**The Lord's Prayer**

### Advent

This Advent season, I’d like to invite you to consider the Lord’s Prayer from some fresh perspectives. No, there is not very much wrong with the old perspectives, outside of the tense problem: they are a marginally acceptable response to the Greek prayer. However, we get too used to them, too comfortable, and sometimes we lapse into the habit of letting our minds wander when we pray. I do hope I’m not the only one with this problem. So, this Advent, I’d like to pursue two things with you.

One. I’d like to take a fresh look at the words of the Lord’s Prayer.

Two. I’d like to examine the Lord’s Prayer using the guide:

“When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt.” — Hosea 11:1

“After they departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, take the young Child with His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there, until I bring word: for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him. When he awoke, he took the young Child with His mother by night, departed into Egypt, and stayed there, until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ‘I called my Son out of Egypt.’ ” — Matthew 2:13-15

### The Fresh Look

“Our Father in the heavens,

“Your name was CONSECRATED[[1]](#endnote-1); Your kingdom CAME; Your will was BEGOTTEN; as in heaven, also on the earth. You GAVE us our bread today, the very glorious Body and like precious Blood of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Savior and Lord.[[2]](#endnote-2) [For His sake] You FORGAVE our debts; as also, we forgive[[3]](#endnote-3) our debtors. Even though You could not have led[[4]](#endnote-4) us into peril; even so You DELIVERED us from the evil.

“Because, the kingdom, the power, and the Glory all are from You, into eternity. Amen.

“For if you forgave men their side-falls[[5]](#endnote-5) (stumbling), then Your heavenly Father will forgive you. Yet, if you forgave not men their side-falls, neither will your Father forgive your side-falls.”

The whole attitude of the prayer is not so much of asking to receive these things; as it is of gratitude for having received them already. Even though we got into one calamity after another, perils which were not of God’s doing, You, Heavenly Father, still delivered us from the evil, again, and again, and again.

On the other hand, such forgiveness comes with a stern warning. No one may enter the kingdom of God’s forgiveness as an unforgiving person. Lack of forgiveness is the poison, which, not only, destroys individuals from within; but also spreads like a flood and like wildfire through whole congregations, killing everyone in its path.

Nothing is more central to God’s relationship with us than our response of gratitude and thanksgiving, so that in all reality we live truly forgiving lives, lovingly bound together in forgiving congregations.

Even so, a lethal dose of ingratitude, unforgiveness, and unthankfulness can sweep it all away.

Someone consecrated God’s name for us. The kingdom of God came with Someone. The will of God is begotten in Someone. Isn’t it obvious that all these gifts are the work of Jesus Christ on our behalf? Isn’t it clear as, during Advent, we await the Incarnation of God’s Son, that all these gifts are Christ’s Christmas gifts for us. Let us, therefore, receive them with all forgiveness, gratitude, and thankfulness.

Christ is Born. Glorify Him.

### The Rubric

Moses tells us that all the details of the Exodus are a mysterious pattern of heavenly realities. Hosea assures us that Jesus is at the center of all these realities. Matthew shows us that this child of Mary is that Incarnate Christ of God. He is not the One Who merely fulfills the Old Testament. He is the One Who wrote the Old Testament. He is the One Who drew out the mysterious pattern; and has now come, bringing the heavenly realities with Him. Jesus Incarnate is the new Exodus.

What does it mean, “Your name was consecrated?” When Jesus arose to destroy all the idolatry of Egypt with ten plagues, He consecrated His Father’s name; that name which the Father Himself consecrated to Moses at the burning bush. Now, He comes in heavenly reality to accomplish with absolute finality, what He revealed in patterns and types nearly 3,500 years ago. He consecrated His Father’s name. That means that all the kingdoms of this world, all the kingdoms of darkness, all the kingdoms of evil will now be destroyed. All these worldly idols are exposed for what they really are: death. Only the Father, is consecrated as the true and living God, along with His Son and His Holy Spirit.

What does it mean, “Your kingdom came?” When Jesus brought the Israelites out into Sinai, a new kingdom was established: for where the king is, there is the kingdom also. Now, in His Incarnation, the kingdom of God is here, and it is with us to this very day, because Jesus, the King dwells in our hearts. The power of the Spirit has made this effectual since Pentecost, 33 AD. Please don’t take this as a figure of speech. It is not a figure of speech. It is a mysterious reality.

What does it mean, “Your will was begotten?” At Sinai, Jesus gives the Law of freedom, and begins those painful lessons of the Law. There is nothing more important than doing the will of God.[[6]](#endnote-6) Now, at His birth, He begins to make possible what man cannot do by works, but only by faith. My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me.[[7]](#endnote-7)” “I have come to do Your will.[[8]](#endnote-8)” Now, instead of being crushed under the Law, by works of the Law; we build on our Cornerstone, on the Fulfillment of the Law, by faith; as the Law shapes us into living stones for the temple of God, the body of Christ. Jesus is the will of God: we follow Him.

What does it mean, “As in heaven, also on the earth?” It means that all the eternal heavenly realities, which were in existence long before[[9]](#endnote-9) Moses ever constructed the mysterious pattern of them; these have now been proclaimed as eternal earthly realities in Christ. The consecration, the kingdom, and the will are now firmly announced as earthly realities, as well as continuing heavenly realities. Satan has never been in charge: it only seemed that way.

What does it mean, “You gave us our bread today?” It means that the real manna now nourishes us in the Communion, making us more and more Christ-like as we receive the Communion in faith.[[10]](#endnote-10)

What does it mean, “You forgave our debts; as also, we forgive our debtors.” It means that having been redeemed from our sins in Egypt, if we wish to be saved to eternal life in the heavenly Holy Land, we must live in faith to the Law: we may not be slaves to any but God; we may not put our human neighbors in any bondage.

What does it mean, “You could not have led us into peril?” The calamities we suffered for forty years at Sinai, which were due only to our own sin, did not bring us to a complete end.[[11]](#endnote-11) Even our stubbornness did not exhaust Your mercy then, and it will not exhaust Your mercy now, in Christ.

What does it mean, “even so You delivered us from the evil?” The evil of our own invention did not thwart the majesty of Your power: not then, not now, not ever. You delivered us in spite of ourselves, and in spite of all the dangerous evil around us.

And the reason for all this glorious bounty is simply, “Because, the kingdom, the power, and the Glory all are from You, into the ages. Amen.”

Our heavenly Father has one simple lesson, both in Exodus and Incarnation: to teach us to be the sort of forgiving persons that Jesus is, without which we cannot spend eternity with Him.

Christ is Born. Glorify Him.

### The Prayer

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς,

Ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου; Ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου; Γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου; ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον. Καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν. Καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν; ἀλλὰ, ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

Ὅτι σοῦ ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. Ἀμήν.

Ἐὰν γὰρ ἀφῆτε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ παραπτῶματα αὐτῶν, ἀφήσει καὶ ὑμῖν, ὁ Πατὴρ ὑμῶν ὁ οὐράνιος. Ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἀφῆτε τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ παραπτῶματα αὐτῶν, οὐδὲ ὁ Πατὴρ ὑμῶν ἀφήσει τὰ παραπτώματα ὑμῶν.

### Translation

Πάτερ[[12]](#endnote-12) ἡμῶν[[13]](#endnote-13) ὁ[[14]](#endnote-14) ἐν[[15]](#endnote-15) τοῖς[[16]](#endnote-16) οὐρανοῖς[[17]](#endnote-17),
Our Father in the heavens[[18]](#endnote-18),

Ἁγιασθήτω[[19]](#endnote-19) τὸ[[20]](#endnote-20) ὄνομά[[21]](#endnote-21) σου[[22]](#endnote-22); Ἐλθέτω[[23]](#endnote-23) ἡ[[24]](#endnote-24) βασιλεία[[25]](#endnote-25) σου18;
Your name was consecrated[[26]](#endnote-26); Your kingdom came[[27]](#endnote-27);

Γενηθήτω[[28]](#endnote-28) τὸ16 θέλημά[[29]](#endnote-29) σου18; ὡς [[30]](#endnote-30) ἐν11 οὐρανῷ[[31]](#endnote-31), καὶ[[32]](#endnote-32) ἐπὶ[[33]](#endnote-33) τῆς[[34]](#endnote-34) γῆς[[35]](#endnote-35).
Your will was begotten[[36]](#endnote-36); as in heaven, also on the earth[[37]](#endnote-37).

Τὸν[[38]](#endnote-38) ἄρτον[[39]](#endnote-39) ἡμῶν9 τὸν34 ἐπιούσιον[[40]](#endnote-40), δὸς[[41]](#endnote-41) ἡμῖν[[42]](#endnote-42) σήμερον[[43]](#endnote-43).
Our bread, the epiousion, You gave us today[[44]](#endnote-44).

Καὶ[[45]](#endnote-45) ἄφες[[46]](#endnote-46) ἡμῖν38 τὰ[[47]](#endnote-47) ὀφειλήματα[[48]](#endnote-48) ἡμῶν9;
You forgave us our debts;

 ὡς26 καὶ28, ἡμεῖς[[49]](#endnote-49) ἀφίεμεν[[50]](#endnote-50) τοῖς12 ὀφειλέταις[[51]](#endnote-51) ἡμῶν9.
 as also, we forgive our debtors.

Καὶ41 μὴ[[52]](#endnote-52) εἰσενέγκῃς[[53]](#endnote-53) ἡμᾶς[[54]](#endnote-54) εἰς[[55]](#endnote-55) πειρασμόν[[56]](#endnote-56);
Even though You could not have led us into peril;

 ἀλλὰ[[57]](#endnote-57), ῥῦσαι[[58]](#endnote-58) ἡμᾶς50 ἀπὸ[[59]](#endnote-59) τοῦ[[60]](#endnote-60) πονηροῦ[[61]](#endnote-61).
 even so You delivered us from the evil.

Ὅτι[[62]](#endnote-62) σοῦ18 ἐστιν[[63]](#endnote-63) ἡ20 βασιλεία21 καὶ[[64]](#endnote-64) ἡ20 δύναμις[[65]](#endnote-65)
Because, from You is the kingdom, the power,

 καὶ60 ἡ20 δόξα[[66]](#endnote-66) εἰς51 τοὺς[[67]](#endnote-67) αἰῶνας[[68]](#endnote-68). Ἀμήν[[69]](#endnote-69).[[70]](#endnote-70)
 and the Glory, into the ages. Amen.

Ἐὰν[[71]](#endnote-71) γὰρ[[72]](#endnote-72) ἀφῆτε[[73]](#endnote-73) τοῖς12 ἀνθρώποις[[74]](#endnote-74) τὰ43 παραπτῶματα[[75]](#endnote-75) αὐτῶν[[76]](#endnote-76),
For if you forgave men their side-falls,

 ἀφήσει[[77]](#endnote-77) καὶ[[78]](#endnote-78) ὑμῖν[[79]](#endnote-79), ὁ10 Πατὴρ[[80]](#endnote-80) ὑμῶν[[81]](#endnote-81) ὁ10 οὐράνιος[[82]](#endnote-82).
 then He will forgive you, Your heavenly Father[[83]](#endnote-83).

Ἐὰν67 δὲ[[84]](#endnote-84) μὴ48 ἀφῆτε69 τοῖς12 ἀνθρώποις70 τὰ43 παραπτῶματα71 αὐτῶν72,[[85]](#endnote-85)
Yet if you forgave not men their side-falls,

 οὐδὲ[[86]](#endnote-86) ὁ10 Πατὴρ76 ὑμῶν77 ἀφήσει73 τὰ43 παραπτώματα71 ὑμῶν77.
 neither will your Father forgive your side-falls[[87]](#endnote-87).

[[88]](#endnote-88)

1. For me, the words, hallowed and sanctified, which mean the same thing, are too archaic for modern English. However, since language is a moving target, each generation must renew its quest for the most expressive and meaningful words. For me, the word necessary in this location at this time is consecrated: to devote to a special and unique purpose or use. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. This makes no claim to support any of the numerous interpretations concerning the body and blood of Christ. Such a study would be beyond the scope of authority, and depth of our present meditation. Readers are encouraged to form their own ideas. Our intention is only to reinforce the idea that the word, ἐπιούσιον, cannot possibly mean the adverb, daily, except as it pertains to the manna. This word, which can only be about the manna, Jesus explains as Himself in John 6, especially in verse 35. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Here is the rare, the unique present tense found in the prayer. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. This lone negative subjunctive found in the prayer, introduces a note of impossibility or improbability. God could, should, nor would not tempt anyone. James 1:13 assures us that this is the zero possibility: so, we ought not be considering it here. Temptation comes chiefly from our own twisted hearts (James 1:14); Satan, demons, and other people or influences are only secondary sources of temptation without effectiveness unless we yield our personal wills to them (1 Peter 5:8) [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. or falling-aside, side-stumbles, side-slips, stumbling [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Taken as a whole, the argument of the prayer is that the will of God is forgiveness: to be and become a forgiving person. Jesus, Himself is that Will of God. He is the perfect fulfillment of all the righteous demands of the Law. In Him, and He in us, the complexities of this indwelling relationship, make us alive to the Law, alive to the Will of God, co-participants in Jesus to both Law and Will. This is the power and work of the Spirit in us, which we receive by faith. The indwelling Spirit enables us to become co-sharers in both Law and Will; not by fleshly works of righteousness: but, rather by His Mercy. Nevertheless, as we become more and more consciously aware of this indwelling relationship in our lives, the urgency of obedience intensifies; while the necessity of increasing co-operative good works, born out of reflecting and responding faith and love for God, multiplies. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. John 4:34 [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Psalm 40:8; Hebrews 10:7, 9 [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Eternity past: there never was a time when the essence of the heavenly realities did not exist, nor will there ever be such a time. These eternal heavenly realities refer to the essence of God, the Trinity, Himself, and not to created beings such as angels, or to created things. Nevertheless, it is impossible for us to conceive of God as being enthroned upon His Mercy Seat without the creation of such a mercy seat. This is a Mystery; we will learn what we need to know when we get to heaven.

The proclamation in time of the Name, Kingdom, and Will indicate eternal realities. Satan has never been “the god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4) except in the pejorative sense that he was cast out of heaven: now, being confined to earth as a prison, he throws his weight around among men. The timely announcement reiterates an eternal reality, as applicable to Adam as to the last person ever born; just as the life and death of Jesus are also applicable to Eve and the last woman. There has never been a time when Christ did not co-reign eternally on earth with the Father and the Spirit. We mere mortals, on the other hand, only understand time. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. John 6 [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. A partial list of the self-induced calamities of the Israelites would include: the Marah waters (Exodus 15), the Manna and quail (Exodus 16), complaining (Exodus 17), disputing (Exodus 18), the golden calf (Exodus 32), the burning and graves of lust (Numbers 11), Miriam’s leprosy (Numbers 12), the unbelieving spies (Numbers 13), the murmuring (Numbers 14), Korah and Dathan (Numbers 16), Moses strikes the Rock (Numbers 20), the Brazen Serpent (Numbers 21), etc. A litany of Apostolic and/or Christian sins would be: similar, more personal, and even worse. None of these things can be blamed on God. We have brought them all upon ourselves. [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Πάτερ, vocative singular masculine noun from Πατὴρ, τέρος, τρός, ὁ: Father. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. ἡμῶν, genitive plural personal pronoun from ἐγώ: I, our, ours. [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. ὁ, nominative singular masculine article from ὁ, ἡ, τό: the, the one, introducing an appositional phrase. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. ἐν, preposition of location, place, or position from ἐν: in [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. τοῖς, dative plural article from ὁ, ἡ, τό: the, in the after ἐν, the preposition is beginning to replace the case ending. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. οὐρανοῖς, dative plural masculine noun from οὐρανός, οῦ, ὁ: heavens. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Literally, Father, ours, the one in the heavens. Optionally, Our heavenly Father. “Our Father which art in heaven,” is archaic and cumbersome. This is a standard introductory address, as with a letter or oral petition. [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. Ἁγιασθήτω, third person singular, aorist passive imperative of ἁγιάζω: to set apart, sanctify, hallow, consecrate. I could find no indications of defectiveness or deponency for this verb; the forms ἁγιασάτω (active) and ἁγιασάσθω, ἁγιάσθω, or ἁγιασθῶ (middle) were not readily found. [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. τὸ, nominative singular neuter article from ὁ, ἡ, τό: the. [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. ὄνομά, nominative singular neuter noun from ὄνομα, ατος, τό: a name, the proper name, the character or reputation. The second accent is attracted from the following word. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. σου, genitive singular personal pronoun from σύ, σοῦ: you, your, yours. The accent was lost to the previous word. [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. Ἐλθέτω, third person singular, aorist active imperative of ἔρχομαι: to come, go, or pass. A defective and irregular verb: the second aorist root is ἤλυθον, ἦλθον by contraction, which shortens to ἐλθ- in the imperative, ἐλθέτω (active); the forms ἐλθέσθω (middle), ἐλθεθήτω or ἐλθήτω (passive) were not found. [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. ἡ, nominative singular feminine article from ὁ, ἡ, τό: the. [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. βασιλεία, nominative singular feminine noun from βασιλεία, ας, ἡ: kingdom. Please note the common distinction between masculine and feminine, where the masculine is the active agent, while the feminine is the inactive recipient. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)
26. Literally, It was set apart, the name, yours. The passive voice asks the question by whom, and when. [↑](#endnote-ref-26)
27. Literally, It came, the kingdom, yours. The kingdom came because the king arrived, and the kingdom came with him. This accords with the prophetic visions of Daniel where the historic emperors and empires (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome) are referred to interchangeably. [↑](#endnote-ref-27)
28. Γενηθήτω, third person singular, aorist passive imperative of γίνομαι: to exist, be created, be begotten, 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, rather than from active verbs of doing, etc. [↑](#endnote-ref-28)
29. θέλημά, nominative singular neuter noun from θέλημα, ατος, τό: bent, inclination, resolve, will, wish. The second accent is attracted from the following word. [↑](#endnote-ref-29)
30. ὡς, correlative adverb from ὅς, ἥ, ὅ: as, like. [↑](#endnote-ref-30)
31. οὐρανῷ, dative singular masculine noun from οὐρανός, οῦ, ὁ: heaven. [↑](#endnote-ref-31)
32. καὶ, cumulative particle (adverbial): also, so also, too. [↑](#endnote-ref-32)
33. ἐπὶ, preposition of location, place, or position from ἐπὶ: on, upon. [↑](#endnote-ref-33)
34. τῆς, genitive singular feminine article from ὁ, ἡ, τό: the. [↑](#endnote-ref-34)
35. γῆς, genitive singular feminine noun from γῆ, γῆς, ἡ: earth, the planet, its surface, land, dry land, a region. [↑](#endnote-ref-35)
36. Literally, It was begotten, born or created, the will, yours. Existed, makes no sense in this context. The passive voice asks the question by whom, and when. [↑](#endnote-ref-36)
37. The phrase gathers and applies to all three verbs: was consecrated, came, and was begotten. [↑](#endnote-ref-37)
38. Τὸν, accusative singular masculine article from ὁ, ἡ, τό: the. [↑](#endnote-ref-38)
39. ἄρτον, accusative singular masculine noun from ἄρτος, οῦ, ὁ: bread in any form or shape, any life necessity. [↑](#endnote-ref-39)
40. ἐπιούσιον, accusative singular masculine noun from ἐπιούσιος, οῦ, ὁ: the lexicons are not particularly helpful at this point. The root οὐσίος from οὐσία, ας, ἡ: existence, substance, essence; cannot possibly be associated with σήμερον (today). The obvious historical reference is to the manna from the days of Moses, which is elsewhere known as the bread of angels, or bread of heaven. This manna conspicuously prefigures the Christ of God, particularly as expressed in John 6, Who is the living Passover, which we receive in the Communion, Liturgy, Mystery, Un-bloody Sacrifice, or any other name you may prefer. The ἐπιούσιον is clearly Jesus Himself. If οὐσίος is substance, then ἐπιούσιον or upon substance is somehow, greater, super-existent. This does not mean that there is a suitable English word for our translation purposes; even though, we know perfectly well, exactly what it means. Some suggested translations might be angelic, or heavenly bread: which picks up on the idea that Jesus is the manna of God. In any case, daily, will never suffice. The word, ἐπιούσιον, most certainly does not mean daily. We do not need bread for our bellies; we desperately need Jesus for our human spirits, so that our souls will be nourished with the fullness of God. [↑](#endnote-ref-40)
41. δὸς, second person singular, aorist active imperative of δίδωμι: give, you gave. The imperative mood is customary for prayer. Even though the force of the past tense must not be weighted excessively, it suggests that this is more an expression of gratitude, than of petition. [↑](#endnote-ref-41)
42. ἡμῖν, dative plural personal pronoun from ἐγώ: to us. This is the indirect object. [↑](#endnote-ref-42)
43. σήμερον, indeclensionate adverb: today. [↑](#endnote-ref-43)
44. The whole point of the petition is the development of Christlikeness within us. “God became man, so that man could become god.” Christ repeatedly scolds the disciples for looking at the outward, earthly nature of things. We are fat enough physically; but, we are starving to death spiritually. [↑](#endnote-ref-44)
45. καὶ, continuative conjunction: and, possibly a Hebraism of vav consecutive or vav continuative. These lead to tedious strung on sentences in English and are left untranslated, because they are unnecessary in English. [↑](#endnote-ref-45)
46. ἄφες, second person singular, aorist active imperative of ἀφίημι: excuse, forgive, you forgave. We render ἄφες literally, in the past tense, but it is possibly characteristic: even so, this is not the imperfect tense; so, we believe that it is best to render a past as a past, letting English readers draw whatever characteristic nuances they wish. Yet, in keeping with the rest of the prayer, this seems to be more of gratitude, than of petition. [↑](#endnote-ref-46)
47. τὰ, accusative plural neuter article from ὁ, ἡ, τό: the. [↑](#endnote-ref-47)
48. ὀφειλήματα: accusative plural neuter noun from ὀφείλημα, ατος, τό: debt, duty. The idea of duty, and being excused from performing a duty suggests the specific failure to keep the Decalogue, which is the specific duty of the Israelites and the Jews; a requirement of the Law; actual or potential culpability, fault, or guilt at the Law. [↑](#endnote-ref-48)
49. ἡμεῖς, nominative plural personal pronoun from ἐγώ: to us. [↑](#endnote-ref-49)
50. ἀφίεμεν, first person plural, present active indicative of ἀφίημι: excuse, forgive. Alexandrian text has ἀφήκαμεν, first person plural, aorist active indicative of ἀφίημι, which appears to be an attempt to coordinate the tense with ἄφες. The change of tense may be characteristic and minimal, but it 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. [↑](#endnote-ref-50)
51. ὀφειλέταις, dative plural masculine noun from ὀφειλέτης, ου, ὁ: debtors, the ones with whom we have a charge concerning the Decalogue; a requirement of the Law that is due or owed; actual or potential culpability, fault, or guilt at the Law. [↑](#endnote-ref-51)
52. μὴ, negation particle (adverbial): not. Its primary function here is to negate the following verb. [↑](#endnote-ref-52)
53. εἰσενέγκῃς, second person singular, aorist active subjunctive of εἰσφέρω: to bring, carry, or lead into. [↑](#endnote-ref-53)
54. ἡμᾶς, accusative plural personal pronoun from ἐγώ: us. [↑](#endnote-ref-54)
55. εἰς, preposition of direction from εἰς: into, the opposite of an ablative when used with the accusative. [↑](#endnote-ref-55)
56. πειρασμόν, accusative singular masculine noun from πειρασμός, οῦ, ὁ: affliction, calamity, peril, proof, temptation, test, trial. [↑](#endnote-ref-56)
57. ἀλλὰ, emphatic adversative conjunction: but, however, nevertheless, on the other hand, yet. [↑](#endnote-ref-57)
58. ῥῦσαι, second person singular, aorist active imperative of ῥύομαι: to deliver, drag from danger, rescue. [↑](#endnote-ref-58)
59. ἀπὸ, preposition of direction from ἀπὸ: from, the ablative, emphasizing separation rather than source. [↑](#endnote-ref-59)
60. τοῦ, genitive singular masculine or neuter article from ὁ, ἡ, τό: the. [↑](#endnote-ref-60)
61. πονηροῦ, genitive singular masculine adjective from πονηρός, ά, όν: bad, evil, the evil person, system, or thing. We resist the temptation to translate, “the evil one,” implying that this refers directly to Satan himself. This certainly includes Satan, but it seems to us that a broader scope is intended: all sorts of evil; the world, the flesh, and the Devil; the whole scope of the evil system, without any exception. Most specifically, it refers to the recent evil we just got ourselves into. [↑](#endnote-ref-61)
62. Ὅτι, causal conjunction or particle from the relative pronoun ὅστις, ἥτις, ὅτι: because. [↑](#endnote-ref-62)
63. ἐστιν, third person singular, present active indicative of εἰμί: he, she, or it is. [↑](#endnote-ref-63)
64. καὶ, coordinating or series conjunction: and. In keeping with the English custom, only the last καὶ in the series is translated. The series or Oxford comma is retained. [↑](#endnote-ref-64)
65. δύναμις, nominative singular feminine noun from δύναμις, εως, ἡ: might, omnipotence, power, strength; predicate nominative. [↑](#endnote-ref-65)
66. δόξα, nominative singular feminine noun from δόξα, ης, ἡ: appearance, glory, Glory, a direct reference to the Shəkinah; predicate nominative. [↑](#endnote-ref-66)
67. τοὺς, accusative plural article from ὁ, ἡ, τό: the. [↑](#endnote-ref-67)
68. αἰῶνας, accusative plural masculine noun from αἰών, ῶνος, ὁ: a significant period of time, an age or era, all of time, eternity. In service settings this is often strengthened with τῶν αἰώνων, lest there be any doubt that eternity is in mind, and to add poetic flourishes for emphasis. [↑](#endnote-ref-68)
69. Ἀμήν, indeclensionate particle of covenantal affirmation: absolutely, truly, we agree, we submit to the covenant stipulations, we will be ruled by this king, amen. [↑](#endnote-ref-69)
70. Alexandrian text omits the entire sentence. This is very possibly a Byzantine liturgical tradition, an added response to the prayer. However, this tradition exists universally throughout the practice of the Church, and the prayer sounds strange without it. It is an appropriate antiphon to the prayer. Since the prayer is covenantal in nature, its only appropriate response is covenant affirmation. [↑](#endnote-ref-70)
71. Ἐὰν, conditional conjunction introducing a protasis: if. This begins a Third Class, Future More Probable conditional sentence. [↑](#endnote-ref-71)
72. γὰρ, postpositive explanatory conjunction: for. [↑](#endnote-ref-72)
73. ἀφῆτε, second person plural, aorist active subjunctive of ἀφίημι: excuse, forgive. [↑](#endnote-ref-73)
74. ἀνθρώποις, dative plural masculine noun from ἄνθρωπος, ου, ὁ, ἡ: to men. This is the indirect object. [↑](#endnote-ref-74)
75. παραπτῶματα or παραπτώματα: accusative plural neuter noun from παράπτωμα, ατος, τό: stumbling, fault, offense, transgression; the act or deed of breaking the Law. It may also imply a lesser degree of seriousness (an accident, a slip) than is implied by ὀφείλημα. The step of sinners is on slippery ground (Deuteronomy 32:35). The change in inflection from circumflex to acute is possibly musical, its exact use is lost to us. It is more likely that the Byzantine culture would reflect correct musical tonalities. This argument cuts both ways, but it is not a translatable difference. [↑](#endnote-ref-75)
76. αὐτῶν, genitive plural reflexive pronoun from αὐτός, ή, ό: their. [↑](#endnote-ref-76)
77. ἀφήσει, third person singular, future active indicative of ἀφίημι: excuse, forgive. Forgiveness is certain if the condition is met. [↑](#endnote-ref-77)
78. καὶ, dependent conjunction introducing an apodosis: then. The location is postpositive, balancing γὰρ (note 72) and δὲ (note 84) [↑](#endnote-ref-78)
79. ὑμῖν, dative plural personal pronoun from σύ: to you. This is the indirect object. [↑](#endnote-ref-79)
80. Πατὴρ, nominative singular masculine noun from Πατὴρ, τέρος, τρός, ὁ: Father. [↑](#endnote-ref-80)
81. ὑμῶν, genitive plural personal pronoun from σύ: you, your, yours. [↑](#endnote-ref-81)
82. οὐράνιος, nominative singular masculine adjective from οὐράνιος, ία, ιον: heavenly. [↑](#endnote-ref-82)
83. That this forgiveness is associated with you plural in all three instances, indicates that this must take place in a forgiving community, even though personal obedience is required. The community of forgiveness is seriously damaged when forgiveness is not a reality. [↑](#endnote-ref-83)
84. δὲ, postpositive conjunction introducing continuation or opposition: but, now, yet, conversely, on the other hand. [↑](#endnote-ref-84)
85. The phrase, τὰ παραπτῶματα αὐτῶν, is included in both the Byzantine and B. Its absence in א leaves that which is to be forgiven open and unspecified. This implies forgive everything, even corrupt and deliberate acts of aggression and violence. [↑](#endnote-ref-85)
86. οὐδὲ, adverb, a contraction of οὐ + δέ: neither, nor, and not, not even. The phrase sequence “for … then … yet … neither” is very emphatic and forceful. [↑](#endnote-ref-86)
87. The converse is also true. Again, it is associated with you plural in all three instances. Failure to forgive on the part of individuals is a cancer or poison that spreads like a flood or like wildfire through the forgiving community, killing all. Acts 8:23; Romans 3:14; Ephesians 4:31; Hebrews 12:15 [↑](#endnote-ref-87)
88. If you have been blessed or helped by any of these meditations, please repost, share, or use any of them as you wish. No rights are reserved. They are designed and intended for your free participation. They were freely received, and are freely given. No other permission is required for their use. [↑](#endnote-ref-88)