

We Cannot Merely Pray

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end war;
For we know that You have made the world in a way
That we must find our own paths to peace
Within ourselves and with our neighbors.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end starvation;
For You have already given us the resources
With which to feed the entire world.
If we would only use them wisely.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God to root out prejudice;
For You have already given us eyes
With which to see the good in others,
If we would only use them rightly.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end despair;
For You have already given us the power
To clear away slums and to give hope,
If we would only use our power justly.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end disease;
For You have already given us great minds
With which to search out cures and healings,
If we would only use them constructively.

Therefore, we pray to You instead, O God,
For strength, determination, and will power,
To *do* instead of just to pray,
To *become* instead of merely to wish,

For Your sake and for ours, speedily and soon,
That our land and world may be safe,
And that our lives may be blessed.

May the words that we pray, and the deeds that we do
Be acceptable before You, O Lord,
Our Rock and our Redeemer.

—Rabbi Jack Riemer (adapted)