

The Way of Perfection

Part 5: Our Father

Eternal Life

Chapter 42 (summary)

Saint Teresa of Avila

Chapter 42 Discusses these last words of the Our Father: Sed libera nos a malo. Amen.

But deliver us from evil. Amen.

It seems Jesus was right to include Himself in this **petition**. We see how **tired** He was of this life when He said to His Apostles at the last supper: **I have greatly desired to eat this supper with you.**

We see how **weary** He must have been of living. Nowadays people ... want to live longer. We do not suffer as much evil or as many trials as His Majesty suffered, nor such poverty.

What was His life if not a **continual death**, where He always saw in advance the **cruel death** that awaited Him? Yet, this was the least of His sufferings. How many offenses committed against His Father? How many souls were lost?

What must have been the Lord's torment, with His boundless charity? What a good reason He had to ask His Father to free Him from so many evils and trials and bring Him at last to rest forever in the Father's kingdom.

2. Amen. By the "**amen**," indicating **all** things come to an **end**, the Lord asks that we be freed from **all evil** forever.

It is useless, Sisters, to think that on earth we can be **free of temptations, imperfections and sins**. Anyone who thinks he is free from sin deceives himself.

If we turn to **bodily ailments and hardships**, who is without them? Nor is it good that we ask to be without them.

It seems impossible to say "**from all evil**," ... Sinners like myself ... are closed in by **weakness, lukewarmness, and a lack of mortification** and other things.

It is beneficial for me to ask the Lord for a **remedy** ... I do not find this remedy while living, so I ask the Lord to **deliver me from all evil forever**...

Deliver me, Lord, from this **shadow of death**, from so many **trials**, so many **sufferings**, so

many **changes and compliments** ... from so many things that **tire and weary me**, and that would tire anyone reading this if I mentioned them all! ...

Thus I beseech the Lord to **deliver me from all evil forever** since I do not make up for what I owe; ... And what is **unbearable**, Lord, is **not to know for certain that I love You, or that my desires are acceptable before You.**

O my Lord and my God, **deliver me now from all evil and be pleased to bring me to the place where all blessings are.**

What do they still hope for here, those to whom You have given knowledge of what the world is and who have a living faith of what the Eternal Father has kept for them?

3. To ask for these blessings with great **desire** and complete **determination** is a **clear sign** for **contemplatives** that the **favours** they receive in prayer are from God. Those who have this sign should esteem their prayer highly...

It is no surprise that those who have a share in the **consolations** of God desire to be where they enjoy them more than in mere **sips**. They do not want to remain in a life with so many **obstacles** to the enjoyment of so much good. They desire to be where the **Sun of justice** does not **set**.

They now see all here below as **dark**. I marvel at how they live. They could not live with any contentment if they have already begun to **enjoy the Lord's kingdom here below**. Such a person must only **live for the will of his King**.

4. How different this life would have to be to not **desire death!** How our will deviates from the will of God! He wants us to **love truth**; we love the lie. He wants us to **desire the eternal**; we lean toward what ends. He wants us to **desire sublime things**; we desire earthly things. He would want us to **desire what is secure**; we love the doubtful.

Everything is a mockery, my daughters, except beseeching God to free us from these dangers forever and draw us away from every evil. Though our desire may not be perfect, let us force ourselves to make the request.

What does it cost us to ask for a great deal? We are asking it of One who is powerful.

To be right, let us leave the giving to His will as we have already given Him ours.

His name be forever hallowed in heaven and on earth, and may His will always be done in me. Amen

Here you see, friends, **what it means to pray vocally with perfection**. It means you are **aware of and understand whom you are asking, who it is that is asking and what you are asking for**.

When they tell you that it isn't good to practice any other kind of prayer than vocal prayer, do not be distressed.

Read this very carefully. What you do not understand about prayer, beseech the Lord to teach you.

No one can take vocal prayer from you or make you recite the Our Father quickly without understanding it. If someone should counsel you to give it up, do not believe him.

5. By giving me **understanding** of the great deal we ask for when reciting the Our Father, Sisters, the Lord, has allowed me to teach you and myself the path we are to follow.

It never entered my mind that this prayer contained so many **deep secrets**. The **entire spiritual way** is contained in it, from the **beginning stages until God engulfs the soul and gives it to drink abundantly from the fount of living water which the Lord said is found at the end of the way**.

It seems the Lord wanted to give us understanding, Sisters, of the great consolation contained in this prayer. It is highly beneficial to those who do not know how to read. They can draw a lot of **doctrine** from it along with **consolation**.

This book cannot be taken away from us for it comes from the **mouth of Truth itself**. Let us **delight** in this prayer and **strive** to learn from so excellent a Master the **humility** with which the Lord prays.

6. ... The Lord has taught us the **path** (in the Book of her Life) ... to reach this **fount of living water**, what the **soul feels there**, how God **satisfies** it, takes away **thirst** for **earthly things** and makes it **grow** in the **things** pertaining to the **service of God**.

Those who have reached this **fount** will find that book (The Book of her Life) very helpful and receive much **light** from it.

Father Domingo Banez ... is my confessor to whom I will give this book. If it is alright for you to see, he will give it to you along with the other one (The Book of her Life).

7. If he thinks this book will be helpful and gives it to you, I will be **consoled** that you are consoled. If no one may see it however, you can accept my **good will**, for by this work I have **obeyed your command**. I consider myself well paid for the **trouble involved in writing** it, but there has been **no trouble in knowing what to write**.

May the Lord be blessed and raised; for from Him comes every good we speak of, think about, and do. Amen