that is worldly

That this one unworthy becomes precious
In thy sight O Holy God
That my speech, that my understanding
Be purged by momentary light suffering



For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword...
Hebrews 4:12

Prayers of the Ancients

I Seek Thee

Aurelius Ambrosius of Milan

Not hiding my wounds
I seek thee for healing
Not surrendering to shame
I seek thee for mercy

I have found thee in love
And loved thee in finding

Thou art my refuge from strife
May my spirit be present with thee
And tread thy ways all of my life
Dwelling in gladness and tranquility

I seek thee in longing
And long for thee in seeking



*I flee unto thee to hide me....lead me into the land of uprightness.
Psalm 143:9-10*

Prayers of the Ancients

The Little Child God

Romanos the Melodist

The maker of heaven came down
Born of a virgin
Grown in unwatered ground
Where forgiveness did blossom

This little child, God before the ages

Jesus the Christ, the true God
Of whom sang beings of fire, beings of clay
Has renewed all things
The old has passed away

This little child, God before the ages

Save the world O Savior
The purpose of thy journey here
To set thy universe aright
My guide, creator, redeemer



Being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death...
Philippians 2:8

Prayers of the Ancients

Call Back Adam

Romanos the Melodist

Mounted on thy throne in heaven
Riding on the colt on earth
Receiving praise from angels
And hymns from children
Who cried blessed art thou
All holy Son of God
Who came to call back Adam

Who bound hell, who slew death
And raised the world
With psalms did infants praise thee
O Christ the victor
Thou for all was crucified
We now rejoice, we call thee blessed
All holy Son of God
Who came to call back Adam

Number us with those who sing thy praises
O hear thy servant's supplications
Have mercy on us, who dwell with thee in love
Grant thy peace, that we be not shaken
We who heard thee call back Adam



*As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.
1 Corinthians 15:49*

Again To Paradise

Romanos the Melodist

The garden's flaming sword foretold a cross of wood
Where the sting of death and Hades were nailed
Where thou my Savior Christ didst die
That we be brought again to paradise

All things in heaven and earth rightly rejoice
To be restored again to paradise

Yet did we forget the types of this tree
The ark, the staff, the parting sea
Thy tree delivers wealth beyond price
For it blooms again in paradise

Most high and glorious God our Father
Thy willing humiliation is now our honor
We boast in thy cross, held near to our hearts
Its triumph called forth by all our instruments

We sing to the Lord our songs of paradise



*And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.
Luke 23:43*

Even To The End

Romanos the Melodist

When thy time with us was done
Things on earth united with things in heaven
The Spirit took thee to glory, Christ our God
Thou hast promised to be with us even to the end

I am with thee, who shall be against?

Abandoning to the earth these things below
Leaving the dust and ash in thy shadow
Flying to the gates of heaven on a cloud
Saying thou art with us even to the end

Mine eyes and hands I raise up high
Joy, praise, blessing my reply

*My peace I leave with thee, my child
I am with thee even to the end*



*Observe all things I have commanded: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.
Matthew 28:20*

Snare Without And Within

a Puritan prayer

Ten thousand snares await me
Without and within
Possessions and pleasures, sloth and vanity
Entice t'ward guilt and ruin

O purify and refine me
That I be rich toward thee
Grant me glimpses of heaven
To shape my mind in thy direction

Draw me O Christ near to thee
That I neglect not eternity
Nor my rebirth into dignity
That I ever increase in my love for thee

Form within me the image of Christ
A letter written with the Spirit's pen
And till my soil while my days are bright
That I be ripe for thy harvesting



For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works...
Ephesians 2:10

Prayers of the Ancients

The Hebrew Children Pray

Cædmon The Melodist

O Lord of all, thy might is strong
Thy name excellent in all the earth
Sublime and great in glory
Thy law just, sure and holy

O God of spirits grant us favor
Save and help us in this dire hour
We pray for mercy in our woes
O holy Lord wrapped in fire

God of wonders free us from the darkness
The blaze of heat and terror of the furnace
Above earth's roof reign thou o'er us
And humble those who walk in arrogance

Thanks be to thee O Lord of hosts
Who on Christ hath laid our punishment
Forsake us not eternal Lord
For thy mercy's sake and thy covenant

We worship thee, we bless thy Name
Thou Lord of man, Almighty Father
Holy Ghost, Son of God
And our eternal Savior



Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us...but if not, O king, we will not serve thy gods...
Daniel 3:17-18

Sanctified Sorrows

a Puritan prayer

This wilderness has been
A heaven on earth
These lessons, these truths
The preciousness of Jesus
The love of God
The sweetness of prayer
And the fitness for labor
All speak with one voice

I praise thee for the trials
I thank thee for the sorrows
Painful and sad though my path may be
The outcome will be most glorious

And in heaven
Where lives no sorrow
No chills nor wounds
Where no blight withers
There shall sweetest praises awaken
When we remember
The sanctified sorrows of earth



An entrance shall be ministered unto you...into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord...
2 Peter 1:11

Prayers of the Ancients

Unto Him

a Puritan prayer

Grace—free grace—will shine
Most glorious on that day
The songs so sweet, divine
Our Savior's heart will dance for joy

His eyes sparkle in delight
To see the whole of his redeemed
Gathered glorified before him
All of whom the Father received

O to be fired with love
By such glorious thought
How bright, how enchanting
To be a soldier of the cross

Unto him who loved us
Who washed us from our sins
Unto him be glory, be dominion
Forever and ever, amen



*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory & blessing.
Revelation 5:12*

Prayers of the Ancients

Unfathomed Love

a Puritan prayer

My soul muses in silent awe
At thy deep, boundless ocean
But like eternity, O God
Christ's love cannot be fathomed

Thy love stooped with thine incarnation
Thy grace is love acting
Thy silence, love in repose
Thy sympathy, love weeping
Thy cross, the altar of love

Thy travail, suffering, death
Love's burnt offerings all
Thy resurrection, love's triumph

Love sees my heart as it is
Hard, cold, fickle, sinful
Lost in despair, sad and mournful
I know my heart is evil

But thy love washes and heals it
Rescues me with but a touch
Returning me into thy kindness
Dissolving the foam of my anguish



*Comprehend with all saints...the breadth, length, depth and height...of the love of Christ.
Ephesians 3:18-19*

Prayers of the Ancients

Haste The Day

a Puritan prayer

Father in heaven, if I suffer need
If I go unclothed in poverty
May my heart yet prize thy love

To be tried by wants is thy mercy
Thy Son Jesus hath bought my soul
Becoming more than life to me

His sweet grace, his righteous power
Greater far than my vile desires
Than my fears of evil in every hour

In Christ is blessed rest and peace
O my Lord please haste the day
When sin is abolished far from me



The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Romans 8:18

Prayers Refused

a Puritan prayer

I thank thee now that my prayers thou refused
I received not because I asked amiss
I prayed from my lusts, from my passions
And gained a wilderness

Purge from me Lord all false desire
All base sins and aspirations
Contrary to thy word

May I walk in love and wisdom
Deliver me from all evil habit
Which cause thy grace to dim

Then shall I bless thee Father God
Who made me upright in thy name



*...that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.
2 Corinthians 5:21*

Eternal Life

Romanos the Melodist

Devote thyself O my soul
To be united to Christ
Who grants pardon for evil deeds
And bestows eternal life

His home was with the angels
Set aside for toil and death
The roughest thorns and thistles
Afflictions of earthly life

Let me await the blessed hope
Of immortal life

We adore thee, Savior of the world
We worship thee, lover of mankind
We need thy mercy, we give thee glory
For thou alone hath eternal life



*Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.
John 6:68*

Prayers of the Ancients

Make Me Whole

Ephrem the Syrian

Only wise and merciful physician
Make me whole and I will be whole
Heal thou the wounds of my soul

Who can restore like thee?
Open my eyes and I will see

Giver of light, illumine my heart
Only a ray of thy grace
Will dispel my darkened thoughts
That thy love shine as a flame

I am arid, I am dry
No water can I see
Thou O Lord doth know my heart
And that my soul thirsts after thee



My soul thirsteth for thee...in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory.

Psalm 63:1-2

Prayers of the Ancients

I Hope In Thy Mercies

Ephrem the Syrian

Habits entangle me like snares
I sink 'neath waves of evil
I am content to be bound
And daily accept new shackles

I appear robed in radiant clothes
But within reside shameful thoughts
My outer self appears composed
But within I suffer bitter loss

I repent and thy forgiveness flows
But this path is a weak foundation
Every day I lay a stone to rebuild
Every day I cause its destruction

Yet I hope in Thy mercies
I fall at Thy feet
Lord lead me out of iniquity

Dear Father I give thee my heart
Thy Spirit take hold of my mind
Lord Jesus my savior thou art



The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 8:2

Prayers of the Ancients

No One Can Heal My Disease

Ephrem the Syrian

No one can heal my disease
Save him who knoweth my heart
How oft have I set these boundaries
'Til my will tore the walls apart
Again I knock at thy door
Which thou openest up for me
I cease not seeking thy grace
Not ashamed in seeking mercy

Rouse thy strength and come
A bolt of heavenly lightning
Disperse the power of my enemy
Thou alone O Lord can save me

Wrench me from the mire
That I be not stained forever
Deliver me from the lion's jaws
Seeking whom he may devour
Whenever thy face he sees
Is he taken aback with fear
And now my Master save me
For to thee I flee in prayer



O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me...? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 7:24-25

Prayers of the Ancients

Ages Of Ages

Ephrem the Syrian

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God our Savior
Grant thy servant contrition
Enlighten this dark heart
Turn these tears into thy sweet possession

O Lord who loveth goodness and mercy
Save me from my corrupt enemy
With thy strength that rebuked the sea
Rebuke the one persecuting me

Yet if on earth I weep but briefly
That I be spared inextinguishable fire
Then may I offer up prayers in purity
And in this battle never tire

So send thy power, most merciful Jesus
That I might joyfully lift up praises
To thee, thy Father and life-creating Spirit
Both now and ever to the ages of ages



*I will sing praise to my God while I have my being... my meditation of him shall be sweet.
Psalm 104:33-34*

Prayers of the Ancients

The Prodigal

Ephrem the Syrian

Do not lose heart, my soul
Do not grieve
Do not say 'the Lord has turned from me'
For thy final judgement has not been told

The Father is kind to prodigals
Rejoicing at their return
Be not ashamed, do not hide from him
Thy soul is his concern

Say 'I will arise and go to my Father'
Leave that place which starves thee
He will not reproach, but receive
With this love doth he show his glory

I beseech thee Lord
Lover of all souls
To save me



*When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran... and kissed him.
Luke 15:20*

Lover Of Mankind

Ephrem the Syrian

O Lover of mankind
Jesus Christ my God
I hope in thy mercy
To receive me above

Though I am most sinful
I knock at thy door
I wish to follow thy path
To walk in thy grace evermore

O Master of all
Mend my infirm soul
Deliver me from passions
Which corrupt me whole

Spirit come upon me
From the Kingdom divine
For thou art a God of mercy
With compassion for mankind



God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in him should not perish...

John 3:16

Prayers of the Ancients

Raise Me Up

Ephrem the Syrian

Stretch forth O Lord thy hand
I lie in the dust and cannot stand
The burden of sin has crushed me
By evil habits am I chained

Raise me up
Thou Lord of life and death
Raise me up
From my paralytic bed

I had vowed to change my ways
But all remains the same
Grant me tears of cleansing
And wash away these stains

To thee, kind-hearted God
I give thanks and adoration
Thou man-befriending One
Accept my supplication



The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins... I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed...
Mark 2:10-11

Prayers of the Ancients

These Times In Which We Live

Ephrem the Syrian

My heart is pained, my soul agonizes
My inner parts are torn
Where can I find the tears
And contrition to rightly mourn
Our meager state of sanctity

Where are our fathers? The vigilant?
Where are the blameless? The meek?
Where are the prayerful? The abstinent?
They at last found what they did seek

O Master thou hast taken
Thy saints refined as gold
From this vain world to a resting place
Where their fruit shall never spoil

Grant us who remain the strength to follow
Shine light on these blinded hearts
That we may walk the path they trod
Sober, meek, set apart

Our fathers have entered the harbor of life
Far from sorrows and sins
They are crowned while we yet slumber
What times are these in which we live



Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise... redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:15-16

Prayers of the Ancients

Thy Mercy Come And Shelter Me

Ephrem the Syrian

Thou who art merciful, longsuffering
Receive the words of my prayer
Which I a sinner bring thee
From the fountain of my tears

Thy compassion be moved toward me
Forgiving this heedless one
That I may bring before thee
Repentant fruit for thy garden

Thy grace endured my sinful youth
May it endure my carelessness
Thou desirest not the sinner's death
Grant time for true repentance

Draw me to life and save me
Hear the sighs of my unworthy soul
Thy mercy come and shelter me
From death into life eternal



The Lord is...longsuffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

2 Peter 3:9

Christ And Satan

Cædmon The Melodist

Thy angel prince called Lucifer
In heaven did stir up strife
In pride and insolence aimed to build
A lofty throne on high

But with his followers felt the rod
Of that immortal Word
Who cast them away from eternal God
Forever are they spurned

The guilty souls which live to sin
Shall tremble when that Son
Shall judge them every single one
'Depart, I know thee not'

May I be mindful O Lord in glory
Of righteousness, of truth
I kneel before thy royal throne
And pray thee Lord for mercy

My only thought to thee O Christ
A greater, more glorious life
Than I may ever gain on earth
With thee, as thy child of light



*And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.
Luke 10:18*

Prayers of the Ancients

I Run To Thee

Ephrem the Syrian

My soul is choked by sorrow
I stand before thee in tears
Regard me and I will be saved
Heal me of these wasted years

Deliver me from the enemy
Thy rival for my soul
There is no other God but thee
No other is good at all

Do not despise me lest I die
Hear me or I will fall
I am either the annihilator's or thine
It is unto thee I call

Immortal and jealous God
I approach thee without shame
For now to thee am I betrothed
Who hath given me thy name

And I run to thee with love
Lord I run to thee with love



*I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the Lord.
Hosea 2:20*

Prayers of the Ancients

He Receives The Sinner

Ephrem the Syrian

A fountain full of waters flowing
And giving drink to all
Thy inexhaustible compassion
Nourishing the whole earth

Thy love desires our salvation
And comes to us from heaven
To bring us home and save us
Who are in Christ Jesus

The Master knows the resolve
With which we turn from sin
And before we arrive at thy door
It opens to let us in

We are consoled and do make merry
And angels do rejoice
That thou received the sinner fleeing
Into the Father's embrace

This is a glory unto thee
Who is longsuffering and kindhearted
Though we had squandered away thy mercy
Thou art still the lover of men



For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life...

Psalm 30:5

Prayers of the Ancients

Fountain Of Healing

Ephrem the Syrian

O fountain of healing
Who cures my ailing
Cure also my soul
From the ruin of sin

May thy compassion descend
On my infirmity
By the strength of thine arm
Help me overthrow the evil one

Cure my soul O Christ
Thou true and great Physician
Where is my soul's remedy
If not in thy prescription?

Thy love has destroyed
The fruit of wicked deeds
Thy compassion came to my aid
I passed temptations safely

Now does my soul glorify thee
And thy Father and the Holy Spirit
Now washed by tears of repentance
I am a temple for thee to inhabit



Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you...
1 Corinthians 6:19

Prayers of the Ancients

Have Mercy On Me

Ephrem the Syrian

Before the wheel of time has turned
And the wind of death has blown
Before these eyes of mine grow dim
And my dust returns to earth
Have mercy on me

O Son of God
May thy light shine on me from on high
O Jesus my Lord
Scatter the terrible darkness of my mind

Before my sins have overtaken me
And I stand before thy throne
Before the trumpet of thy coming
Before the door hath shut against me
Have mercy on me



*Remember not...my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me...O Lord.
Psalm 25:7*

Prayers of the Ancients

Day And Night

Ephrem the Syrian

Let us awake from our sleep
Call to the Lord day and night
Let us labor for his reward
To enter into eternal life

Day and night, night and day
Let us not cease to praise the Lord
Day and night, night and day
From early light 'til we can see no more

I slipped and fell into sin
Like the thief on the cross
Thy right hand raised me up
Giving mercy when hope was lost

I will not cease to praise my God
As the angels day and night
And when my Savior arises and comes
Will be seated at his banquet of light



*Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.
Revelation 19:9*

Prayers of the Ancients

May My Life

Ephrem the Syrian

May my prayer and service be accepted
Lord fill my heart with thy love
In suffering, grant me a spirit of patience
I confess thee with my mouth

May my mouth that sang thy praise
And confessed the faith
Not issue forth sobs on that day
But blend in harmony with the saints

May my eyes that kept vigil
When laden with sleep
Not lose sight of their reward
But enter their eternal hope

May my life, spent in this jar of clay
Laboring here for thy glory
Not suffer loss when my days are done
But by my Savior Christ be forgiven

To stand before thee in pureness of heart
And say in praise 'Thou art compassionate'



The Lord God...keeping mercy for thousands...forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...
Exodus 33:6-7

Mercy In Grief

Ephrem the Syrian

A mournful soul approaches thee
With tears, O Holy Master
Thy goodness prevails daily
Have mercy on this sinner

Thy love is everywhere
And declared in thy Word
To those who walk in thy way
And are cleansed by thy blood

O Lord all compassionate
Wash this heart with radiant bliss
That I might come to my senses
And be a dwelling for thy grace

I know thou hast accepted me
I pray thee come into my heart
Do not withdraw from entering
By the odor of corrupted thoughts

I am as the prodigal
The publican, the thief
The blind man by the roadside
Approaching thee for mercy in grief



He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

John 6:37

Shelter Me

Ephrem the Syrian

Get up my soul, arise
Thou hast slept till now in sin
Shake off slumber, hurry
Seek refuge in the Just One

Seek him in repentance
He may be moved to mercy
Put off the veil of corruption
That thine eye may rightly see

Thou who forgives sins
And freely grants mercy
With all prodigals who repent
I will gather and exalt thee

With passions like a storm
A ship drowned on the sea
My thoughts are like thorns
Bearing no fruit for thee

Heal now my wounds amidst my tears
My soul had withdrawn from thee
Trembling at thy righteous judgment
Now may thy compassion shelter me



*Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.
Ephesians 5:14*

A Trumpet Will Sound

Ephrem the Syrian

A trumpet will sound from the heavens
Calling awake the beloved of Christ
The Heavenly King will give repose
And joy in eternal life

Those righteous and worthy of God
Will soar through the air t'ward glory
Thou Lord will gather thy saints
Who are found pleasing to thee

We who have labored and persevered
Summoned to join in that great hour
With archangels, prophets, apostles
And the Bridegroom arrayed in power

Thou God on high, Immortal One
Hath shown thy tender compassion
And will awaken us by Christ the King
Who will take us to our home in heaven



*The Lord himself shall descend...with the trump of God...and so shall we ever be with the Lord.
1 Thessalonians 4:16-17*

A Cure For The Soul

Ephrem the Syrian

O giver of all good things
O fountain of healing
Thou treasure of compassion
Granting grace for the asking

Heal my wandering thoughts
My soul's hidden sores
Only-good and kindhearted God
No one can give thee a reward

A cure for our souls
Comes with repentant tears

No one can buy
Thy holy cures
They are priceless and given
Only amid sorrowed tears

Illuminate my prayers
And will thou who blots out sin
In this my time of weeping
Extinguish these fires within



*God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death...nor crying.
Revelation 21:4*

Grace Alone

Ephrem the Syrian

Grant forgiveness O Lord
Send also strength
That I might live in sanctity
To accord with thy will

How oft I have promised
But failed to keep my word
How oft thou hast rescued
But of my own will failed again

By thy grace alone
Turn me away from sin
That which abides in me
O save my life from ruin

How can I recount
All thy gifts of grace
And all else thou hast given
Turn not away thy face

Thy kindness is forever
Thy arms do embrace
Thou wilt receive me in heaven
When I come unto thy gates



*My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.
2 Corinthians 12:9*

Prayers of the Ancients

Careless

Ephrem the Syrian

Why so careless, O my soul?
Such scant concern for thy salvation
Thou wilt not forever live in this world
When the end cometh, what then?

No tears fill my eyes
My heart have I hardened
I stray from obeying Christ
Against thee only do I sin

*Art thou wounded?
Despair not
Hast thou fallen?
Now get up
Confess thy sins
And mercy will flow*

He who cleansed the leper
Will wash me with his word
He who raised Lazarus
Will raise me from the dead

Thou knowest all things
Seeing into my heart
I approach thee in faith
I surrender every thought



*...bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.
2 Corinthians 12:9*

A Child In Thy Care

Ephrem the Syrian

My sins exceed
Those of other men
But thy grace allows me
To call upon thy name

Thy compassion knows no limit
I find love and faith in my tears

I rely upon thy mercy
To be cured of deepest sores

O man-befriending Master
Keep me from despair
O Jesus, Lord and Savior
In kindness hear my prayer

I know I will be chastened
For idle thoughts and words
When I forget thy goodness
My way doth often err

As thou filled the water pots
Fill me with thy cure
Keep me in thy grace, O Father
Like a child in thy care



Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father...we are the children of God.

Romans 8:15-16

The Flesh, The Grave

Ephrem the Syrian

I beheld the corruption of flesh
There is no beauty in the grave
Bones dry up and crumble
Time ravages the fairest face

Then thoughts of resurrection
Swiftly carry me away
That trumpet shall finally sound
And every tongue on earth shall say

Praise to thee, O Lord of all

We exclaim thy immortal nature
Thy dominion over us
From the beginning we were adorned
And imprinted with thine image

In the last thou wilt carry the righteous
With thee aloft to heaven
Who saved our lives from ruin
With thy only begotten Son



*We shall all be changed...in the twinkling of an eye...we shall put on immortality.
1 Corinthians 15:51-53*

The Cloud Of Unknowing

Anonymous

Here pause I for contemplation
From the earthly path I trod
To consider the Cloud of Unknowing
In which the soul is oned with God

Unto thee all hearts are open
By thee all speech is heard
From thee no deed is hidden
I seek from thee one word

My heart knows it can love thee
My mind knows it cannot
My senses grow weary, restless
My being wants only God

I cry with word, with thought, with desire
In thee rests all that is good
But knowledge is not sufficient
May unknowing arrive in a flood

O wash the intent of my heart
With the unspeakable gift of thy grace
That I more perfectly may love thee
More worthily offer praise



*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard...the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
1 Corinthians 2:9*

Prayers of the Ancients

Hear Me

Ephrem the Syrian

O righteous God and praised
Pre-eternal and forever
Hear this man, this sinner
This hour

O God, my God, do hear me
Pavillioned in thy fortress
Answer my prayer with fire
As thou didst for the prophet

O God of holy powers
Whose promise we receive
Hear those who call in truth
Who walk the path of peace

Thy mighty armor covers me
To banish unclean spirits
Of fear, of pride, of despondency
Thy salvation is my helmet

May my spirit and my body
Conform to the image of Christ
That I be pleasing unto thee
Hear me now as I bow in thy sight



Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness...have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

Psalm 4:1

He Is The Tree Of Life

Ephrem the Syrian

He girded his love in readiness
For his labor he put on flesh

For He is the Tree of Life

Blessed the voice of the Father
Coming down in truth and light

His mercies upon those souls in the pit
Near the tree of evil and good

He became a child bringing knowledge of truth
His days a song on a humble harp of life

From the cross was he lifted above the skies
That we may may join him there on high



*God...spoke unto us by his Son...purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.
Hebrews 1:1-3*

Prayers of the Ancients

For His Seekers

Ephrem the Syrian

On this night of the Sweet One
May I not be bitter

Jesus is our Passover
Jesus is the Lamb

On this day of forgiveness
May I learn to love

Jesus is our Resurrection
Jesus is the Life

On this night of the Humble One
May I not be proud

Jesus is our Passover
Jesus is the Lamb

On this day the Rich One
Was made poor for my sins

Jesus is our Resurrection
Jesus is the Life

God came into the presence of sinners
Down to serve his servants
God opened the gates to his seekers
The strayed who sought his forgiveness



He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.
Hebrews 11:6

Hymn On Paradise XI

Ephrem the Syrian

The air in paradise is a fountain of delight

No hoary frost, no searing heat

This harbor of joys, this haven of bliss

Is light and rejoicing for eternity

These dimming eyes can scarcely gaze

Upon the brilliance of its beauties

Its trees are clothed in spiritual leaves

Which appear as immortal bodies

More numerous than the stars

Are the blossoms in that land

The fragrance wafting blessedly

Is a sweetness from his hand

Make me worthy through thy grace

To feast with thy dear Son

Welcomed at the table of the Kingdom

Prepared for us in Eden



We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

1 John 3:2

The Resurrector

Ephrem the Syrian

All the dead will rise
At the sound of the trumpet
And all will sing the praise
Of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Our Father, Creator of man from dust
And thy radiant Son who delivers us
By whose cross and whose death
Are thy saints, thy creatures blessed

Thee will I worship
O Christ my Lord
For to all confessing thy name
Thou art the Resurrector

Now worship we the Father
Who sent his only Son
Our Savior sits at thy right hand
Dispensing thy compassion



*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
Matthew 25:34*

The Chosen Fast

Ephrem the Syrian

I marvel at thine incarnation
Yet by fasting did thou overcome
This is the fast that thou hast chosen
And wings for my own triumph

To gaze upon the living God
And defeat the evil one
To purify the needy soul
Refresh my vision of him

This fast is pure and beautiful
The bright eye shall behold our God
But the soul stirred up by anything
Cannot clarify one thought

Let thy word be my mirror
And my eyes be ever clear
My words be as a morning prayer
My heart be ever pure

I rejoice in this my fast
As thou embraced thine own
To meditate on thy words of life
And thy victory, O God the Son



Appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret...who shall reward thee openly.

Matthew 6:18

Prayers of the Ancients

Majesty And Grace

Ephrem the Syrian

Leaving the heights of thy majesty
An act proclaiming thy grace
Shown humbly in thy blessed birth
Which shook the universe
And brought the gift of hope
To redeem this human race
Glory to God entirely
For majesty and grace

Shepherds came from near
Magi from afar
Saw love without measure
Lying swaddled in a manger
The gifts that they offered
Never can compare
With the Gift from the Father
Which angels did declare

Glory to thee, newborn King
All earth and heaven sing
Goodwill and peace we have from thee
To our hearts did the Infant bring
Majesty and grace



*...the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, [we] were eyewitnesses of his majesty.
2 Peter 1:16*

Prayers of the Ancients

A Son Is Given

Ephrem the Syrian

Glory to the One
Who released us from our sin
Glory to the Son
Who died for everyone
Glorious was thy coming
And thou shalt come again
Each eye shall see thee, Son of God
And glorify thy name

And now we all do thank him
Who saved us by his wounds
And now we all do thank him
Who felt the curse by thorns
Thanks unto the Healer
Whose Child is now our cure
Who took pity on the sinner

I bless thy holy Child
Blessed is the babe
I bless thy only Son
I bless his holy name



...unto us a child is born, a son is given...his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor..Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Worship The One

Ephrem the Syrian

I worship the One
Who enlightens by his teaching
A path for his words
He prepared for my hearing

Gentle is his strength
His silence showed his power
His unseen Spirit renews my thought
That Seed which fell on earth

I worship the One
The anointed Master
God's own Son

He has become everything to all
The Master Builder, the Ploughman
The Vine and Good Shepherd
The Cup of Salvation

Thus do I worship the One
He who is the Way
I seek first His kingdom
He alone is the Gate



Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
John 14:6

The Day Of The Lord

Ephrem the Syrian

Great is the day of the Lord
It pours forth forgiveness
It rejoices in goodness
It healed my blindness

O bring forth thy day
Brighter than the sun
Shine through my darkness
That I with thee be one

Thy day is new life in springtime
Strength in my old age
It renews me by thy love
It brings compassion and grace

Thy day is like no other
From thy birth 'til thy return
Thou art Son of Man upon the earth
Son of God on heaven's throne



This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 118:24

Prayers of the Ancients

Our Father

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

Our Father most holy
Creator, Redeemer
Defender, Provider
Consoler, Our Savior

Hear me from heaven
Enlighten me, teach me
Dwell in me, fill me
I thirst for thy divinity

Thy kingdom cover all the earth
Thy will be done as it is above
May I walk this day within thy love
And thy Spirit guide me as a dove

I thank thee Lord for daily bread
Received as from thy hand
Forgive my sins that I may stand
To also forgive, as is thy command

When temptation lures me from the way
If veiled or visible, sudden or prolonged
I pray thou Lord will lead me on
Deliver from evil t'ward thy world to come



But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions...your Father knoweth what things ye have need of...

Matthew 6:7-8

My Creator

Ephrem the Syrian

Thy extent cannot be seized
Nor thy handiwork explained
The merest gnat is a marvel too great
Thy wisdom cannot be contained

Thy bringing forth is unsearchable
Thy wealth incomprehensible
Thy light fills us, but cannot be grasped
By it darkness was conquered, reprov'd

To evil did Adam succumb
And our Light was hidden in dark
Then shone the advent of our Lord
And Satan was overcome

Thou hast humbled all of the proud
Thy attackers all confused
Having weighed and measured it all
Thou alone, my Creator, are Lord



*He hath established the world by his wisdom... stretched out the heavens by his discretion.
Jeremiah 10:12*

Prayers of the Ancients

The Fire Of Thy Love

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

I beg thee God, most glorious, most high
Light my heart by the fire of thy love
Take possession today of my very soul
Keep it safe in this world below

May my faith be true
May my hope be certain
May my love be ever pure

I will live, I will die
For love of thy love
As thy Son did for love of mine

Grant me sense and knowledge
I pray dear Lord
That on earth I fulfill thy command



*The life which I now live...I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20*

Prayers of the Ancients

Prayer Of Thanksgiving

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

O God all powerful, most holy
Thou art high and thou art supreme
Thy righteousness covers the heavens and earth
Uncreated, from forever thou hast been

In amazement to thee do I offer
Tho' scarcely I picture the thought
None else exists for me to give thanks
But to thee for thine own self

By thy will, by thy Son and thy Spirit
Art thou creating all things
All spirits, all matter from thee do flow
In thine image this paradise

Yet all, through transgression, have fallen
And thou willed thine own Son to be born
Truly God, truly man, by his cross and his blood
These his pathway to forgive our sin

And now there remains naught else we can do
But thank thee with hearts bowed low
That thy Son comes again in full glory
To receive thy true worshipers home



*Thanks to the Father, who...translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son...the image of the invisible God.
Colossians 1:12-15*

Prayers of the Ancients

The Praises Of God

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

My Lord, He is holy
His wonders are great and small
He is the Most High, the Almighty King
And the tenderest Father to all

Lord thou art Three
Lord thou art One
Thou art goodness, all goodness
Always

Thou art love and charity, wisdom, humility
Thou art patience, and sweetness and rest
Thou art beauty, art safety, art justice O Lord
Our hope, who his children defendeth

Thou art truth, moderation, refreshment and strength
Our joy, our wealth overflowing
Thou art gentle, art faithful, our shelter and guard
All merciful, thou art life everlasting



Bless our God, ye people, and make the voice of his praise to be heard...who holdeth our soul in life...

Psalm 66:8-9

Prayers of the Ancients

Toward Thy Cross

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

Thou Jesus Christ condemned to die
Thou for my sins were crucified
Bearing alone the bitter cross
Lord bear me up through pain and loss

Thy way was marked in blood and woe
These sins of mine did strike thee low
As Simon helped to bear thy load
Lord lead me on my narrow road

Up Calvary's hill thou set thy face
Now in my soul thy image trace
Thy painful path was walked for me
May I this day but follow thee

It was my sin which brought thee here
O Christ my God I repent sincere
Those hands that healed, riven by nails
Now safe in those hands, I shall not fail

O Jesus there thine all did give
I pray thee now teach me to live
Buried with Christ who died for me
I too shall rise at last with thee



*He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
Philippians 2:8*

Prayers of the Ancients

Prayer For Help

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

O God, my God, I need thy aid
Thou knowest my frame, I do not hide
By thy mercies relieve my distress
Humbly this plea I make

Hear me O Lord, have pity on me
I falter, but thy love never fails
For the sake of Christ my Savior
Show kindness in my time of difficulty

Thy ways O God, make known to me
My path hidden, I am distraught
Open the eyes of one so blind
To see thy will in my time of need

Grant safety Lord, O hear my call
In thee do I hope and trust
On thee I cast my fears, my cares
Into thy hands I place my all



*Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.
1 Peter 5:7*

Prayers of the Ancients

Prayer For Thy Presence

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

Be near me now, O Father above
Be not afar, I pray
In thee do I seek to live and move
In thy presence and with thy love

O Lord, do not in anger chastise me
Though I am weak and I disobey
I seek for thy forgiving grace
In Christ's name I make my plea

Thou Lord are my strong fortress
Not turning aside when I run to thee
Ever comforting in my sorrows
Thou wilt pity, wilt rescue, wilt bless

To the brokenhearted thou Lord art near
Thy goodness for my grief, my distress
Still I will trust through everything
I hope in Christ and will not fear

Thou Lord did rescue and set me free
With love and mercy in time of trouble
Grant me Savior Christ, I here implore
The strength to follow faithfully



*God...giveth grace unto the humble. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.
James 4:6,8*

Prayers of the Ancients

A Prayer On Virtues

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

Thy wisdom, O Lord, is holy and pure
With the poor in spirit, thy humility
Thy love can be found by those who obey
All virtues proceed from thee

If I possess one and offend not the others
Indeed I have practiced them all
If I offend but one, I possess none other
Indeed I offended them all

Thy wisdom confounds all Satan's schemes
The pure, the holy stand apart
Undoing the wisdom of this world
Resisting the deceitful heart

Humility pierces the pride of life
It seeks not a worldly crown
The poor in spirit have no kingdom here
The cares of this world do not own

Thy love melts away my temptation, my fear
In obedience I submit unto thee
So I live on the earth at peace with all men
By virtues from the heavenlies



*Be blameless...in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.
Philippians 2:15*

Prayers of the Ancients

At Eventide

Conrad of Parzham

And now to spend some moments with thee
O Jesus, in humility

One more day has come and gone
I draw nearer my heavenly home

Again do I long, O Bread of Life
For thy sweetness and for thy light
Mercifully pardon my faults this day
And refresh thou my heart, I pray

As deer pant for water, and earth for heaven's dew
Even so for thee do I yearn
O Savior Christ, I repent of my sins
Grant me peace this night and for eternity



*The Lord will command his lovingkindness in the day time, and in the night his song shall be with me.
Psalm 42:8*

Prayers of the Ancients

At Communion

Bonaventure of Bagnoregio

Pierce my inmost soul with deepest wounds
Of thy calm, joyous and true love
Thou Bread of Life do nourish my days
Upon whom angels long to gaze

I thirst and receive a river of life
Thou source of purest light
Thou wellspring of knowledge
Torrent of pleasures without end

Now does my hungering soul seek thee
May I ever run to thee
Meditate upon thee
Moment by moment speak of thee

Thou my riches, my refuge, my wisdom
My delight, my rest and tranquility
Thou my portion, possession and treasure
In thee am I rooted immovably



Jesus answered...the water that I give shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

John 4:13-14

Perseverance

Giovanni Francesco di Bernardone

O God omnipotent and eternal
Who art ever just, but merciful

I lay before thee my supreme request

That in living for thy sake
In observing all thy will
In pleasing only thee
Fueled by thy Spirit's fire

That following the footsteps of thy Son
Trusting to thy grace alone
Grant as I end my earthly course
I may attain thy eternal home

Thus will I walk in the fear of the Lord
Come trials and tests, come what may
I am on my way to God
To be with him always



*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame.
Revelation 3:21*

Prayers of the Ancients

Deliver From Evil

a Puritan prayer

Thou Father, ever hallowed in heaven
May thy kingdom to earth come soon
In this world here below as above
Would thy will be ever done

Daily I feast on bread from thy hand
I forgive as I have received
From all temptation I may find escape
In thee whom I have believed

Yet this world is brimming with evil
If only from human sin
Yet lurks there an enemy spewing
That which I must never allow in

This is a defiling world and ensnaring
A discouraging world and malignant
A deadening world and deceiving
Christ overcame the world, triumphant

So deliver me Lord, from evil
For thy kingdom's power will not end
This I pray thee now in Christ Jesus' name
Amen



*Go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.
Matthew 6:6*

Prayers of the Ancients

Nothing On Earth

a Puritan prayer

All that is good springs from thee, O God
All fullness, all sweetness, all light
Unworthy to commune with so holy a God
Thy Son did forgive, made me right

Oh for the simple obedience of a child
Still thy kindness as a Father remains
I am humbled by thy patterns of mercy
For eternity will echo thy praise

Though afflictions here vex the body
Sins pardoned, in thee I have peace
Who hath said that this world will give trouble
Still I hope in a heavenly release

Now go peace and holiness together
A new creature, seeing glory to come
I claim nothing on earth as a treasure
I claim Christ who will lead me home



*Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.
Psalm 73:25*

Creature Of A Day

a Puritan prayer

I am the creature of but a day
An arrow shot through the air
A spirit from God and returning there
This gulf I must cross to make my way

A moment hence and I will be no more
Dropped into an unchangeable eternity
One thing only I must know from thee
The way to heaven, safe to that shore

Thou condescended to teach the way
For this end thou came from above
And have given us this book in thy love
What price for thy word would I pay?

When I lack wisdom, I ask of thee God
Who giveth freely, and scoldeth not
Whene'er I begin to obey thy word
Thy will I see and my prayers are heard



*Man's days are as grass...the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear him.
Psalm 103:15,17*