Multiplication Master

The test was coming. But Luca had a plan.

By Jessica Larsen
Based on a true story
“Love the Lord and do your part” (Children’s Songbook, 9).

Nine times seven is 63. Six times eight is . . . 42? No, that’s not right!
Luca furiously erased his answer.
“Time!” Luca’s teacher called. “Everyone hand in your tests.”

That night during family scripture study, Dad read from the Doctrine and Covenants: “Therefore, if you will ask of me you shall receive; if you will knock it shall be opened unto you” (D&C 6:5).
Luca’s head popped up. That was the answer! Prayer!
Luca started praying every day to do well on his timed multiplication test. This would work. It had to work. He would finally become a Multiplication Master!

On Tuesday, Luca came home from school and grabbed his basketball.
“Do you need help studying?” Mom asked.
“Nope! I’ve got it taken care of!” Luca said as he ran out the door.
He believed so much in prayer that he didn’t even take out his flash cards to practice his math.

On Friday, Luca knew he was going to pass the test. But when he sat down to take it, the answers just didn’t come, and he did even worse than before!
Luca walked home from the bus stop with his head down.

“Did you practice with your flash cards?” Dad asked.
“No.”
“Did you study at all?”
“No,” Luca said. “But I prayed all week!”
Dad dribbled the ball and looked at Luca. “Well, multiplication is kind of like basketball. How did you get so good at basketball?”
“I practiced,” Luca said.
“Yes, and so when we pray for Heavenly Father to help you before your games, we’re not praying for Him to magically make you a better basketball player. What do we pray for?”
“For me to remember what I practiced,” Luca said.
“That’s right. Prayer works best when we do our part and also ask Heavenly Father to help us,” Dad said.

“So my part is studying my flash cards?”
Luca asked.
“Exactly,” Dad said, passing the ball back to Luca.
Luca heaved a big sigh and took a shot. The ball bounced off the rim.
“OK. It’s going to take a lot of work. But I guess I can study hard and ask Heavenly Father to help me.”

“Once I wanted to learn how to do the monkey bars, but I fell. So I tried again, but I fell again. I could only get to the third bar. I prayed to Heavenly Father to help me be brave. After my prayer, I felt ready to try again. This time I made it to the fourth bar! Then the fifth! I was getting better! I knew Heavenly Father would help me be brave enough to keep trying so I could get better.”
Lily S., age 7, Arkansas, USA

The author lives in Texas, USA.