

The Lord's Prayer: The Seventh Petition

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition, in summary, that our Father in heaven would rescue us from every evil of body and soul, possessions and reputation, and finally, when our last hour comes, give us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this valley of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

“Deliver us from evil.” Think about those words. Think about the fallen world we live in with all the evil in it. That’s quite a task. Now, think how many Christians in the world pray that prayer, making that petition to the Father, to be delivered from evil. What an impossible task. No wonder it seems like we must endure so much suffering. But is that what it means for God to “rescue us from every evil of body and soul”? Are we really expecting Him to spare us from any hurt? That would be unrealistic to say the least. One of the questions in the **Explanation** is concerned with just that. It says, “How does the Lord rescue us from every evil of body and soul, possessions and reputation?” The answer is, “In a world ruined by sin, the Lord keeps us from harm and helps us to endure the troubles that He allows to come into our lives.” Notice, God rescues us in two ways: 1) He keeps us from harm and 2) He helps us to endure.

Acts 14:22 says: *Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.* Suffering is part of being a Christian. The Bible promises that we will suffer for our faith. Jesus Christ is our Example. Look how much He suffered on our behalf. It’s only fair that we suffer for Him.

2 Corinthians 12:9 says: *My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.* God doesn’t expect us to get through trials and suffering on our own. He holds us up by His grace. If we can trust His grace for salvation (and we do), we can trust His grace to see us through the dark times.

Proverbs 3:11-12 says: *My son, do not despise the Lord’s discipline or be weary of His reproof, for the Lord reproves whom He loves, as a father the son in whom He delights.* Sometimes, God allows us to suffer as a form of discipline. It’s hard to do, but vital for us to remember to remain positive. He’s only doing this because He loves us.

Psalms 91:9-10 says: *Because you have made the Lord your dwelling place—the Most High, who is my refuge—no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.* Sometimes, God does rescue us by putting a hedge up and protecting us from evil. In Luther’s Morning and Evening Prayers, we pray: “Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me.” We recognize the evil in the world and that the devil is there, too. But we know that if God is with us, the devil will have no power over us because our heavenly Father will deliver us from evil.

Of course, the final deliverance from evil will be at the end of our lives or the end of time, whichever comes first, when God will deliver us from this evil world and take us home to be with Him in glory forever and ever. God’s will be done, and His name be praised forever and ever. Amen.