

Multiplication Master

*The test was coming.
But Luca had a plan.*



By Jessica Larsen

Based on a true story

“Love the Lord and do your part”

(Children’s Songbook, 9).

Nine times seven is 63. Six times eight is . . . 42? No, that’s not right!

Luca furiously erased his answer.

“Time!” Luca’s teacher called. “Everyone hand in your tests.”

“Oh no!” Luca thought. “But I’m not even done!”

Luca sighed as he handed in his test. He had to get a 90 percent on his timed tests to pass his multiplication tables and become a class Multiplication Master, but he just didn’t know how he was going to do it!

"Once I wanted to learn how to do the monkey bars, but I fell. So I tried again, but I fell again. I could only get to the third bar. I prayed to Heavenly Father to help me be brave. After my prayer, I felt ready to try again. This time I made it to the fourth bar! Then the fifth! I was getting better! I knew Heavenly Father would help me be brave enough to keep trying so I could get better."

Lily S., age 7, Arkansas, USA



That night during family scripture study, Dad read from the Doctrine and Covenants: "Therefore, if you will ask of me you shall receive; if you will knock it shall be opened unto you" (D&C 6:5).

Luca's head popped up. That was the answer! Prayer!

Luca started praying every day to do well on his timed multiplication test. This would work. It *had* to work. He would finally become a Multiplication Master!

On Tuesday, Luca came home from school and grabbed his basketball.

"Do you need help studying?" Mom asked.

"Nope! I've got it taken care of!" Luca said as he ran out the door. He believed so much in prayer that he didn't even take out his flash cards to practice his math.

On Friday, Luca knew he was going to pass the test. But when he sat down to take it, the answers just didn't come, and he did even worse than before!

Luca walked home from the bus stop with his head down. He had prayed so hard to be a Multiplication Master. Why didn't Heavenly Father answer his prayer?

When he got home, he shot baskets until Dad came home from work. Dad honked the car horn as he pulled up.

"How was school?" Dad asked.

"Not very good," Luca said, looking down. "I can't pass my multiplication test."

"I'm sorry to hear that," Dad said. He held up his hands for a pass.

"I should have passed!" Luca said. "I prayed and everything. Dad, you said that Heavenly Father answers prayers. He definitely didn't answer mine today!"

"Did you practice with your flash cards?" Dad asked. "No."

"Did you study at all?"

"No," Luca said. "But I prayed all week!"

Dad dribbled the ball and looked at Luca. "Well, multiplication is kind of like basketball. How did you get so good at basketball?"

"I practiced," Luca said.

"Yes, and so when we pray for Heavenly Father to help you before your games, we're not praying for Him to magically make you a better basketball player. What do we pray for?"

"For me to remember what I practiced," Luca said.

"That's right. Prayer works best when we do our part and also ask Heavenly Father to help us," Dad said.

"So my part is studying my flash cards?"

Luca asked.

"Exactly," Dad said, passing the ball back to Luca.

Luca heaved a big sigh and took a shot. The ball bounced off the rim. "OK. It's going to take a lot of work. But I guess I can study hard *and* ask Heavenly Father to help me."

"There you go!" Dad said. "So, are you ready for a little one-on-one?"

Luca grinned and stole the ball from Dad. "Sure! As long as you help me study at the same time."

"You're on," Dad said. "Six times eight is?"

"Forty-eight!" Luca said, taking another shot. This time it swished through the hoop.

Between practice and prayer, he would become a Multiplication Master after all. ■

The author lives in Texas, USA.

