

# Harvard Theological Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/HTR>

Additional services for *Harvard Theological Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



---

## The Lord's Prayer

Ernst Von Dobschütz

Harvard Theological Review / Volume 7 / Issue 03 / July 1914, pp 293 - 321  
DOI: 10.1017/S0017816000011433, Published online: 03 November 2011

**Link to this article:** [http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract\\_S0017816000011433](http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0017816000011433)

### How to cite this article:

Ernst Von Dobschütz (1914). The Lord's Prayer. Harvard Theological Review, 7, pp 293-321 doi:10.1017/S0017816000011433

**Request Permissions :** [Click here](#)

# HARVARD THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

VOLUME VII

JULY, 1914

NUMBER 3

---

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

ERNST VON DOBSCHÜTZ

UNIVERSITY OF HALLE

The Lord's Prayer has of late received renewed study, and fresh material has been brought together for determining its form and meaning. The problems have not been fully solved, but the discussion has reached a point at which a general survey of its present state and results is interesting and profitable.<sup>1</sup>

### I

If anything could deter Christians from superstitious belief in the mechanical inspiration and magical transmission of the Bible, it would seem to be the fact that even the Lord's Prayer has not come down to us in a uniform text.

The text in Matthew, to be sure, is substantially sound. The few variant readings are mostly of little consequence. The most important one relates to the closing doxology, which is found in the Textus Receptus, and hence in Luther's Bible and the King James Bible, but is absent from most of the ancient authorities, among them the Vulgate, and therefore from German versions before

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Hoennicke, "Neuere Forschungen zum Vaterunser," *Neue Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, xvii, 1906; and the articles "Lord's Prayer" in *Hastings's Dictionary of the Bible*, and in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*.

Luther, as well as the New Testaments of Wycliffe, Tyn-dale, Coverdale, and some other translators.<sup>2</sup>

Quite different is the case with the text in Luke. In the Textus Receptus, indeed, and the versions which are based upon it, the difference from the text of Matthew is slight. There is one variation in the fourth petition: 'day by day' (τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν) instead of 'this day' (σήμερον); two in the fifth: 'sins' instead of 'debts,' and 'everyone that is indebted to us' instead of 'our debtors.' That is all. The doxology is missing in all authorities, ancient and modern. But when we turn to the critical texts or to the translations based upon them, as, for instance, the Revised Version of 1881, we note great differences: here in the address Luke has nothing but 'Father,' while the third and seventh petitions are lacking altogether. It is interesting to observe that in these points too the Vulgate has kept the original form and transmitted it to the late Middle Ages, so that Wycliffe, Coverdale in his Latin-English edition of 1538, the Rheims-Douai Bible, and others, represent the true text against the Authorized Version.

Nearly all the quotations outside the New Testament represent the Matthaean form, or some form akin to it. Thus Didache 8 2<sup>3</sup> follows Matthew; except that in the fifth petition it has 'indebtedness' (ὀφειλήν), instead of 'debts' (ὀφειλήματα), and the present tense 'we forgive' (ἀφίεμεν, compare the late uncials and Textus Receptus) instead of the aorist, 'we forgave' (ἀφήκαμεν); in the doxology 'kingdom' is omitted, as it is also in some Egyptian texts. The interesting inscribed potsherd found at Megara and published by R. Knopf in 1900<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> These, however, have an Amen at the end of the prayer.

<sup>3</sup> This paragraph is lacking in the Ethiopic version discovered by E. von der Goltz, Sitzungsberichte der Berliner Akademie, 1906.

<sup>4</sup> Mittheilungen des kaiserl. deutschen archaeologischen Instituts, Athenische Abtheilung, xxv, 1900, pp. 313-324. A Coptic amulet was published by U. Wilcken in 1902.

has, together with the mis-spellings which betray an illiterate writer, the present tense in the fifth petition (*ἀφίόμεν*, cf. DELΔII); and at the end the place of the doxology is taken by an acclamation, 'O Lord Christ,' which is at variance with the invocation, 'Our Father.' The liturgical use, as attested in the eighth book of the Apostolic Constitutions and other rituals of the church, is entirely in agreement with Matthew. In one remarkable form occurring in the Acts of Thomas, § 144, the fourth petition is lacking.<sup>5</sup>

## II

There is, however, one variant reading in the Lukan text which, after being long neglected, has in recent times become the subject of much debate. It is the petition for the Holy Spirit, which is found in some ancient authorities. Not more than two or three Greek manuscripts, and these late and relatively unimportant, give it; but it is attested in the fourth century by the Cappadocian fathers and in the second by Marcion. It runs as follows: 'Let thy Holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us;' the words 'upon us' varying in position and in some authorities being absent. Further, Codex Bezae (D) appends the words, 'upon us' to the first petition of the prayer, and in some German forms *zu uns* begins the second. This may be taken as a remainder from the petition for the Holy Spirit; but the explanation may also be given that that petition has developed out of the words 'upon us.' The most curious fact is that in Marcion's Gospel this sentence took the place of the first petition, whereas in all the other witnesses it is substituted for the second. It is difficult to account for this variation.

<sup>5</sup> This, however, is attested only by one Greek manuscript (U in Max Bonnet's edition, *Acta apostolorum apocrypha*, ii, 2, p. 250) and by the Syriac (ed. Wright, p. 279; Burkitt, *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*, ii, pp. 105 f., 268 f.).

Bishop Chase, in his book, *The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church* (1891), was the first to call attention to this variant reading; he regarded it as a liturgical development of the second petition made to fit the Lord's Prayer for use in the baptismal service. In 1904 Harnack<sup>6</sup> insisted upon the importance of this very old reading and drew radical critical conclusions from it. Spitta, writing in the same year,<sup>7</sup> affirmed its genuineness; while von Soden<sup>8</sup> suggested that it originated in a baptismal prayer of John the Baptist.

The facts may be presented in the following scheme:

<i>Matthew</i> address	<i>Luke</i> address	<i>Marcion</i> address	<i>Others</i> address
1. name	1. name	1. spirit	1. name
2. kingdom	2. kingdom	2. kingdom	2. spirit
3. will			
4. bread	3. bread	3. bread	3. bread
5. forgiveness	4. forgiveness	4. forgiveness	4. forgiveness
6. temptation	5. temptation	5. temptation	5. temptation
7. deliverance (doxology)			

Now Harnack argued, as in the *Textus Receptus* Luke's form was assimilated to the Matthaean standard by adding the third and the seventh petitions, so the canonical form in Luke and the other two forms are all attempts to complete an original Lukan text from Matthaean material. One form added to Luke the name (Matthew's first petition), another added the kingdom (Matthew's second); in the canonical form the two enlarged forms were combined and the primitive Lukan petition for the Spirit dropped. It thus appears that originally instead of the first three petitions of Matthew

<sup>6</sup> *Sitzungsberichte der Berliner Akademie*, 1904, pp. 195 ff.

<sup>7</sup> *Die älteste Form des Vaterunsers*, *Monatsschrift für Gottesdienst und Kirchl. Kunst*, 1904, pp. 333-345.

<sup>8</sup> "Die ursprüngliche Gestalt des Vaterunsers," in *Christliche Welt*, 1904, pp. 218 ff.

Luke had only one, that for the Spirit; and, comparing this result with Matthew's form, Harnack finds that they cannot both be genuine, in fact that they exclude one another.

	address	
1. name	}	spirit
2. kingdom		
3. will		
4.	bread	
5.	forgiveness	
6.	temptation	
7. deliverance		

Thus the original prayer would have consisted only of the address and the three petitions (4-6 in Matthew) relating to daily needs; Matthew's first three petitions and, equally, the petition for the Spirit in Luke being later liturgical additions.

Spitta, on the other hand, thinks that the form which includes a petition for the Spirit, and which is attested by Gregory of Nyssa and two Greek manuscripts, represents not merely the original Lukan text but actually the primitive form of the Lord's Prayer. But Harnack seems to me to have given ample proof, and von Soden has still further strengthened his arguments, that a petition like this does not correspond with Jesus' mode of thought.

In Luke's Gospel, to be sure, a petition for the Holy Spirit seems admirably to suit Luke's fondness for referring to the Holy Spirit. It is not necessary to adduce the instances from Acts, for they are well known; but we may note the fact that Luke 11 is the chapter of the Holy Spirit, where he is mentioned oftener than in any chapter of the Synoptic Gospels. In Lk. 11 13 for 'give good things' the evangelist glosses, 'give the Holy Spirit'; in 11 20 in a passage from Q, where Matthew has, 'If I by the Spirit of God cast out demons,' Luke, prob-

ably following an exorcistic tradition, changes this into 'by the finger of God'; in 12 12 he gives the comforting assurance that 'the Holy Spirit will teach you in that hour what you must say.' It is obvious that the petition for the Spirit fits in well here; but the argument can be turned in the opposite direction, for it may be said that the very fact that the Holy Spirit is so often mentioned in these chapters led someone to introduce this petition here. Besides, the petition as a whole does not agree with the Lukan style of diction and of thought. In its form with two verbs it corresponds neither to the first nor to the third (Lukan) petition. Luke uses 'cleansing' only for outward levitical cleanness (4 27, 17 14, 17, of leprosy; 11 39, Acts 10 15, 11 9, of vessels and food)—except in Acts 15 9, where the word is used in a figurative sense of hearts cleansed by faith; while in this petition the idea is neither purely levitical nor figurative, but sacramental. Moreover, and this is the main point, Luke never thinks of the Spirit as cleansing; the Spirit is a divine energy, imparting the gift of tongues and other miraculous endowments, never the cleansing power. That conception belongs to the sacramental view, seen in the mysteries, which became common among later Christian theologians and is already found in the thought of the gnostics.

Having thus proved that this petition does not originally belong to Luke's Gospel, we need not concern ourselves with the possibility of its coming from Jesus him-self. It would be a strange chance that a genuine saying of Jesus should find its way into a later form of Luke's Gospel. And in any case it does not agree with Jesus' teaching. In the few instances in which Jesus mentions the Holy Spirit, he implies that he himself and his disciples already possess it, so that there would be no need of praying for it; and the idea of the Spirit as a cleansing power is not germane to the teaching of Jesus.

It is difficult to refute the theory that this petition came from the Baptist. One textual critic has tried to prove that the additions and variations in the Western Text were borrowed from Q, the document used by Luke himself, which he supposes to have been consulted again by a later editor; in somewhat similar fashion von Soden assumes that a saying of the Baptist came into the Gospel of Luke as an additional note. But the burden of proof lies on him who maintains such a thesis.

### III

If then the canonical text of both Matthew and Luke can be accepted as authentic, the question as to the original form of the prayer itself becomes much simpler. We have merely to ask whether there has been a shortening or an expansion, for it is evident that the longer form of the address, the third petition, and the seventh petition all belong together. I purposely avoid suggesting that it was Matthew who expanded or Luke who shortened. The evangelists would not have ventured of their own motion to alter what had been transmitted to them; they simply repeated the form used by the churches to which they belonged. The alteration, whatever it was, must have come in at a very early date and without attracting attention.

The Lord's Prayer need not have been drawn by either of the two evangelists from a written source, such as Q; one or both might have taken it from oral tradition. We have, however, one piece of evidence for a common Greek source in the unusual Greek word used to render the adjective qualifying 'bread.' *Epiousios* is not found elsewhere in extant Greek literature, and our limited knowledge is supplemented by the statement of an ancient scholar of the highest rank, Origen, who expressly says that *epiousios* here seemed to be a new word coined



on the analogy of *periousios*. In view of the variation in other words (such as 'debts' and 'sins') the agreement in this unique term is only to be explained, so far as I can see, by the use of a common Greek source, and hence we may infer that the Lord's Prayer stood in Q, or in some other Greek source used both by Matthew and Luke,<sup>9</sup> but that the text of the prayer was reproduced by one of the evangelists in a form changed so as to accord with the form to which he was accustomed and which was current in the church to which he belonged. This local form may have been a late and altered one, but it is equally conceivable that we have in it the original form, restored in the Gospel against the authority of Q. As to this literary criticism gives no help; we are confined to internal evidence.

Now it is a general observation founded on experience that the shorter form is usually the more original. This rule admits of exceptions, but in our case it leads to the best solution. No reason can be given why the address should have been shortened and the third and seventh petitions dropped altogether, whereas the enlarged form of the address corresponds to the liturgical fashion and the third and seventh petitions are mere repetitions of the second and sixth. Nothing is missed when they are lacking, while they give a certain coloring to the second and sixth petitions which, as we shall see later on, was not originally intended. And the very fact that the longer, Matthaean form was adopted for all liturgical purposes speaks for the genuineness of the shorter, Lukan form. A deviation from the commonly used form would be inexplicable if not caused by a very good tradition.

<sup>9</sup> It is not the place here to enter upon the Synoptic problem. I am convinced that not all the materials common to Matthew and Luke are taken from Q; for example, with Matt. 11 12-14 compare Luke 16 16 and with Luke 7 29, 30, compare Matt. 21 32. Only where the wording or the order is identical is it probable that Q is used.

There is still the possibility that both forms go back to Jesus himself. Harmonists like Osiander supposed that Jesus gave this prayer once in the Sermon on the Mount and a second time on the occasion when his disciples asked him to teach them how to pray, and modern apologists insist upon the probability that Jesus would have repeated so important a lesson. To me the repetition does not seem in itself probable, especially as the introductory request of the disciples in *Luke 11 1* loses all reasonableness if Jesus had already told them how to pray. One would expect that in his answer he would at least remind them of this fact. In trying by this theory of repetition to get rid of the difficulty of a double tradition more improbabilities are created than are dispelled.

#### IV

Before discussing the prayer itself, a word must be said about the occasion on which Jesus gave it.

In *Matthew 6* the prayer is found in the Sermon on the Mount, which according to this Gospel is addressed to the disciples, who are surrounded by the people. It is introduced with no special occasion, in a series of sayings about prayer; in opposition to the hypocritical practice of Jewish rabbis and to the loquacity of gentile prayers, Jesus says, 'After this manner therefore pray ye.' But it is not difficult to see that this is not the original place of the prayer. The verses 7-8, 9-13, 14-15, are insertions by the evangelist which destroy the harmonious structure of the passage with its three examples of good works,—almsgiving, praying, fasting,—as given in 6 1, 2-4, 5-6, 16-18. That these verses form an original unity, only partly obscured by the insertions, is obvious to anyone who has a feeling for symmetry. It is the catechetical method of *Matthew* which makes him gather at the same point everything belong-

ing to one topic. So we conclude that Matthew did not find the Lord's Prayer in its present surroundings, but himself gave it its position in the Sermon on the Mount.

This conclusion seems to be in favor of Luke's introduction. But it is by no means necessary that either Matthew or Luke should have preserved the original position of the prayer. Luke 11 belongs to the so-called "longer insertion," in which Luke brings together most of his non-Markan materials. He is not following a single source but is combining several; and more than once we can see that he has himself provided a fitting situation. That the instructions given, according to Luke, to the seventy disciples were in the source addressed to the twelve, is evident from the allusion in Luke 22 35; Luke has introduced the seventy in order to distinguish these instructions in chapter 10 from the similar ones given in 9 1-6, where he followed Mark 6 7-13. It is therefore entirely possible that the introductory verse 1 in chapter 11 is likewise the free composition of Luke. He is fond of representing Jesus in the act of praying (cf. 3 21; 6 12; 9 28; only 5 16 has a parallel in Mark 1 35), and is particularly interested in the disciples of the Baptist (cf. Acts 19 1-7). Thus all the elements of this introduction are easy to explain.

But whatever view be taken as to the situation given by Luke, it is obvious that Luke's introduction gives to the Lord's Prayer a wholly different character from that which it wears in Matthew. According to Luke the prayer is a model given to the disciples at their request; in Matthew it appears as the prayer which a Christian is bound to say whenever he prays. It is only a short step from the formula, 'After this manner therefore pray ye,' to the instruction of the Didache, 'Three times a day ye shall pray.'

## V

The address is the shortest possible: 'Father.' Much has been said about the "communicative" value of 'our,' and about the importance of reminding oneself that this father is not an earthly one but is so high that he inspires at once awe and trust—awe for his holiness and trust in his power. That is well; but a later addition interests us less, and we may well fear any interpretation which turns the Lord's Prayer into a sermon on religious and moral topics. It is a prayer, a normal prayer, and in no wise a lesson. We are allowed to say, 'Father,' and are not thereby in any way reminded of other beliefs or duties.

'Father' is the most simple and natural address for a child in asking for something from his human father (cf. Luke 15 21); the whole attitude of the child towards the one who is able to give and willing to help him to his best, finds expression in this word. Is it so natural for men in speaking to God to call him 'father'? It is noteworthy that in all religions the idea of fatherhood is present in some way or other. It may be called a common notion of mankind. And yet there is a great difference. When the Assyrians speak of their god Sin as 'father,' it is the father of the gods whom they have in mind; they ask Nebo to intercede as son with Marduk his father. So Zeus is the father of gods and of men; the Latin Jupiter expresses this in the name itself. The Romans in their prayers call Mars and Romulus *pater* because the nation is said to be derived from them: it is a national and mythological connection which finds expression in the address. So Israel calls God 'father' because he has created the nation, or, according to another figure, has selected it from among the nations. In this case the connection is again national, but is not mythological. In Israel monotheism does not recog-

nize any physical relation between God and man, God and his people; the relation is purely moral, but it is national. Not the individual, as individual, but the nation is son of God; the individual has this relation only as a member of the nation; for instance, the king as the national representative. It is remarkable that in the Old Testament more is said about men as sons of God than about God as their father. Judaism shrank from bringing God into too close relation to humanity. Nevertheless the development of piety, encouraged by the influence of Greek philosophy, individualized the thought of this nation also. In the Alexandrian book of Wisdom the individual pious man is said to boast of God as his father—possibly only in addressing him in prayer, but more probably in speaking about him in general. There is a great difference between pondering upon the fatherhood of God and realizing it in prayer, for only in prayer does the relation become vital and important.

Now this is what we find in Jesus; he not only refers to God as 'the father,' but addresses him as 'father' in his prayers. With Jesus what was in former times exceptional becomes the rule. For Jesus himself it is the expression of the natural relation to God in which he feels himself to stand: God is his father, he himself God's beloved son, who is sure that nothing can happen to him which is not in his father's will and therefore good; who on his part is sure of his loyalty to his father's will, and is prepared to fulfil it by every means. This relation of father and son as it existed between God and Jesus is, however, unique. Jesus wishes men to enter into the same relation, but he is aware that their position is different; he never speaks of God as 'our (common) father.' He says 'my father' and he says 'your father.' John 20 17, if not a genuine saying of Jesus, surely gives a just interpretation of his thought. "I ascend unto

my father and your father, and my God and your God." Being himself the Son of God, he could make men to be God's sons and to feel as such and to behave as such. When Paul uses the term 'adoption,' he brings in a strange legal touch, but the underlying idea is true: sonship to God is not for men what it was for Jesus; it is not inherited as a right but is given them by Jesus.

These remarks may seem out of place here, where we are discussing the Lord's Prayer; but I wish to make it clear that this intimate address, 'father,' short and full of trust, is not an obvious form of speech. When used in Jewish prayers, the term is almost buried under solemn additions, 'God our father and our king,' and the like, due to the same tendency which made Christians add 'our (father) which art in heaven.' Jesus, when he prays, addresses God simply by the word 'father'; cf. Mark 14 36, where the sound of the original Aramaic word is preserved in 'abba, father.' In Matt. 11 25 'father' is enlarged to 'father, lord of heaven and earth,' but the address returns to 'father' in verse 26; again we have 'father' in Luke 23, 34, 46, as well as in John 12 28, 17, 1, 5, 21, 24. We do not find it used by anyone else in the gospels; even Jesus himself, when describing the prayer of others, does not use it; cf. Luke 18 11, 13 where both the Pharisee and the publican say 'God.' On the other hand, the Christians used it from the beginning. This is attested by Paul in Rom. 8 15, Gal. 4 6, where the Aramaic 'abba, father,' is kept, as it was in Mark 14 36. It was through Jesus that the Christians learned to address God as their father; it is probably by the Lord's Prayer that they became accustomed to do so. This seems a reasonable explanation, whereas the suggestion that Paul, in the two passages adduced, had the Lord's Prayer in mind, quoting it by its first word, can hardly be accepted.

## VI

The Lord's Prayer itself is divided into two parts. The first two (or three) petitions bear a character quite different from the following three (or four); they are exactly parallel and solemnly asyndetic.

Hallowed be	<i>thy</i>	name;
come	<i>thy</i>	kingdom;
[done be	<i>thy</i>	will . . . .].

'Thy' is here the prominent pronoun, whereas the following petitions have 'our' and 'us'; in these latter, moreover, the structure varies and there are connecting particles.

<i>Our</i> bread, the <i>epiousion</i> ,	give <i>us</i> today;
and forgive	<i>us our</i> debts . . . . ;
and do not bring	<i>us</i> into temptation
(but deliver	<i>us</i> from the evil one).

We need to observe this general structure before entering into details. The difference is remarkable, but it does not prove that the first part did not originally belong to this prayer. The change in tone is, I think, intentional.

Now what is the meaning of the first series of petitions? They seem to be prayers not to God but on his behalf. This sounds strange, and therefore interpreters have tried to turn these first two (or three) petitions into something like a vow—for that is the substance of nearly all the interpretations, differing though they do in form of statement. "We would hallow thy name—do thou help us to do so; we would bring in, or spread, thy kingdom—do thou work with us; we promise to do thy will as it is done by the angels—enable us to fulfil this promise." In particular, the first petition is usually spoken of as representing a kind of doxology,<sup>10</sup> and many interpreters

<sup>10</sup>Non tam petentium quam adorantium (Wetstein).

refer to a rabbinical statement, quoted by J. Lightfoot and J. J. Wetstein from *Berachoth*, p. 40 b, that a prayer without a doxology is not to be counted as a prayer. I venture to think that this way of putting it would rather tend to support Harnack's view that the first series of petitions is a later addition springing from liturgical motives (ecclesiastical feeling often coincides with rabbinical views); the same motives leading to the addition of the regular doxology at the end. But who can explain this strange form for a doxology? Why not 'we hallow,' or better 'we praise'? We have no right to construe the words 'hallowed be' in any other sense than the word 'come,' and the latter surely expresses a petition. Likewise 'be done' must be taken as a real petition, not as a concealed form of promise or vow.

Zahn is right in insisting upon the aorist tense of these two (or three) imperatives. For the Greek understanding, whatever the corresponding Aramaic form may have been, the aorist imperative means some demand which is to be fulfilled by an instantaneous, or at least a single, act. How can the name of God be hallowed in a single act? It cannot, if it is to be hallowed by men. But Jesus is not thinking here of men; nor will the Christian think of their agency, if he understands the prayer as a real prayer; rather is he asking God to hallow His own name. What does this mean?

The name, important with us in private and public life (a name often carries with it a great mass of associations; without the name a document is worthless), was still more important for the Semite.<sup>11</sup> It is full of meaning; to change one's name means a substantial change in his position. One can take neither man nor spirit without knowing his name. The name is not the man; but the man is nothing without his name. To calumni-

<sup>11</sup> We ask, 'What is your name?' or 'How are you called?' The Semite asks, 'How is your name called?' Gen. 32 28.



ate another is to give him a bad name, to bless him is to make his name great (Gen. 12 2). The name represents the man to others, and also to posterity.<sup>12</sup> The names of the twelve tribes on the high-priest's breast-plate represent the tribes themselves before God. So likewise the name of God, revealed by himself to his prophet (Ex. 3 15, 6 3), represents God himself; one can praise God or praise his name, one can curse God or curse his name, but the name always implies reputation in the sight of others or of mankind. The angels decline to answer when asked for their name (Gen. 32 29, Jud. 13 18), but God says of his angel (Ex. 23 21) that his (God's) name is in him; therefore he can be God's representative. The common phrase, 'to cause his name to dwell there' (Deut. 12 11 and often) may be derived from an old fashion of inscribing the name of the god on the walls of his temple (compare 'to put his name there,' Deut. 12 5), but in Israel it is meant figuratively: the name represents the gracious presence of God himself, and contains a power (compare the benediction Num. 6 24-26). Often the name may stand for the person represented by it (compare Ex. 34 16); sometimes it may mean 'fame'; it usually implies the notion of a spoken word (compare 2 Sam. 7 26).

The combination 'hallow the name' is as uncommon in the Old Testament as the other combinations 'make the name great' and 'praise the name' are common. In Is. 29 23 (perhaps a late addition) it is said: 'They shall sanctify my name; yea, they shall sanctify the Holy One of Israel, and shall stand in awe of the God of Israel.' Here the sense is 'praise.' In the same way it is used as an equivalent for 'praise' and 'glorify' in Enoch 61 12, and often by the Rabbis (*kiddush hashem*, *hillul hashem*).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Gen. 21 23 (LXX), 48 16, the law relating to marrying a brother's wife in order to keep up his name; Deut. 25 6-10, Ruth 4 5 ff., 2 Sam. 14 7, 18 18. The persistence, not being personal, is bound to the name; therefore to drop the name (from inscriptions, etc.) is to destroy existence; Deut. 9 14, 29 20, Josh. 7 9.

But in Ez. 36 23 it is said of God himself: 'I will sanctify my great name, which hath been profaned among the nations, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes.' Here the meaning is clear: it is God himself who sanctifies his name by restoring his people to glory and holiness. When God allows his people to be defeated and scattered through the nations, he causes his name to be profaned; again, when he brings his people back to their former position, he sanctifies (hallows) his name. All this shows the path to the right understanding of the first petition in the Lord's Prayer. God is asked to sanctify his name by some wonderful mighty deed, in a word by nothing less than the establishment of his kingdom.

The second petition is merely the interpretation of the first. Here again a sound interpretation has to start from an historical analysis of the idea of 'kingdom.' *Malchuth* properly designates not 'realm' but 'dominion,' not the place of rule but the act of rule, the government. Now in the Old Testament two conceptions run side by side. One takes the dominion of God as something present: he rules the world, the sidereal as well as the spiritual; he governs the nations; he is king and lord over the gods. More important, however, is the other, which, starting from a pessimistic view of the present, sees the dominion of God made real only in the future. At present, worldly powers, the party of the impious, Satan himself and his evil spirits, exercise their dominion, but the time will come when God shall suddenly break this tyranny and establish his own dominion, and thereby bring in the reign of bliss. It is in this future sense that the kingdom of God is spoken of in later Jewish literature, and Jesus himself shared this view of his time. The kingdom (or dominion) of God is not something empiri-

cally in existence; it has to be brought about, and therefore the disciples may ask for it in their prayer. It is not to be established by men; God sends it, or establishes it, by his own wonderful power. The novel feature in Jesus' gospel is that he thinks of God's intervention as independent of the behavior of men. God brings about his kingdom, even if men do not care for it; they do not hinder its coming, they only deprive themselves of its blessings (compare Luke 10 9, 11). To be sure, Jesus says much of the conditions for the individual's entrance into the kingdom, but the coming of the kingdom is not conditioned by the attitude which the individual, or even the people, takes in regard to it. It comes of itself, sent by God; it has in some sense already come in Jesus, and it will come in glory with Jesus at the parousia.

Here again the combination, 'thy kingdom come,' is remarkable. We are more used to such phrases as 'enter' the kingdom, 'see' the kingdom, 'inherit' the kingdom, 'share in' the kingdom. This group of verbs, which in the Old Testament designate the possession of the land of promise,<sup>13</sup> convey the notion of a topographically circumscribed and located kingdom, or realm. The kingdom is there; the question is whether one can enter it or not. But another set of verbs is frequently used in connection with kingdom which embody a different conception: the kingdom 'is at hand,' 'comes'; this involves the notion of something movable, pertaining to a temporal not to a local scheme. Doubtless, the Jews of that time conceived of heaven and earth as capable of motion; Paul expects the "building from God," the "house not made with hands, eternal, in the heavens" to be moved thence to earth because it is the new body with which he longs to be clothed upon. Nevertheless, the idea of coming, of being at hand, suggests

<sup>13</sup> So in Matt. 5 5, 'they shall inherit the earth' (better, 'the land') is equivalent to 'theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

rather future time than distant position. And in fact the notion of the kingdom of God is a temporal one: it is the future reign of bliss, a dominion to be made real by God when his good time shall arrive.

But the more important aspect is that Jesus does not teach his disciples to pray that they may enter the kingdom, that God may grant them to share the blessings of his realm, that they may be able so to act as to bring about, establish, or spread his dominion. On the contrary, he makes them pray directly for the coming of the kingdom. Here we grasp the very meaning of the idea. It is not individual happiness; that is expressed elsewhere by the equivalent, 'live.'<sup>14</sup> Jesus is looking for a general change of all conditions, which will bring bliss to mankind. So this petition, taught to his disciples, does not interfere with his claim that in his company they already enjoy the blessings of the kingdom. They do already enjoy them personally; but there still remains the desire that these blessings may become universal, that everything which is opposed to true happiness may be removed. And this can be done only by God himself, by some supernatural act of his almighty power.<sup>15</sup>

By bringing about the kingdom in this full sense of the word God will hallow his name, that is, will cause it to be praised by all creatures. The same thing is prayed for in both these petitions; only it is first viewed with relation to God—he has honor from it; then with relation to mankind—through it men are blessed.

The third petition is an addition which does not quite fit here. It might be interpreted as meaning that God is asked finally to fulfil his will, that is, to bring to effect

<sup>14</sup> Observe that the same group of verbs which we found connected with 'kingdom' is used in combination with 'life'; 'enter,' Mark 9 43, 45, Matt. 18 8, 9, 19 17; 'inherit,' Mark 10 17, Matt. 19 29, Luke 10 25, 18 18.

<sup>15</sup> See the discussion of individual and collective salvation in my book, *The Eschatology of the Gospels*, London, 1910.

what he has planned and promised. 'Will' can have this meaning, *Heilsratschluss*, the intention to save mankind; in Matt. 26 42 'will' means God's decree, to which man has to submit.<sup>16</sup> But it is much more common in the sense of 'will to be obeyed,' that is, law, commandments.<sup>17</sup> This petition seems therefore to be a moralizing interpretation of the former ones: the kingdom, or dominion, of God is established when the will of God is done by all creatures, on earth as well as in heaven.

This last clause, 'as in heaven so also on earth,' cannot be taken as belonging to all three petitions, as is held by Westcott and Hort,<sup>18</sup> for it is connected in tradition exclusively with the third one. The introductory particle 'as' indicates that heaven and earth are not taken as the two parts of the universe on an entire equality (compare Gen. 1 1, Matt. 5 18, etc.), but are contrasted; the heaven, God's residence, being the model of perfection, where the will of God is done always without reluctance, the earth on the contrary being the scene of rebellion against God (compare Is. 55 9, Deut. 30 12, Ps. 2 7). The petition thus asks God to cause his will to be done by men as it is regularly done by the angels; perhaps one may include the idea that the wild beasts and other brute creatures on earth shall submit to God's law as fully as do his heavenly creatures, the stars.

<sup>16</sup> This passage, however, seems to be modelled after the Lord's Prayer; there is nothing similar in Mark 14 36, 39, Matt. 26 39. Luke 22 42 again comes nearer to the Lord's Prayer, but is not identical with the third petition, as is Matt. 26 42. Submission to God's irresistible will is implied in Acts 21 14.

<sup>17</sup> 'To do the will of God' is the common phrase in Judaism as well as in the gospels, cf. Mark 3 35, Matt. 7 21 (Luke 11 28), John 7 17, 9 31, Acts 13 22; in Rom. 2 13 'will' stands for the totality of the Law. It is remarkable that the Old Syriac, which usually translates 'do the will,' here gives the plural, 'thy wills (wishes) be (done).'

<sup>18</sup> It is maintained already by Origen, the Arian author of the *Opus imperf. in Matt.*, and the *Catechismus Romanus*; it has been supported recently by Nestle, in *Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, vi, p. 190.

In Luke a few Latin manuscripts have the third petition without this addition. This reading was supported by Lachmann.

This would enrich the notion of God's dominion, which in fact is never a purely moral one, but almost always includes the idea of a realm of peace, a restored paradise. This would fit into Jesus' conceptions; but as we have here a later addition, I do not feel sure that it is right to go beyond the moral meaning.

Thus the first part of the Lord's Prayer may be summed up in the one idea that God is entreated to fulfil the desire of his faithful people and bring about his dominion, the realm of bliss. That this one idea is expressed in two (or perhaps three) petitions is exactly what would be expected in view of Jesus' custom of illustrating his points with two or three examples.<sup>19</sup> This does not run counter to his own warning to avoid vain repetitions (Matt. 6 7); he himself prayed insistently and with repetition of the same words (Mark 14 39). The repetition here is not vain; the one idea is expressed on two sides and so receives its due emphasis.

## VII

The second part of the prayer is markedly different. It begins with the petition for daily bread. We shall not attempt to solve the riddle contained in *epiousios*.<sup>20</sup> The phrase 'bread of tomorrow' (*mahar*) in the Gospel according to the Hebrews does not signify, since this Gospel is probably a retranslation from the Greek, not the original Aramaic. Jerome's translation *supersubstantialem*, which reappears in Wycliffe's 'bread over other substance' (compare also Coverdale, 1538, and

<sup>19</sup> Cf. my paper on Doublets and Triplets, in *Neutestamentliche Studien Georg Heinrici zu seinem 70 Geburtstag* dargebracht, Leipzig, 1914, pp. 92-100.

<sup>20</sup> It has been discussed recently by A. Debrunner, *Glotta*, iv, 1912, pp. 249-253, and A. Deissmann, *Neutestamentliche Studien Georg Heinrici* dargebracht, 1914, pp. 115-119. The former proposes to take the adjective, or what the grammarians call hypostatic, form for ἐπι τὴν οὐραν (scil. ἡμέραν) 'for the day just being,' whereas the latter still maintains the derivation from ἡ ἐπιούσα (scil. ἡμέρα) 'the next day.'

'supersubstantial' in the Rheims-Douai Bible) spoils the very best in this petition, which is not spiritual, nor sacramental, but natural and human, man's answer to God's call for trust in him (Matt. 6 25 ff.). To omit *epiousion* as being a gloss on the word 'today' meaning 'every day' is too easy a solution. My own opinion is that the word indicates that men are to ask for what they need, what is appropriate for them, but not for more. The difference between Matthew's 'give us today,' with its aorist tense ( $\delta\acute{o}s$ ), and Luke's 'give us day by day,' with its present ( $\delta\acute{\iota}\delta\omicron\nu$ )—it is remarkable how accurately the tenses are used in this popular Greek—may be explained by the purpose of the prayer for use in the evening, just as the translation 'tomorrow' seems to be governed by liturgical motives.<sup>21</sup> Matthew's version is here supported by symmetry as well as by internal evidence.

The next petition is akin to the one just considered. Forgiveness of sin is the daily bread of the soul, and it is significant that Jesus puts it in this way. This was not the attitude of later Judaism. Consciousness of guilt and longing to be rid of it was, indeed, not lacking—one need only remember the Psalms—but it is usually on account of a special fault, under the pressure of a special penalty, that the Jew asked for forgiveness. We are not told that the publican's sigh, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' was his daily prayer. The formulated confessions of sin which we find in the Mishna are meant for special days, like the day of atonement. On the other hand, we find the prayer for forgiveness constant in Christianity from the beginning. In spite of its enthusiasm and excitement, Christianity was fully aware that man has every day to struggle with sin and that his struggle is often unsuccessful. I do not refer

<sup>21</sup> Cf. F. H. Chase, *The Lord's Prayer in the Early Church* (Texts and Studies, i, 3), 1891, pp. 42-53.

here to the seventh chapter of Romans, but to 1 Thess. 5 14, 1 Cor. 3 12 ff., and to all the exhortations of Paul's letters. Following Jesus' utterance about sins which can and sins which cannot be forgiven (Mark 3 28 ff., Luke 12 10, Matt. 12 31 ff.) primitive Christianity for the most part distinguishes between sins of weakness and ignorance and mortal sins—the former to be forgiven through the intercession of the heavenly Lord (Rom. 8 34, Heb. 2 18, 4 15, 7 25, 1 John 2 1), the latter irrep- arable (Heb. 6 4 ff., 10 26 ff., 1 John 5 16). Jesus does not assume that such sins have been committed by his disciples, but he thinks it necessary for them every day to ask forgiveness.

The question has recently been much discussed whether or not Jesus offered the prayer in his own behalf, and so accepted a share in this petition for forgiveness. The tradition does not give the Lord's Prayer as meant for himself; it does not introduce it by 'Let us pray,' but by 'When ye pray, say'; and in view of what has been pointed out above regarding Jesus' attitude of distin- guishing himself from his disciples in his relation to God, I think it highly improbable that he meant here to in- clude himself among penitent sinners.

In this petition, likewise, the wording of Matthew seems to come nearer to the original than that of Luke; 'remit debts' is a familiar figure with Jesus for the for- giveness of sins (compare Matt. 18 23). Luke likes to explain<sup>22</sup>, and therefore says 'sins' instead of 'debts,' keeping, however, 'debtors' in the second part of the pe- tition. The genuineness of this second part has been doubted<sup>23</sup>, because it is said to make the structure un- symmetrical and to have a moralizing tendency unfit for a prayer. Here again there is a slight difference between Matthew and Luke. Luke's form expressed

<sup>22</sup> Compare Luke 11 13 with Matt. 7 11.

<sup>23</sup> Eduard von der Goltz, *Das Gebet in der ältesten Christenheit*, Leipzig, 1901, p. 51.



rather the willingness on the part of the person praying to forgive if anybody is 'owing' him, that is, has offended him; with Matthew the man insists that he has forgiven, and that now it is God's turn to forgive him. Both ways, we are sometimes told, are alien to Jesus' mind, and unfit for a real prayer; therefore this must be a later addition, suggested by the parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Matt. 18 23-35) and other sayings of Jesus (compare Mark 11 25, 26, Matt. 18 21 f., Luke 17 3 f., Matt. 5 23 f.). I am not prepared to agree with this criticism. First, the tradition is against it: Luke proves that this is an old part of the prayer, not an enlargement added when this was connected with Matt. 6 14 f. On the contrary, it attached to itself this other saying. Secondly, Jesus is here teaching; a certain amount of pedagogical matter would not therefore be surprising. It is true that prayer ought not to be abused for purposes of teaching and preaching; prayer is addressed to God, not to a congregation, and Jesus knew this better than anyone else. But is it necessary to assume that by adding this sentence Jesus wished to intimate to his disciples the duty of forgiving? He makes them speak to God and declare their willingness to forgive (for here Luke's form seems preferable to Matthew's, which was probably influenced by the parallels in 5 23 f., 18 23 ff.: first forgive, then ask for forgiveness). It is a natural expression of right sentiment and only incidentally a reminder of one's own duty.

The next petition is closely connected with this: forgiveness does not help, if sin is done again; therefore shield us from new temptation. It is a self-created difficulty which has led to the Old Latin rendering: 'Do not suffer us to be brought into temptation.' Theological reflections like those expressed in James 1 13 ff. are far from Jesus. His undisturbed religious sense traces everything immediately back to God. While

later Jewish narrowness and timidity introduced Satan instead of the anger of the Lord (1 Chron. 21 1), and so corrected the old Biblical view that God tempted David (2 Sam. 24 1 ff.), Jesus goes back to the primitive conception.

It is therefore unfit for his prayer and evidently again a later addition when Matthew adds here, 'but deliver us from the evil one.' A careful study of the phraseology convinces me that the word 'evil' cannot be understood in the sense of *Übel*, evil inflicted upon a man, so that the petition becomes a prayer for deliverance from death, illness, or other distress; it bears a moral character, and is either neuter—the evil which one does, or masculine—the evil one. This latter meaning not only is attested by the interpretation of the fathers but is required by the context, for it is needed to meet the difficulty contained in the reflection that God tempts not directly but through Satan (cf. Job 1). The sixth petition was supplemented by this seventh, which however is less comprehensive, excluding only one line of temptation (the devil, not the world or the flesh).

The second part of the Lord's Prayer thus shows greater variety than the first; it comprises three different petitions, all, however, closely related to one another.

Neither the doxology nor the 'Amen' belonged originally to the Lord's Prayer. Both attest its early liturgical use.

## VIII

Having thus analyzed the Lord's Prayer in detail, let us now sum up its contents. We find that, except for the short address, it contains nothing but petitions. That is remarkable. A rabbinical rule says that no prayer is complete without praise, and it is this feeling which has caused the enlargement of the address and the addition of the doxology at the end. The same

feeling has induced many interpreters to explain the first petition as a kind of praise rather than prayer. To us it seems fitting that thanksgiving should be included in every prayer (compare 1 Thess. 5 18, Col. 3 17, Eph. 5 20, 2 Cor. 1 11, etc.), but for Jesus to pray means to ask for something (compare Matt. 7 7-11). Many a theory about prayer will have to be revised, if we take Jesus as our example in praying and adopt the prayer he taught his disciples as a model.

And for what does he bid his disciples ask? A German proverb says, *Not lehrt beten*, necessity teaches to pray. This is often censured: one ought to pray without being urged by necessity. But, like all proverbs, it has truth in it, and Jesus supports it; it is necessity which makes his disciples pray. Rather, two necessities lead them to ask God for relief. First comes the one great urgent necessity that all the conditions of life be changed. In this present world with all its distress and woe man needs a general change which shall bring happiness and peace. This is the kingdom of God for which the Christian looks; and he calls upon God to bring it about, beseeching him to hallow his own name, exposed to blasphemy if God do not exhibit his power and justice. Secondly, there are the minor necessities of the intervening present. As long as this world with its existing conditions remains, man wants bread to eat, and he needs daily restoration through the forgiveness of sin and the averting of temptation; body and soul both need support. Jesus puts this in the plainest form. He does not enter into detail as to the needs of bodily life; daily bread expresses it all. He does not use many words about feeding the soul with spiritual food, supporting it by divine communion, and so on. That our sins may be forgiven and that we be not led into temptation, that is all that he tells us to ask for. But he plainly and insistently wishes his disciples to ask for these things.

Here is no making of words; it is prayer, real prayer.<sup>24</sup> Instead of moralizing upon the Lord's Prayer we had better observe the Lord's attitude as it is expressed in this model prayer, and then learn from him what he values, what he thinks worth while to pray for, what he does not mention at all, and why he puts things in this order; what is his valuation of the several objects he is setting before his disciples' minds, and how plain and simple it all is. The whole prayer is, so to speak, only one great petition: deliver us from our burden, universal and individual.

Jesus begins with the common, and in his view the most urgent, necessity in order to put emphasis upon it, and he expresses it in two parallel petitions. Then he goes on to speak of the needs of the individual in the present time, and here three short sentences cover the whole ground.

It is important to notice that Jesus starts from the evil situation in general. It shows how strongly he himself feels the depressing state of the present world, how deeply he is impressed by the misery of his people, or rather of mankind in general (for he is a Jew, but without the narrow limits of nationality); it shows how social his mind is and how much he values the common benefits and deplures the common evils. However individualistic he may be, he cares for mankind as a whole, nay even more, for the world universal, including all being, and he is not satisfied until the universe shall be changed from a place where Satan exerts his influence into a dominion of God.

It is remarkable that Jesus ascribes so much importance to the daily needs of human life. Nothing human

<sup>24</sup>That is very appropriate which Isidore of Seville, *De officiis ecclesiasticis*, i. 15 3 f., says: that in the first three petitions *aeterna poscuntur*, and in the following four *temporalia petuntur*. It has no value to compare the Lord's Prayer with the Decalogue: twice three petitions corresponding to twice five commandments; the first part dealing with piety, the second with charity. Calvin, otherwise the best interpreter, is here misled by a bad tradition.

is alien to him; he is not one of those exalted spiritualists who are above the need of eating, nor does he share the dualistic view that the material body has no claim for support because it is the creature of an inferior God. No, Jesus well knows what hunger means to man, and he puts into the world-prayer a petition for daily bread, thereby securing to the bodily life its proper right for all time to come. But at the same time he by no means confines himself to this domain; there is something else in man which has equal claim to attention. If the body is tormented by hunger, so is the soul by the interruption of communion with God, which is what sin means. Therefore sin must be removed and not allowed again to enter. Whenever this is done by God's forgiving sin and averting temptation, then man is safe and happy. There is no need to add a special petition for bliss and joy; these are here;<sup>25</sup> but since they are merely individual, the first two petitions are necessary.

The prayer thus reflects the gospel of Jesus. The gospel is not a new law, not a new kind of morals. It is a message of grace from God our Father announcing his readiness to bring about his kingdom, that is to fulfil all his promises regarding the future realm of bliss; it is at the same time a declaration on the part of God that he is willing to act as the Father of each individual man, supporting, forgiving, defending. Nothing is said in this prayer about Jesus. Christianity from time to time missed something and tried additions having regard to John 16 23. But it is exactly Jesus' attitude. He announces the kingdom and he preaches God's fatherly love without saying much about himself; and yet he is the king of this kingdom and it is but through him that we are sure of God's fatherly love. So it is

<sup>25</sup> Alcuin is reported to have prayed daily: 'O Lord, grant me to acknowledge my sins, to confess them sincerely, to make satisfaction for them justly; and so grant me forgiveness of my sins'; to which prayer Benedict of Aniane wished to add, 'and after this make me blessed (grant me salvation).' Was this addition necessary?

Jesus who teaches his disciples this prayer; they never would dare to pray in this way were it not for him. To be sure, the single petitions have parallels in the Old Testament and the Jewish literature.<sup>26</sup> But one looks in vain for anything like this prayer. It is unique as to its composition, and original as to the religious spirit revealed in it. It is the Lord's Prayer, in the sense that it expresses the new relation into which God and mankind have been brought by Jesus.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> J. J. Wetstein: *Tota haec oratio ex formalis hebraeorum concinnata est*. See the materials in E. von der Goltz, *Das Gebet in der ältesten Christenheit*, 1901, pp. 40-41, and G. Heinrici, *Die Bergpredigt*, 1905, pp. 66-67.

<sup>27</sup> C. C. Torrey, "A Possible Metrical Original of the Lord's Prayer," in *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, vol. xxviii, 1913, pp. 312-317, gives a retranslation of the Lukan form of the Lord's Prayer into Aramaic in "six perfectly metrical lines of seven syllables each," which deserves careful consideration. Torrey's article, "The Translations made from the Original Aramaic Gospels," in *Studies in the History of Religions* presented to C. H. Toy, New York, 1912, pp. 269-317, also contains discussion of some of the problems of the Lord's Prayer.