



*“When thou risest
in the morning let
thy heart be full of
thanks unto God.”*

—Alma 37:37



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Morning and Evening PRAYERS

*Prayer becomes more meaningful as we counsel with
the Lord in all our doings (see Alma 37:37).*

The patterns used by God in creating the earth are instructive in helping us understand how to make prayer meaningful. In the third chapter of the book of Moses we learn that all things were created spiritually before they were naturally upon the earth.

“And now, behold, I say unto you, that these are the generations of the heaven and of the earth, when they were created, in the day that I, the Lord God, made the heaven and the earth,

“And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, created all things, of which I have spoken, spiritually, before they were naturally upon the face of the earth” (Moses 3:4–5).

We learn from these verses that the spiritual creation preceded the temporal creation. In a similar way, meaningful morning prayer is an important element in the spiritual creation of each day—and precedes the temporal creation or the actual execution of the day. Just as the temporal creation was linked to and a continuation of the spiritual creation, so meaningful morning and evening prayers are linked to and are a continuation of each other.

Consider this example. There may be things in our character, in our behavior, or concerning our spiritual growth about which we need to counsel with Heavenly Father in morning prayer. After expressing appropriate thanks for blessings received, we plead for understanding, direction, and help to do the things we cannot do in our own strength alone. For example, as we pray, we might:

- Reflect on those occasions when we have spoken harshly or inappropriately to those we love the most.
- Recognize that we know better than this, but we do not always act in accordance with what we know.
- Express remorse for our weaknesses and for not putting off the natural man more earnestly.
- Determine to pattern our life after the Savior more completely.
- Plead for greater strength to do and to become better.

Such a prayer is a key part of the spiritual preparation for our day.

During the course of the day, we keep a prayer in our heart for continued assistance and guidance—even as Alma suggested: “Let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord” (Alma 37:36).

We notice during this particular day that there are occasions where normally we would have a tendency to speak harshly, and we do not; or we might be inclined to anger, but we are not. We discern heavenly help and strength and humbly recognize answers to our prayer. Even in that moment of recognition, we offer a silent prayer of gratitude.

At the end of our day, we kneel again and report back to our Father. We review the events of the day and express heartfelt thanks for the blessings and the help we received. We repent and, with the assistance of the Spirit of the Lord, identify ways we can do and become better tomorrow.

Thus our evening prayer builds upon and is a continuation of our morning prayer. And our evening prayer also is a preparation for meaningful morning prayer.

Morning and evening prayers—and all of the prayers in between—are not unrelated, discrete events; rather, they are linked together each day and across days, weeks, months, and even years. This is in part how we fulfill the scriptural admonition to “pray always” (Luke 21:36; 3 Nephi 18:15, 18; D&C 31:12). Such meaningful prayers are instrumental in obtaining the highest blessings God holds in store for His faithful children.

Prayer becomes meaningful as we remember our relationship to Deity and heed the admonition to:

“Cry unto God for *all* thy support; yea, let *all* thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let *all* thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever.

“Counsel with the Lord in *all* thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day” (Alma 37:36–37; emphasis added).

We are commanded to “pray always” (2 Nephi 32:9; D&C 10:5; 90:24)—“vocally as well as in [our] heart[s]; . . . before the world as well as in secret, in public as well as in private” (D&C 19:28). I testify that prayer becomes more meaningful as we counsel with the Lord in all of our doings.

I witness Heavenly Father lives and that He hears and answers every earnest prayer. Jesus is the Christ, our Savior and Mediator. Revelation is real. **NE**

Adapted from an October 2008 general conference address.

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