

Prayer of St. Ephrem

**O Lord and Master of my life,
Keep from me the spirit of indifference and discouragement, lust of power, and idle
chatter.**

(Prostration/deep bow)

**Instead, grant to me, Your servant,
The spirit of wholeness of being, humble-mindedness, patience, and love.**

(Prostration/deep bow)

**O Lord and King,
Grant me the grace to be aware of my sins
And not to judge my neighbor;
For You are blessed, now and for ever and ever. Amen!**

(Prostration/deep bow)



Then the following prayer is said 4 times:

**God be merciful to me a sinner,
God cleanse me of my sins and have mercy on me.
I have sinned without number; forgive me, O Lord.**

*The prayer of St. Ephrem is said again with one final
prostration at the end.*

A quick and simple version of this prayer:

O Lord, help me to not want my own way all the time. (Bow)

Help me to love others. (Bow)

Keep me from being jealous, and help me to know and admit when I am wrong. (Bow)

During the period Great Lent, the prayer written by St. Ephrem the Syrian is said frequently. It is a prayer on which everyone should carefully meditate. Allow the prayer into your heart and mind, and it will inevitably speak to you. Each of us can relate to this prayer, allowing it to raise many issues in our hearts. It reminds us that God is the Master of our lives, and asks God to free us from the sins of everyday life, like pride and gossip and laziness and greed. In it we ask God to give us humility and love of our neighbor, awareness of our own sins, and disinterest in the sins of others. It asks for the gifts and graces we need to lead a holy life.

This prayer also acts as a warning to us. We need to spiritually be on our guard, avoiding the temptations that each day brings, and making amends for our failings, first by recognizing them, and then bringing them before our Lord God with humility and in repentance. To emphasize the theme of this prayer--changing our lives--we accompany it with **Great Prostration**, kneeling and touching the forehead to the floor.

Often we have become lazy, and even faint-hearted, in our prayers, meditations and readings. This season of Great Lent reminds us to be awake, alert, concentrating anew on the Glory that has been revealed to us. What we should really be doing, during this period of Lent, is seeking to overcome our faults, and learning to be loving Christians! This is a time to look at our own errors, to honour our Lord God in prayer, seeking out humbly our repentance.

Let us take advantage of this rich period of time given to us; let us, with great love in our hearts, go to Church more frequently - as the Church offers us more services during this time of the 40-day fasting period, and Holy Week, eventually leading up to the joyful celebration of our Lord's Holy Glorious Resurrection. What a blessed time this is for us! Let us now begin humbly, and with love to pray as we continue our journey to Holy Pascha.

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