The Lord's Prayer

Gratitude

2025

The older English translations begin with the unnecessarily cumbersome, “Our Father which art in heaven”. Today, “Our Father in the heavens”, would be more appropriate. Luke has simply, “Father”. We might even take a tip from Luke and settle on, “Heavenly Father”, or “Our Heavenly Father”, or even, “Abba”. These are not compellingly significant differences.

Πάτερ hημών hο εν τοις ουρανοίς
Our Father in the heavens — Matthew 6:9b.

Πάτερ
Father — Luke 11:2b.

### The First Gift

We get down to brass tacks in the next phrase, which absolutely does not say, “Hallowed be thy name.” It says:

hαγιασθήτω το όνομα´ σου,
Your name was hallowed! — Matthew 6:9c

hαγιασθήτω το όνομα´ σου
Your name was hallowed! — Luke 11:2c

We abandoned the translation, devoted, when we discovered this use of hallowed in Revelation, so we returned to the customary wording: both words mean the same thing.

Hαγιασθήτω: past passive emphatic of hαγιάζω (hαγιασθήτω, third person singular, aorist passive imperative of hαγιάζω: to set apart, devote, sanctify, hallow). So, the Greek text has a past tense, where the older English version suggests a present or a future tense. So, what?

The difference is subtle: the gift of God is changed into a petition. Big deal, isn’t it? Yet, before we know it, we are redirected by the spinning of words from giving thanks to God for the great and glorious gift of God’s Holy Name to us, to asking for something we already have. Ever so gradually, our prayer ceases to be grateful, thankful, and God centered; to becoming asking, grasping, and self-centered. The whole purpose of prayer has been subtly diverted. So, what?

Adam and Eve were given the Holy Name of God at Creation; because, they were His beloved children: but, Adam and Eve broke that Holy relationship… God didn’t break the relationship.

That relationship was renewed in Noah, and restored to Israel in the innocent lamb at Passover and at Pentecost, 1406 BC: but, by 586 BC, the Israelites had broken that Holy relationship once again… God didn’t break the relationship.

Around 6-4 BC, this relationship was restored to all people, everywhere, for all time, by the miraculous Incarnation and birth of Jesus; it cannot be broken this time because Jesus is the eternal and sinless Son of God: Jesus is the God-man. We humans, Jew and Gentile, male and female, are no longer bastards: we are the beloved adopted children of God. We only need to believe in Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit to receive this gift of the love of the Father.

Consider the glory and the greatness of God! By Creation God established a Universe so beautiful that it takes the breath away; and yet that same Creation provides for every human need of over eight billion people today: every breath of air, every drop of water, every morsel of food, our clothes, our shelters, our medicines, our learning, everything. If people suffer in want it is because of the greed and selfishness of other people.

When we lose gratitude to God, even in death, we lose everything: because our deepest thoughts become self-centered, instead of God centered, and we have once again cut ourselves off from the loving Fatherhood of God by unbelief.

Gratitude is the only proper attitude. Change the way you pray!

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### The Second Gift

There are no text variants in the second phrase for either Matthew or Luke. Commas, accents, breathing marks, punctuation, or word separation: these are all artifacts generally added by epigraphers to make the text accessible to ordinary Greek readers. We use a modern simplified minimal punctuation system with Westcott & Hort.

ελθέτω hη βασιλεία σου,
Your kingdom did come! — Matthew 6:10a

ελθέτω hη βασιλεία σου
Your kingdom did come! — Luke 11:2d

We changed the translation of the past tense from, “Your kingdom came”, to, “Your kingdom did come”, in order to add a beat to the rhythm.

Ελθέτω: past active emphatic of έρχομαι (ελθέτω, third person singular, aorist active imperative of έρχομαι: to come). So, the Greek text again has a past tense, where the older English version suggests a present or a future tense. So, what?

Once again, the glorious gift of God is subtly changed into a petition. Instead of thanking God for all His marvelous gifts to us, we are reduced to being empty-handed beggars.

Adam and Eve gave away the Kingdom of God soon after creation.

Israel gave away the Kingdom of God shortly after the Exodus when they, out of fear, failed to trust God, and refused to enter into the promised land (Ha Aretz in Hebrew, hη γη in Greek): so, they wandered in the wilderness for forty years, while that unbelieving older generation died.

Israel despised the Kingdom of God, and gave it over to idolatry by 722 BC. By 586 BC Judea had also squandered the Kingdom of God in unbelief and idolatry.

Now Jesus is incarnate, conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin’s womb, born in a stable, worshipped by shepherds and Persians, hated by Herod: Jesus escapes into Egypt; Herod fails to kill Him. The King is now here among us. Where the King is, so also is the Kingdom. When He ascends into heaven to be enthroned on high, the Spirit of God is left among us. The Kingdom of God never leaves again, cannot leave again. In life and in death we are protected in this Kingdom: for we are made full members of it when The Spirit baptizes us into Jesus death, and raises us to newness of life in His glorious resurrection.

Instead of empty-handed beggars, our hands are now filled with all the glories of God’s Kingdom; wonderful gifts for which we never asked, or even dreamed of asking: but, the Father knew, and the Father sent His Son to give (John 3:16). Do not be empty-handed beggars and ungracious receivers. This is not a petition either.

Gratitude is the only proper attitude. We need to change the way we pray!

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### The Third Gift

Luke leaves out the phrase about the will of God: we’re not sure why.

γενηθήτω το θέλημα´ σου,
Your will was begotten! — Matthew 6:10b

— Luke 11:2d

There are no text variants for Matthew here. The Byzantine text of Luke adds all of the words, “γενηθήτω το θέλημα´ σου” (Your will was begotten!). Luke is not focused on the will of God in this context: yet, the random scribe puzzles, and adds a note anyway.

Γενηθήτω: past passive emphatic of γίνομαι (γενηθήτω, third person singular, aorist passive imperative of γίνομαι: to exist, be created, be born. An irregular verb: the second aorist root is ἐγενόμην, which shortens to γεν- in the imperative, γενέσθω (active). The word derives from the copula, being or existing; rather than from active verbs of doing, etc.). Again, the word is a past tense: not a present or a future. A gift is being discussed: not a petition. Gratitude is the appropriate response: not begging. God cares for His children with an amazing and even lavish generosity: begging is an insult to God and His precious gifts. It only gets worse.

If Jesus wanted to discuss doing, He would have used the active verb, ποιέω: to do. He uses the word, γίνομαι, which always has something to do with being, or existence: for example, God creating, a father begetting, a mother birthing, or some other bringing forth. It belittles the word, γίνομαι, to translate it as do, be done.

It was this word, γίνομαι, that first alerted us to the fact that this is about the incarnation, birth, and epiphany of Jesus. The Father has begotten a human son, a monogenes, from the womb of the Virgin when, His eternal Son added to Himself a complete, perfect, sinless human nature to become the God-man.

What of this will of God, which was begotten? How is the will of God not the Law of God, or at least the Law of God is the most complete expression of the will of God that we have in writing. Jesus will complete all the righteous demands of the Law of God by His incarnation, life, preaching, teaching, miracles, and crucifixion. Jesus is the Law of God walking around among us on two feet. By His single combat, He fulfilled all the righteous demands of the Law for us.

It is this realization that brought us to the understanding that Jesus hallowed the Father’s Name; Jesus brought the Father’s Kingdom; and now Jesus does the will and Law of the Father.

The will of God for us is to take up our crosses and follow Jesus. Thank You, Father, for giving us Jesus. Thank You, Jesus, for blazing the path to follow. Thank You, Holy Spirit, for bringing us the power and teaching to follow and obey. The Spirit enables us as He writes the Law of God on our Hearts. Thus, we obey the Law of God by grace through faith as the Spirit teaches us to love walking with Jesus.

We simply must change the way we pray. Throw out the traditional translation, which has become an idol, and take what the Greek text says to heart. Cease self-centered prayer. Become grateful. Everything you are and have is a gift from God. The traditional prayer is wrong. We simply must change the way we pray.

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### Heaven on Ha Aretz

hως εν ουρανώ και επί γης
as in heaven, also on [the] land. — Matthew 6:10c

— Luke 11:2e

The Byzantine text adds, “της”, after ἐπὶ in Matthew. The Byzantine text of Luke adds all of the words, “hως εν ουρανώ και επί της γης” (as in heaven, also on the land). Again, Luke’s omission shows us that his focus lies elsewhere, probably on Luke 11:13. The random scribe still struggles with these omissions, as do we, until we see that the topic of prayer continues through Luke 11:13, and beyond. This could indicate that Matthew has a pre-crucifixion focus, and Luke has a post-Acts 2 focus. Whatever the case the change is strange.

The Greek word, γης, is the Hebrew, Aretz; της γης, is Ha Aretz, the Land, the Promised Land. This may explain the difference: Matthew is writing to Israelites and Jews; Luke is writing to Greeks and Romans (Gentiles).

Matthew’s phrase shows us that in the first three gifts, brought to earth by Jesus, are identical to these items in heaven: Jesus has brought heaven to the Holy Land for us.

We all make mistakes, hundreds of them every day; our brains are correcting so automatically, so rapidly that we scarcely notice them: we take them for granted.

Such mistakes in doctrine divide the churches, now over 45,000 of them; this prevents us from finding true catholicity (not Roman Catholicity): the ability to speak with one voice (John 10:16; Acts 4:24; Romans 15:6; 1 Corinthians 6:17; 7:17; Ephesians 4:5-6; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Hebrews 12:21-29). We have fallen many centuries away from the true unity of The Church.

First, we must face the reality that we make mistakes, even in confessional statements, and admit to them.

Second, we are obliged to search diligently for such mistakes, and hunt them down like vermin in our houses or in our food.

Third, having found errors, such as the treatment of these Greek past tenses (hαγιασθήτω, ελθέτω, and γενηθήτω), we must study hard together until a universally satisfactory correction is formed, and what has now become an idol for us in the old standard translation is destroyed.

The Father has given us the magnificent gift of (at least part) of Heaven on land (the land, Ha Aretz). Let us not despise that gift by ingratitude. Let us rather, change the way we pray.

This gift features three parts: the Father’s Name, the Father’s Kingdom, and the Father’s Will or Law. Elsewhere, we learn that Jesus has made this curse of the Law, hanging over our heads, into a foundation for our feet (Ephesians 2:20). I cannot say if this platea stands on these three parts as pillars; or, if the Will is the platea itself, the Kingdom is the protective walls, the Name is the Name of the city, our adopted family name.

I can say that more gifts are coming. Let us change the way we pray. Let us tear down this false idol, as we come to absolute total agreement by studying together.

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### The Fourth Gift

τον άρτον hημών τον επιούσιον δος hημίν σήμερον
[~~the~~] Our bread, the epiousion, You gave us today! — Matthew 6:11

τον άρτον hημών τον επιούσιον δίδου hημίν το καθ’ hημέραν
[~~the~~] Our bread, the epiousion, You give us according to the day! — Luke 11:3

Δος: past active emphatic of δίδωμι (δος, second person singular, aorist active imperative of δίδωμι: you gave. The imperative mood is customary for prayer. Hence, our preference for calling it emphatic: the English imperative suggests, much-to-much of, command; the Greek imperative is much broader than that… it is emphatic).

Δίδου: present active emphatic of δίδωμι (δίδου, second person singular, present active imperative of δίδωμι: you give. Even though Luke uses the present tense, this cannot possibly be interpreted as a petition).

There are no text variants for either Matthew or Luke here. Luke changes from Matthew’s past tense, “δος” (gave), to a present tense, “δίδου” (give): this seems to point the thematic interrelationship with Luke 11:13, which seems to end the discussion of prayer. Then Luke changes from Matthew’s, “σήμερον” (today), to, “το καθ’ hημέραν” (according to the day, or day by day), again to connect with Luke 11:13. Note that the critical word, “επιούσιον” (the I Am Bread, Jesus, John 6:26-71), is unchanged.

This is still, most certainly a gift; gratitude is the proper attitude: we are not empty-handed beggars standing before our Father. We stand before our Father with our hands and arms overflowing with the Father’s gifts. This is the Christmas to end all Christmases: we haven’t even yet had enough time to open most of them. We are simply overwhelmed with the goodness of the Father’s grace.

Whatever, επιούσιον, means, it most certainly is not an adverb meaning daily. Let’s pick the word apart. Επιούσιον is a compound word, επι + ούσιον. The only sense in which this επιούσιον is daily, is that it is talking about the manna, which the Israelites ate in the wilderness for forty years. But the manna, which the Israelites ate is only a prophecy or a type of the New Testament manna which Jesus describes definitively in John 6; Jesus Himself is the manna descending from heaven; Jesus Himself is that Bread of Life. In the Nicene Creed, the word, ούσια, is used to describe the essence of God. Jesus is the επι + ούσιον, the upon + essence of the Father. The Father and the Son share the same essence so closely that they are not even a hairs breadth apart (hο ων και hο ην και hο ερχόμενος is said of both Father and Son in Revelation 1:4, 8). Jesus is the life upon, or after, or like the essence of the Father. This works out in Jesus perfect obedience to the Law in His life, miracles, preaching, and teaching; but, most of all in His body and blood, shed in Crucifixion. “As often as [we] eat this bread, and drink this cup, [we] show the Lord’s death till He returns” (1 Corinthians 11:26).

If Christ’s perfect obedience to the Law has built a platea, a solid foundation on which to build and live, He now plates it with His own blood as if it were transparent gold (Revelation 21:21).

Every time you receive Communion, you must concentrate on being thankful. The Father has no greater gift than the death of death that we remember in communion.

If we don’t change the way we pray, we are of all people, most miserable.

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### The Fifth Gift

και άφες hημίν τα οφειλήματα hημών, hως και hημείς αφήκαμεν[1] τοις οφειλέταις hημών
You forgave us our debts; as also, we forgave our debtors! — Matthew 6:12

και άφες hημίν τας hαμαρτίας hημών, και γαρ αυτοί αφίομεν παντί οφείλοντι hημίν
You forgave us our sins: for, we ourselves also forgive all being indebted to us! — Luke 11:4a

[1] RP have αφίεμεν: first person plural, present active indicative, rather than αφήκαμεν, first person singular, aorist active indicative. We believe that this is a lexical error: the first person singular is αφήκα; αφήκαμεν is the first person plural (note the form of the endings in -μεν).

Άφες: past active emphatic of αφίημι (άφες, second person singular, aorist active imperative of αφίημι: excuse, forgive, you forgave).

Αφήκαμεν: past active indicative of αφίημι (αφήκαμεν, first person plural, aorist active indicative of αφίημι: excuse, forgive. Byzantine text has αφίεμεν, first person plural, present active indicative of αφίημι. This suggests that we must automatically forgive, out of gratitude for what we have been forgiven. We simply must do what is natural for a forgiven people to do: Matthew 18 and 25. There is nothing optional about this reaction; an unforgiving person cannot possibly enter the kingdom of God’s forgiveness. Having received the gift of faith, it is impossible not to respond appropriately).

Αφίομεν: present active indicative of αφίημι (αφίομεν, first person plural, present active indicative of αφίημι: excuse, forgive).

Οφείλοντι: present active participle of οφείλω (οφείλοντι, dative singular masculine, present active participle of οφείλω: one being in debt, one being indebted, debtor).

God forgave, past tense in both cases. The theme of God’s wonderful gifts continues. Our proper response is gratitude, not petitions or begging. Whether people also forgive or forgave does not alter the fact that God forgave.

Matthew says, “τα οφειλήματα” (debts). Luke says, “τας hαμαρτίας” (sins, missing the mark). To what or to whom are we in debt? Not to God: for, God holds no one in a state of slavery. Not to Satan: for, Satan has no such authority or power. Ah, but the Law, there is the rub: if God does not abide by His Own Law, He becomes a sinner; if God changes His Own Law to accommodate sinners, He becomes a liar. All mankind is indebted to the Law of God: seemingly there is no hope, no solution.

But, now Jesus has come. The body and blood that we saw in the epiousion pays the ransom of our debt to the Law: we are free. Who can receive such a gift? Do only the elect receive this gift? Do only the properly baptized in water receive this gift? Do only those who sincerely believe receive this gift? It appears from John 3:16 that all people, everywhere, for all ages, the cosmos, receive this gift: but, strangely, only those who believe are willing to accept it. How ungracious! What ingratitude!

Even though Paul was scrupulously obedient to the law, he failed to see Jesus, and murdered Christians without a cause: his scrupulosity at Law did not keep him from missing the target completely. “Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the devoted Spirit” (Titus 3:5). This is Spirit baptism, not water baptism. Water baptism, without the Spirit is worthless.

Whether, Matthew says, “αφήκαμεν” (forgave) as in the Alexandrian text, or, αφίεμεν (forgive) as in the Byzantine text makes little difference now: this was discussed previously. Luke deletes Matthew’s brief second clause, and replaces it with a similar, but more explanatory clause, “for, we ourselves also forgive all being indebted to us.” This is the requirement of the Law, to erase debts every seven years, and erase everything in the Year of Jubilee. Since, Jesus is here among us, in our hearts by the power of the Spirit, the eternal Year of Jubilee has come (Luke 4:17-21).

But Jesus has eliminated all the debt to the Law. It seems as though there is nothing left for people to forgive. The heavenly “bank” has been “remonetized”: there is nothing left for us not to forgive; our forgiveness of others is significant trivia, yet to be explained (Matthew 18:21-35).

Change the way you pray. Be more thankful. Be more forgiving. You are forgiven. Lift up your voices and sing and shout. Christ is risen. You are forgiven. Thank you, Father. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Holy Spirit. Thank you, brothers and sisters.

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### The Sixth Gift Introduced

και μη εισενέγκης hημάς εις πειρασμόν,
Even though You would not have led us into temptation; — Matthew 6:13a

και μη εισενέγκης hημάς εις πειρασμόν.
Even though You would not have led us into temptation. — Luke 11:4b

εισενέγκης: past active subjunctive of εισφέρω (εισενέγκης, second person singular, aorist active subjunctive of εισφέρω: to bring, carry, or lead into).

There are no text variants for either Matthew or Luke here. Because the verb is subjunctive it was decided that the introductory και was best represented in English as a concessive (even though); the introductory αλλά (a strong but, or alternative to the previous phrase) in the following phrase will thus provide the natural response (even so). The reader is invited to consider other expressions of the και - αλλά conjunction pair; και by itself most frequently expresses a full stop in Greek, following the Hebrew idiom for the word/letter, vav. The subjunctive verb is unfortunately left uninterpreted in most English translations.

God does not tempt anyone (James 1:13); it is an absolute impossibility: which is another reason for gratitude. Satan is of course known as the great tempter. Nevertheless, the primary source of temptation is the evil inner self: a consequence of the fall of mankind with Adam and Eve (James 1:14-15). We are the immediate cause of our own temptations. “The Devil made me do it”, is a common popular lie. We have no one to blame but ourselves. My guilt stops on my doorstep.

Let us change the way we pray. Let us strive to be more grateful.

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### The Sixth Gift Completed

αλλά hρύσαι hημάς από του πονηρού.
even so, You delivered us from the evil: — Matthew 6:13b

— Luke 11:4c

The Byzantine text of Luke adds all of the words, “αλλά hρύσαι hημάς από του πονηρού.” (even so, You delivered us from the evil).

hρύσαι: past active emphatic of hρύομαι (hρύσαι, second person singular, aorist active imperative of hρύομαι: to deliver, drag from danger, rescue).

The very strong contrasting conjunction, αλλά, almost forces the preceding phrase to say, “Even though You would NEVER have led us into temptation.” “You delivered us from the evil”, is the opposite alternative to temptation.

Today it is popular to interpret “the evil” as Satan: this cannot be the case. The Devil made me do it is the sorriest excuse of all. However, James 1:14-15 has already proved to us that the direct and immediate source of temptation is the evil inner workings of the human heart. Instead of tempting us, which the Father could never do; He delivered us from the evil buried deep within us. We need to be grateful, thanking the Father for the deliverance from ourselves that He has already delivered to us in the blood of His Son; bestowed upon us; gifted to us. It is insulting to the Father and the Son to ask for, beg for, petition for what we already have as a gift.

Oh, please. Oh, please let us change the way we pray. Our very gratitude for the Father’s wonderful gifts is contagious; as it spreads to others, people hurt each other less and less: it is the primary element of evangelism. If we appear to be self-centered and ungrateful, all our words ring false.

We simply must, change the way we pray.

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### The False Ending

hότι σου εστίν hη βασιλεία και hη δύναμις και hη δόξα εις τους αιώνας αμήν.
Because, from You is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, into the ages. Amen.

This ending is not found in either Matthew or Luke in the Alexandrian manuscripts. Its earliest reference may come from an illusion in the *Didache* (1st or 2nd Century): but, this is a very uncertain line of evidence: for we have no critical text of the *Didache* in Greek, or any manuscripts readily available for examination.

However, nothing in the *Didache*, warrants the conclusion that either the text of Matthew or Luke originally contained this blessing as the formal ending of the prayer. Rather, it seems to me, that, if anything, the *Didache* supports the formal liturgical use.

A common opinion is that this quotation from 1 Chronicles 29.11-13 was added as a praise response to the prayer. It was never part of the text either Matthew or Luke as Jesus taught it. Our principal objection to its inclusion remains that this blessing disrupts the logical, thematic flow of the discussion in both Matthew and Luke.

However, it does support the conclusion that the Lord’s Prayer is a list of six gifts from the Father; definitely, not a set of six petitions: for, these past tense verbs cannot be twisted into petitions.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Didache>

<https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0714.htm>

It does appear to be a quotation of or inference to 1 Chronicles 29.11-13.

According to the Nestle *NTG*, Twenty-fifth Edition (USB, 1971), page 13, this reading is supported by E (8th Century) F (9th) G (9th) H (9th) S (10th) V (9th) Y (9th) Ω (9th)….

According to the Aland *GNT*, Second Edition (UBS, 1968) page 18, note 4, this reading is supported by K (9th) L (9th) W (5th) Δ (9th) Θ (9th) Π (9th) F13 (11th on) 28 (11th) 33 (9th) 565 (9th)….

According to the Hodges and Farstad *GNT MT* (Nelson, 1982), page 16, this reading is supported by the Byzantine text (MT = Majority Text).

According to the Robinson and Pierpont *NT in Original Greek* (Chilton, 2005), page 10, this reading is supported by the Byzantine text.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_text-type>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_New_Testament_uncials>

Here is a lengthy study: https://www.thetextofthegospels.com/2018/11/matthew-613-how-does-lords-prayer-end\_23.html

All of these are relatively late witnesses: established well after Constantine had made Christianity popular.

We absolutely reject this ending as part of the Bible text in either Matthew or Luke: it is just an unnecessary disruption in the thematic flow of either prayer.

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From this point on, Matthew and Luke move in two distinct directions, indicating that after the lesson of gratitude, there at least two other continuing emphases: namely, forgiveness in Matthew and positive answers of prayer in Luke. Perhaps, the first reveals more about the work of Christ; while, the second uncovers details of the work of the Spirit. We begin with Matthew.

### Matthew: The Absolute Necessity of Forgiveness

εάν γαρ αφήτε τοις ανθρώποις τα παραπτώματα αυτών αφήσει και hυμίν hο πατήρ hυμών hο ουράνιος εάν δε μη αφήτε τοις ανθρώποις [τα παραπτώματα αυτών][1] ουδέ hο πατήρ hυμών αφήσει τα παραπτώματα hυμών

for, if you [we][2] would have forgiven[3] others[4] their stumblings[5], then Your Heavenly Father will forgive you [us]; yet, if you would not have forgiven others [~~their stumblings~~ ?], neither will your Father forgive your stumblings. — Matthew 6:14-15

[1] WH, RP, and others. This is almost obviously a scribal insertion attempting to balance the rhythm. It does not alter the meaning of the two verses by one iota.

[2] Jesus changes the prayer pronoun from our/we to the more direct and personal you: this is important in applications; but, some readers may be more comfortable with, we. Jesus has turned from teaching to preaching. This is the point: true gratitude is forgiving; failure to forgive is ingratitude.

[3] The past tense is interpreted as a perfect here, in order to conform to English idiom.

[4] ανθρώποις: men, human beings not males, humans, people, other people, others.

[5] παραπτώματα: side-falls, stumblings.

αφήτε: past active subjunctive of αφίημι used twice (αφήτε, second person plural, aorist active subjunctive of αφίημι: you could/should/would have excused, forgiven).

αφήσει: future active indicative of αφίημι used twice (αφήσει, third person singular, future active indicative of αφίημι: he/she/it will excuse, forgive).

The little word, γαρ (for), assures us that this phrase and pair of sentences is most certainly connected to the previous phrase and sentences (with the nonexistent liturgical phrase removed): most frequently as explanatory, but also as causative, or other. If this connection is ignored: there is nothing left to explain, and nothing is explained: these phrases are left hanging in midair, surrounded by vacuum. The word, γαρ, is always postpositive; which is to say that it is always the second word in a phrase or sentence: this seems strange to us, in that English usually has such words first.

No one can enter the heavenly kingdom of God’s Forgiveness with an unforgiving heart: the unforgivable sin is unforgiveness. God alone has the right to judge: we have no such right. God alone has the competence to judge: we have no such competence. So, we do well to focus on the words said and assiduously avoid the judgment of people (ad hominem arguments/fallacies). Unfortunately, this won’t stop others from taking legitimate arguments personally: so, forgiveness is something at which we really have to work hard... it is a nearly impossible task… but, God….

Matthew goes on to develop this theme of absolute forgiveness in Matthew 18, ordinary kindnesses in Matthew 25, and the very objective of our lives and existences in the Great Commission in Matthew 28.

“Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how often will my brother or sister sin against me, and I forgive them? till seven times? Jesus said to him, I say not unto you, ‘Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.’ ” — Matthew 18:21-22

“So also, will My Heavenly Father do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother or sister from your hearts.” — Matthew 18:35

“In as much as you have done it to one of the least of these brothers or sisters of Mine, you have done it unto Me.” — Matthew 25:40, 45

“And these will go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” — Matthew 25:46

“Teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. Look, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.” — Matthew 28:20

For a truly grateful person to be unforgiving is an absolute contradiction of terms. Out of gratitude flow, forgiveness, kindness, respect, love, learning to work together in teamwork.

### Meditation

The Lord’s Prayer creates a mental picture for me. I hope it speaks to your heart. It’s as if God has created an earthly playground for His children: He gives us His name, thus claiming His Fatherhood love for us; He creates a protective wall, a kingdom, around us to keep us from all evil; He makes a safe granite floor, a platea, from the Law, so we are never on sand; all of this is heaven like; then He gives us the bread, epiousion, painting the whole platea with the blood of His dear Son; our debt to the Law is paid/forgiven/ransomed; never once tempting us, He has delivered us from that very evil, we brought upon ourselves. He sets us free in this perfect playground to play; we still being sinners, children, unable to walk, bump into one another, hurt one another, and become angry. It is these stumblings that we must practice to forgive: for, we all stumble; forgive we must, it’s not an option.

Prayer without gratitude and forgiveness is no prayer at all. We certainly must change the way we pray.

Soli Deo Gloria

The Lord's Prayer

Gratitude

### Luke: The Positives of Answered Prayer

Luke continues the topic of prayer with an emphasis on persistence in prayer and positive answers, rather than Matthew’s emphasis on forgiveness. This makes sense if we recall Ezekiel 1:10, where the man was commonly thought to represent Matthew, the Lion – Mark, the Calf – Luke, and the eagle – John. We also recall that Mark is probably acting as Peter’s scribe; Luke is acting as Paul’s scribe: so, Mark is actually Peter’s Gospel, while Luke is really Paul’s Gospel: else, neither is Apostolic, and neither is authentic. Then we remember that Matthew was trained with the Twelve and with the Seventy, by classes and homework; but, Paul was trained separately and later by private tutoring. So, we are probably not looking at two versions of the same prayer, but, two distinct prayers, with two very different teaching objectives. Forgiveness is emphasized to the Twelve and the Seventy because neither they nor their culture were very forgiving by nature. Paul, on the other hand, having the mask ripped from his eyes on the Damascus road, saw himself naked, as a murderer, the persecutor of Christ Himself, would never, ever need to be reminded of forgiveness again. Rather, on the long road of toil ahead of him, through many dangers, needed to be reminded to not quit, to persist, to toil ever onward, that the Spirit of God would always be with him, because he was God’s child. It all makes perfect sense to me.

Luke 11:5-8 continues with a seemingly silly little parable about borrowing bread in the middle of the night. The Apostles are probably snickering behind their hands until the punch line hits: then it gets deadly quiet, and deadly serious, real quick.

It seems like a silly request, until we consider the context. In the flesh, the question is stupid: nobody awakens a neighbor at midnight for three lousy little biscuits the size and shape of donuts… he waits for dawn. Mere bodily food is never of such urgency. But, in the spirit, we see the Father, Who never sleeps, always ready to give the Bread of Life to those who ask, at any time of day or night.

Καγώ hυμίν λέγω, αιτείτε, και δοθήσεται hυμίν· ζητείτε, και hευρήσετε· κρούετε, και ανοιγήσεται hυμίν.

I also tell you: “Ask – it will be given to you; seek – you will find; knock – it will be opened to you: — Luke 11:9

πας γαρ hο αιτών λαμβάνει, και hο ζητών hευρίσκει, και τω κρούοντι ανοιγήσεται.

… for, all those asking receive; those seeking find; to those knocking will be opened”. — Luke 11:10

Another brief parable in Luke 11:11-12 drives the point even deeper and clinches the nail.

ει ουν hυμείς πονηροί hυπάρχοντες οίδατε δόματα αγαθά διδόναι τοις τέκνοις hυμών, πόσω μάλλον hο πατήρ hο εξ ουρανού δώσει πνεύμα hάγιον τοις αιτούσιν αυτόν.

“So, if you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more will the Father from heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?” — Luke 11:13

Here is God’s final answer (Revelation 22:17). Here is Luke’s and Paul’s punchline for prayer. We don’t know if Paul had any children. He was a Pharisee: hence, almost certainly married. He was evil enough, as are we. We must be as persistent in prayer, always asking, seeking, knocking; just as a child persists in seeking food: the child is relentless, asking every moment. We must be as hungry for the Spirit of God, and the Word He teaches, as a child is hungry for food: children, it seems to us, are hungry all the time… so must we be. The idea of getting God out of bed to give us bread, only casts it in a more humorous light.

### Conclusion

Let us please change the way we pray. Not begging for things, especially those things which the Father has already provided. Asking the Holy Spirit to teach us the heavenly things, about how to lift up our crosses and follow Jesus. The signs of ingratitude are all over us.

“You lust, and have not: you kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: you fight and war, yet you have not, because you ask not. You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss, that you may consume it upon your lusts. You adulterers and adulteresses, know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” — James 4:2-4

In the final analysis, our situation is little different from that of Adam and Eve: surrounded by millions of good things (the beauty of the earth, sea, and sky; enough to breathe, drink, and eat; adequate clothing; the ability to think from which we will develop all education, fantastic medications, and unbelievable inventions); our attention is led away to that one thing we do not have. We become angry, resentful, ungrateful, and unforgiving. We throw temper tantrums, better known as wars.

We must change our attitude when we pray.

Soli Deo Gloria

The Lord's Prayer

*Matthew*

“Our Father in the heavens,

Your name was hallowed!

Your kingdom did come!

Your will was begotten!

… as in heaven, also on [the] land.

Our bread, the epiousion, You gave us today!

You forgave us our debts; as also, we forgave our debtors!

Even though You would not have led us into temptation; even so, You delivered us from the evil:

for, if you [we] would have forgiven others their stumblings, then your [our] heavenly Father will forgive you [us]; yet, if you [we] would not have forgiven others [~~their stumblings~~ ?], neither will your [our] Father forgive your [our] stumblings.”

*Luke*

“Father,

Your name was hallowed!

Your kingdom did come!

Our bread, the epiousion, You give us according to the day!

You forgave us our sins: for, we ourselves also forgive all being indebted to us!

Even though You would not have led us into temptation.”

“I also tell you: ask – it will be given to you; seek – you will find; knock – it will be opened to you: for, all: the asker receives; the seeker finds; the knocker will be opened to.”

“So, if you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children: how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”

*The Conclusion*

“Our Father in the heavens,

Your name was hallowed!

Your kingdom did come!

Your will was begotten!

… as in heaven, also on [the] land.

Our bread, the epiousion, You gave us today!

You forgave us our debts; as also, we forgave our debtors!

Even though You would not have led us into temptation; even so, You delivered us from the evil:

for, if we would have forgiven others their stumblings, then our heavenly Father will forgive us; yet, if we would not have forgiven others, neither will our Father forgive our stumblings.”

Soli Deo Gloria

[[1]](#footnote-1)

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