

PRAYER

When we pray we speak to God. The Lord Jesus taught His disciples how they should pray. The prayer should come from the heart; it should not be memorized. We should concentrate our thoughts on the prayer, even when someone else says the prayer. We can go to our Heavenly Father with all our wishes and petitions, but should never forget our thanks and intercessions.

The children feel that they can tell our Heavenly Father anything. He grants their petitions according to His will.

V. 13

How we pray

With help from a picture (Daniel praying) we discuss with the children how to pray. We connect ourselves entirely with our Heavenly Father. In order to avoid distractions, we kneel down, keep our eyes closed and bow our head. Our hands are folded. We always want to pray with all our heart.

In our prayer we speak with our Heavenly Father. He hears every honest prayer. We begin every prayer with praise and thanksgiving. We can also bring him our prayers of petitions and intercessions.

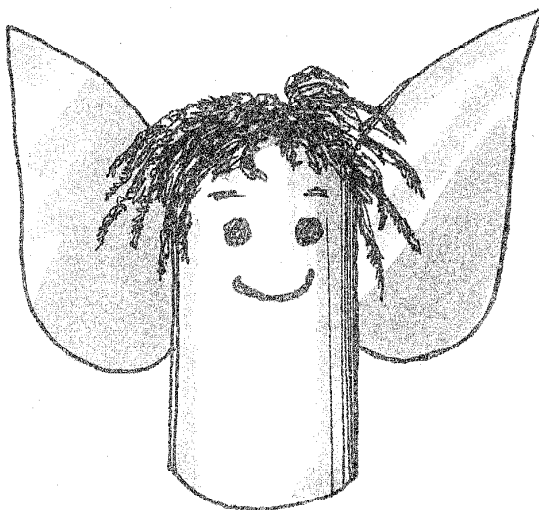


► Angels' protection

Before father leaves for work each morning, he reads from the Bible and prays with the whole family in the living room. Each member of the family also has the opportunity to pray, mother first, then each of the children in descending order of their age. Father thanks our Heavenly Father for everything and prays especially for the angels' protection for the whole family. Adrian, who is four years old, listens attentively. One day, he asks his mother: "What is angel protection?" His mother explains to him: "God has many angels which He sends to us when we need help. We thank Him for this and ask Him to provide angels' protection for us every morning." A few days later, mother goes into the cellar. Adrian is playing and amusing himself, but soon gets bored. He wonders where mother is. He looks everywhere for her. He even ventures down the steep cellar stairs. Suddenly, he loses his balance and falls, head over heels, and ends up lying on the hard floor at the bottom of the stairs. He screams at the top of his lungs. Mother hurries to his rescue. "My leg, my leg hurts" the boy cries. Mother wonders if it is broken. Carefully she inspects the leg and sees that it is only bruised. "Everything will be all right," says mother. Slowly, Adrian calms down. Together they send a prayer of thanks to their Heavenly Father. In the evening, when the whole family is gathered for their prayer, little Adrian says: "Today we have to say a special thanks to God for the angels' protection." His parents are very happy that their son understood that he had experienced the angels' protection.

II. 7 ► The children explain how they experience angels' protection. We sing a song, for example: "God is everywhere."

IV. 11 ► The children draw or construct an angel.



V. 45



On a picture, we see a family praying in the living room. We discuss the picture.

The family gives thanks: for the angels' protection, that they are healthy, that they love each other, for their home, for the food...

They intercede for: their loved ones, friends, servants of God, the sick... They plead for: the angels' protection, for the return of Jesus...





Praying before meals

After the family gathers around the table and the prayer is said, mother serves what she has prepared for us with much love and care. The children begin to complain: "I do not like salad!" cries little Peter. I only want noodles - lots and lots of noodles!" demands his sister. "The vegetables taste awful!" says Karen.



The teacher asks the children about their favorite foods and what they really dislike. She points out that they should not take for granted that there is enough food on their tables. The children are reminded to thank their parents and God for the food.

II. 3



Thanking our Heavenly Father and asking the blessing on our food is discussed. We sing the song: "For Food and Drink" or #494, verse 4.



We talk about the process of making bread. Planting the seed, growth, God's blessing, harvest, grinding of grain, kneading the dough, baking, eating. The children can imitate the motions involved in the bread-making process. Thanks to God's blessings, we all have our nourishment.

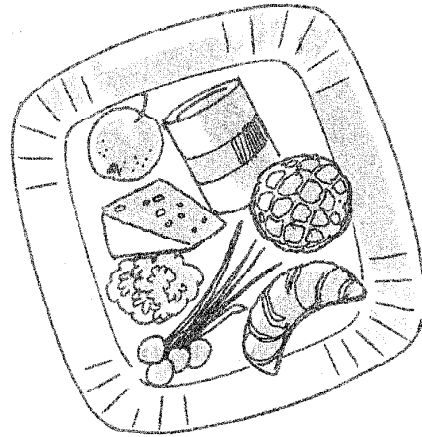
III. 7--

III. 12



The teacher brings a basket with fruits and vegetables. The children name the different items that God permits to grow. The children are given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with any of the items that they do not know so well. A game can be played where the children close their eyes and guess what the items are, using their sense of touch and/or smell.

► The children draw or glue pictures of food items onto a paper plate. The pictures can be cut out of a catalog or just designed with construction paper.

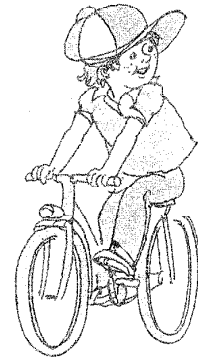


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► **Praying (for angels' service)**

Tom has the earnest wish to receive a new bicycle. His father says: "Tom, I am sorry, but it is not possible. A bicycle is expensive. You know that we have to save. I am thankful when we can buy the essentials. You will have to keep using your old bicycle." Tom knows that his father is serious about this. So every evening he asks our Heavenly Father to fulfill his wish. He is sure that our Heavenly Father will help him. One day Tom's father checks the brakes on his old bicycle. He discovers that the brakes are totally worn out. He buys new brakes and installs them immediately, but Tom does not appreciate what his father has done for him. A few days later he makes a few rounds in the front of his house and then turns into the street. But at this moment he sees a car speeding towards him. He hears the tires squealing. Tom applies the brakes. When both come to a stop, they are awfully close to one another. The driver steps out of his car and says: "I did not see you coming. We nearly had a terrible accident. I am glad that you were able to brake in time."

Tom tells his father that the new brakes saved his life. Subsequently he thanks his father with all his heart. Together they pray and thank our Heavenly Father that he has preserved Tom's life and for always providing His children with what they need.



► We discuss the children's wishes. They make a collage on this theme. The children are allowed to ask God for anything they wish for. He fulfills that which is right and good for us.

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► **Help in need**

Christian and Andrew go on an outing with their parents. They go for a long walk through fields and into the forest. They have fun. Content, but very tired, they return home. Father searches for his key in his jacket and trouser pockets. He gets all upset. Finally, he says: "I have lost my key. It must have fallen out of my jacket somewhere." They look at each other helplessly. They feverishly try to figure out what to do next. Andrew is very calm. He says joyfully: "Do not worry, we will find the key again. I just told everything to our Heavenly Father." Father and mother are happy to see their child's faith and trust. Shortly afterwards, father says: "I have a feeling I lost my key at a particular spot in the forest." "Then, let us go and get it," says his son. They drive back. Father turns into a little path in the forest, stops and says: "This is the spot where I have seen the key in my mind's eye." Andrew leaves the car and a few minutes later, finds the key. He swings it triumphantly in the air. Together they fold their hands and thank our Heavenly Father for His wonderful help. Overjoyed they drive home again.



III. 10



We play a game. We can sing a little song, something like this: "Oh, my key, you have to wander, from one hand into the other, tell me please, you see I bow, in whose hand my key is now."



The children tell us about their own emergency situations and how God had answered their prayers.





Praying in Church

The teacher speaks to the children about praying in church (this is especially difficult for the children, because they often understand very little of the content of the prayers. However, they have to remain very quiet, not to disturb anyone). Single sentences from the "Lord's Prayer" can be discussed.

For Example: "Our Father, which art in heaven." We are happy about our strong and wise Father. To this we can sing the song "God is here." "Give us this day our daily bread." (compare: the table prayer)



We pray together in the Beginners' Sunday School. The children can pray along, by adding their thanks and petitions or repeat a sentence or two.





Come, Lord Jesus!

Little Barbara is playing when her mother reminds her: "Barbara, it is time now to go to bed. You know that your dad has to leave soon to make a family visit. We would still like to pray together before he leaves." Grumbling, the little girl puts her toys away. She would have loved to stay up a little longer. Carefully she takes her dolls into her arms and lays them on her own pillow. Her parents come and they all kneel down at her bedside. Her father prays. He thanks our Heavenly Father and pleads very fervently for the return of the Lord Jesus. Barbara asks her father how this will happen. Her father answers: "I will try to explain it to you. Before, when you were getting ready for bed, you took your dolls lovingly into your arms and gave them a big hug. You love them very much. The Lord Jesus will do the same with us, when He comes back. He will put his arms around us and will take us home. We will be with Him in heaven, as His bride, to celebrate the Wedding Feast. We are happy to look forward to this. That is why we always pray: 'Come, Lord Jesus'!" Barbara is very happy about this. She and all the children of God are looking forward to that beautiful day.

► The teacher shows the children a photograph of a wedding. On this day, the bride wears a beautiful dress. A wedding is a very special celebration, because two people who love each other want to be together forever. The children talk about their own experiences of special celebrations.

II. 9 ► We pray together: "Lord Jesus, come!" and sing a fitting song.

► The children draw a beautiful white gown on a colored paper and cut out a veil from white curtain material.



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