

THE LORD'S PRAYER

1 HAVE YOU EVER CALLED OUT TO GOD FOR HELP AND WANTED TO KNOW WHO YOU ARE?

Before you can begin to pray as Jesus intended, you must settle the question of whether God is your Father, and you are His child. Nothing is more important. Are you a child of God? Are you part of his family? Just as you were born physically into an earthly family, so Jesus said you must be reborn spiritually into a spiritual family (John 1:12, 3:3). This happens by faith -- by believing that God loves you as a Father and cares for you as His child.

2 WHO IS GOD?

Your Father is "in heaven." He inhabits eternity and is enthroned above the highest reach of the cosmos (Deut. 26:15, 1 Ki 8:30). But though He is exalted over all things, as Creator and LORD He knows the number of hairs on your head (Matt. 10:30) and what things you have need of before you ask Him (Matt. 6:8). Your Father's greatness spans all the cosmos and yet is conscious of the smallest details of your life. God cares for you as His child.

3 THE LORD'S PRAYER IN HEBREW

Avinu shebashamayim, yitkadesh shimkhah.

Tavo malkhutekha, ye 'aseh retzonekha,
ba'aretz ka'asher na'asah va'shamayim.

Ten-lanu haiyom lechem chukeinu.

U'selach lanu et ashmateinu,

ka 'asher solechim anachnu la 'asher ashemu lanu.

Ve 'al-tevieinu lidei massah, ki- 'im hatzileinu min-hara.

Ki lekha ha-mamelakha ve-hagevurah vecha-tiferet,

Ie 'olemei 'olamim amen.

4 THE LORD'S PRAYER IN ENGLISH

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

5 You do not "profane" your Father's Name by witnessing to the world around you that He is not who He really is -- namely, the LORD to whom every knee shall bow and every tongue confess. You are to bear witness to His Name by sanctifying it, by honoring it, and by living in the awe of God every moment of your time of sojourn here on earth. When you truly understand yourself as the Father's child, your life will be conformed into the image of his Son (Romans 8:29)

A Note about the Hebrew and Greek Texts for the LORD's Prayer

The New Testament was written in Greek. The Hebrew translation used here comes from the 1999 edition of the SalkinsonGinsburg Hebrew New Testament, which was compared to many other translations.

The LORD Jesus undoubtedly taught this prayer to His disciples in Hebrew, since Hebrew was the language of the synagogue and temple of His day, and Jesus Himself "made aliyah" by performing Torah readings at the synagogues (Luke 4:16). Jesus also revealed Himself to Paul in the Hebrew language during Paul's dramatic conversion experience (Acts 26:14).

6

Thy Kingdom come

The Kingdom of God is the manifestation of the rule of God over the hearts of men. Thus when ancient Israel wanted a king like the other nations, the LORD reproached them for not wanting His rule within their hearts (see 1 Samuel 8:6-7). Later, the prophet Daniel foretold of the succession of world kingdoms destined to be destroyed by "a kingdom of God" that shall last forever (see Daniel 2:44), where the "Son of Man" is given dominion, and glory, and an everlasting and indestructible kingdom (Daniel 7:14). Isaiah likewise foretold of the coming Prince of Peace upon whose shoulders the reign of God would rest (Isaiah 9:6).

When Jesus began to preach, He declared Himself as the "Son of Man" who came to proclaim that the Kingdom of God was at hand (Matthew 3:2, 4:17, etc.).

Jesus taught that this Kingdom "cometh not by observation" (Luke 17:20), but is "within you (Luke 17:21), meaning that it is evidenced by the working of faith as you submit to the authority of the LORD. Identifying yourself as a subject of the King means that you are actively living out His reign and glory in your daily life, and sharing the rule of God with others you encounter.

7 **THY WILL BE DONE.** This phrase parallels the first, for being a subject in the Kingdom of God means doing the will of the Sovereign of the Kingdom. This is decidedly not an appeal for Stoic or passive resignation in the face of frustration or disappointment, since the modifying phrase, on earth as it is in heaven" precludes this interpretation. Rather, "Thy will be done" involves active consecration or dedication to the cause of promoting the reign of God within our hearts. We fulfill the will of t on earth, as it is in heaven

God's kingdom is fully established in heaven, where His perfect rule is forever unchallenged. Yet His authority is not regarded here on earth, where the kingdoms of this world will ultimately be dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psalm 2), and those who disobey His commandments will be subject to everlasting punishment (Matthew 25:31-46).

Are you willing to obey the Rule of the LORD by sanctifying yourself through faith in Him? The choice is ultimately your own....

he LORD when we keep His *mitzvot* (1 John 2:3-4) and proclaim His Salvation (Matthew 28:19-20).

8

GIVE TO US!

It might seem odd that Jesus taught us to use the imperative of the verb "give!" when addressing the Father, but it is undeniably part of the text, and might best be understood as the appeal of a child who is utterly dependent upon his father to provide for his needs. God Himself has created in us all the hunger and thirst for life, and a child without such desire would be a sickly child indeed.

9 This day

The appeal, however, is qualified by the need for "this day." The Father's manna is given to us one day at a time. Each one is to gather as much as he needs... No one is to keep any of it until morning" (Exodus 16:16,19).

10 OUR DAILY BREAD

This phrase likewise occurs in Proverbs 30:8, where it is written, "Give me neither poverty nor riches, but provide me with my daily bread. In the Hebrew it suggests food that is given by ordinance (but the verb might also derive from a related Hebrew verb meaning "to engrave." Since God has created us with an "engraved" hunger and thirst, we must ultimately look to Him for our sustenance and life.

"Kingdom bread" is really the Bread of Life, which Jesus said truly satisfies our inner hunger. As we seek first His Kingdom ("Thy Kingdom come") and His Righteousness ("Thy will be done"), we are assured that the needs for this day of kingdom life will indeed be met (Matthew 6:33-34).

11 This "Forgive us...as we forgive...", which means that our forgiveness of others *is* the measure of our own state of forgiveness, for with the measure you use it will be measured back to you (Luke 6:38). If we cling to resentment, bitterness, or a desire for revenge, we appeal to principles that alienate us from reconciliation with others. But if we intend to have God be the Judge of others, we appeal to Him to be our own Judge as well.

This petition functions as a mirror for our hearts: *as* we forgive others who have sinned against us, so we apprehend the forgiveness of the LORD. Or, to put it the other way, our experience of the forgiveness of the LORD is revealed in the way we treat others who have wronged us.

If we merely hear this truth but fail to practice it, we are like someone who looks at their face in a mirror but soon forgets what they saw, thereby exempting themselves from the truth of their own condition (James 1:22-24).

If we have an unforgiving spirit toward others, we will not be forgiven (Matthew 6:15); if we are judgmental toward them, we ourselves will be put on trial; if we are cruel and unyielding toward them, we will experience life as hellish, miserable and mean.

This reciprocal principle of Kingdom life appears throughout Jesus' teaching. *As* you forgive, so you shall be forgiven (Matthew 6:14); *as* you judge, so you shall be judged (Matthew 7:2); *as* you show mercy, so you shall be shown mercy (Matthew 5:7); *as* you give unto others, so it shall be given unto you (Luke 6:38).

Beloved let us love and forgive one another.

12 "And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil" Matthew 6:13

TEMPTATION

The Hebrew word Massah comes from a root that means to melt, dissolve, or consume -- as by fire that tests the quality of something. As a noun, the word is often translated as "test," "trial," or "temptation," and is directly used to name the place where the children of Israel rebelled against God in the wilderness (Ex 17:7; Deut 6:16, Psalm 95:8; Hebrews 3:7-9). Significantly, *massah* can also mean 'despair,' in the sense of "melting of heart," and is usually rendered as mockery or scorn (Job 9:23),

When we petition the Father to be "led not into temptation," we are essentially asking to be redirected in our heart's attitude in the face of difficult and trying moments. To fall into the "hands of Massah" means yielding to despair -- and to the psychological dissolution that results in bitterness, scorn, and mockery.

13 But deliver us from the evil one. "Deliverance from *Yetzer Hara*

The origin of this despair is what Jewish tradition calls *yetzer hara*, or the inner impulse to gravitate toward selfish gratification (idolatry). This concept first appears in Genesis 6:5 where the wickedness of man is described as "every imagination (*yetzer*) of the thoughts of his heart was only evil (*re*)." In the New Testament, *yetzer hara* is called the "carnal mind," the "old nature," or the "natural man."

The word *yetzer* itself is a neutral word used to refer to something formed or shaped, like pottery fashioned by the hand of a potter. Just as a potter purposes a shape before forming an object, so that which is intended within the heart will form our character. But since God has "power over the clay" to make one vessel fit for honor and another for dishonor (Romans 9:21), we are to appeal to the Father alone for deliverance from the evil impulse.

The ultimate source of the evil impulse is *hara* itself, that is, the evil one, *since it is Satan who seeks to entice us into idolatry. Satan does this in order to rob God of His glory by blinding us to the truth of His love and of our desperate need for Him. He seduces us with vain imaginations that we might be satisfied with things other than God Himself. But Yeshua instructs us to pray to be delivered from the evil one by the power of God's salvation. May you be so delivered today.*

14 "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." (Matthew 6:13b)

The Concluding Doxology

Jesus taught us to pray in an entirely Jewish manner. The first three phrases of the so-called "Lord's Prayer" mirror the Jewish Kaddish and the sanctification of God's Name. The middle phrases summarize the essential petitions of the ancient Jewish Amidah prayer, and the climactic conclusion mirrors the praises King Solomon offered at the dedication of the first Temple (1 Chronicles 29:11-13). All in all, this is an entirely Jewish prayer given to us by our Jewish Lord and Savior.

Like most other Jewish prayers, this one ends with the adverb "amen" meaning "truly" or "surely." Amen comes from a root word (*aman*) meaning to nourish, support, and to make sure and strong. The Hebrew word for faithfulness, *emunah*, comes from this same root.

The Jewish sages teach that "amen" can be thought of as an acronym for *el melekh ne'eman*, "God is a faithful King," a phrase said every day before the Shema is personally recited. And indeed the Lord Jesus is "the Amen, the faithful and true witness" (Revelation 3:14) who has shown us the power and the glory of the One who is to be worshipped forever in Spirit and in truth.

The very first word of Scripture is *b'reishit* (Genesis 1:1) and the last word is *amen* (Revelation 22:21).

Putting these words together we obtain:

In the beginning was Amen."

Likewise, putting the very first and last *letters* of the Scriptures together yields the word *ben*, meaning "a son": From beginning to end, then, we see that the Scriptures point to the Lord Jesus as the Faithful and True Son of the Father, the rightful King of the kingdom of God.

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