† Blessed is our God always, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. ... in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Through the prayers of our holy Fathers and Mothers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us. Amen. Glory to You, our God, glory to You.

O Heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, You are everywhere and fill all things, Treasury of blessings, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

† Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (three times).

† Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it is now, was in the beginning, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Prayer

Meditations

*Applications*

Several years ago[[1]](#endnote-1), I set out on an intense study of the Lord’s Prayer; this proved to be necessary because I had no real understanding of the prayer; all the standard explanations led to impossible contradictions: as a result, I was just mouthing senseless repetitions without any meaning or understanding. I pondered these mysteries for decades, before beginning research. However, praying with understanding and meaning is exactly what Jesus commands.

*Opinions*

This is not a collection of opinions. If you doubt what I have written here, go ask your pastor or priest to get out his Greek grammars and lexicons and look it up for you. All I did was look these things up and report them: you are free to draw your own conclusions.

*Facts*

There is only one present tense verb in the entire prayer, and that is not a request: it is an understood expectation. All the other verbs in the prayer are in the past tense. So, Luther is wrong when he analyses the Lord’s Prayer as a set of petitions, things we must ask God to give us. Rather, the Lord’s Prayer is a set of Declarations, Gratitudes, Praises, Thanksgivings for what God has already done for us.

*Listen*

God does not need a recitation of our want list. He already knows, far better than we will ever know, what our true needs are. I need the discipline of the disease and pain that strike at my legs, because it makes me a better man. If God relieves this disease and pain through the services of doctors, good and well. If I die as a result of that disease and pain, so much the better. The possible tragedy would be that I never listened or learned the lessons of my own mortality.

*Rock*

God, knows our every need, and has moved to provide for all of these needs far before we were ever born. We don’t need to ask; it does no good to ask: we’re not going to change God’s mind. We’ve already received all of these needs as gifts: so, stop asking for what we cannot possibly understand from a highly defective English translation, and give attention to what the words truly say... if in doubt, check them out.

The Prayer

*The Father’s Name*

“Hallowed be Thy Name.” No, no, no, a thousand times no. Think about what we are saying. What could we ever do to add to or subtract from the holiness of God’s Name: our requests for such may be well intended; yet, they are entirely useless; that is not what it says. What it says is, “Your Name was consecrated, hallowed, or sanctified[[2]](#endnote-2)!” We are not told who or how God’s name is set apart from the ordinary. A little thought explains this to us. We might have suspected that God was not ordinary, when we first discovered that He created us in Genesis 1:1. If this is not enough, then the conversations of God with various people throughout the rest of Genesis must provide clues. Then God talks to Moses at the burning bush and tells him about His Name in no uncertain terms (Exodus 3:2-15). In case we think this is idle talk, God proceeds to demonstrate that He is truly different by destroying all the idols of Egypt. The Egyptian politicians immediately set out to create a spin cover up of their embarrassment, so that we cannot find much archaeological support for these events; which may be why Egypt remains in poverty today, to remind them of their mortality for once despising the Name of the Living God. The first pillar of our faith is that God’s name is truly different; He consecrated His own name from creation every onward: that is an establish fact, upon which we may not improve. Thank You, dear Father for eternally consecrating Your Name for us: we live and die by Your Consecrated Name.

*The Father’s Kingdom*

“Your kingdom came!” Not, “your kingdom come.” God’s kingdom is not a future thing for which we must ask. God’s kingdom is automatically present wherever God makes His Presence evident: we just weren’t listening. Ever since God walked with Adam in the cool of the day, the kingdom of God has been among us. Ever since Jesus was Incarnate… Ever since the Holy Spirit was first given at Pentecost, 33… Ever since we were born… Ever since we were baptized, we were surrounded by the kingdom of God. This is the second pillar of our faith. Thank You, dear Father for continuing to allow us to live and die in your heavenly kingdom. We have not listened. We do not deserve such a gift.

*The Father’s Will*

“Your will was born!” Who or how, the Lord’s Prayer itself does not explain. Yet, is it not self-evident that the will of God is Jesus Himself. He alone has come to do the Father’s will (Psalm 40:6-8; John 1:13; 4:34; 5:21, 30; 6:38-39; Hebrews 10:6-7). Jesus is the will of God. We enter into the will of God, only through the miracle of being made Christ-like. This is the third pillar of our faith. Thank You, dear Father for continuing to allow us to live and die with Your Will planted in our hearts by Christ.

*The Father’s Infinity*

“As in heaven, also on the earth.” Everything that we understand about God’s government of the created universe, also governs earth, especially in the affairs of men. Only the deceit of Satan has made it seem otherwise: but Satan is a false god, exposed for what he is by the same events that exposed the idolatry of Egypt… by God’s Consecrated Name. The great pillars of faith that rule in heaven, also reign on earth: The Father’s Consecrated Name, The Father’s Kingdom, and The Father’s Will. These three things remain unchanged, undisturbed, unmoved, and unmovable, undisturbable, unchangeable. They are invincible! ΙΣ ΧΣ ΝΙΚΑ! Jesus Christ Conquers! Thank You, Father.

*The Father’s Bread*

“He gave us our bread today, the epiousion.” It’s already served up on our plates, we don’t need to ask for it. The only puzzle here, is in the meaning of this epiousion, this special bread, what might that be? We must think about what this epiousion, this upon-substance could possibly mean. It most certainly does not mean daily, except as that might be hidden in the Mystery. Again, and again in the preaching of Jesus, and in the epistles, we hear of the manna[[3]](#endnote-3), that Jesus Himself is the true Manna (Matthew 6:25, 31; 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 9:17; 12:22; 22:19-20; 24:25; John 6:31, 33, 35, 48, 49, 51, 54-56, 58; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:24-26; Revelation 2:17; 10:9). Exactly, how much evidence did you require? There is only one thing that this epiousion can possibly be. The epiousion is the precious broken body and like precious blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, our Savior and Lord. Every crumb that we eat and every drop that we drink comes as a by-product benefit of the death and resurrection of Christ. Every tender morsel of steak is at His behest and His provision. We need not pray for bread. Our Father knows that we have need of bread, and all other provisions. We need to give hearty thanks for the gift of Christ, from whom all these physical things are given. Thank You, Father.

*The Father’s Forgiveness*

“You forgave us our debts.” For Christ’s sake in His suffering and death, “[the Father] forgave us our debts.” These are not trespasses, these are things owed to God, they are obligations. As Matthew 18:23-35 so abundantly, clearly, and painfully emphasizes: the unforgiving servant might have been forgiven his infinity of debt without even asking. His forgiveness of his neighbor’s debt is not the condition of his forgiveness; the Father forgives without any qualification, for the sake of the Son: we are expected to live by the laws of this kingdom of God’s forgiveness. “As we forgive our debtors.” We are as children, so these are shoes we will have to grow into. Yet, if we never learn the nature of the Father’s loving forgiveness, and the necessity of reproducing it in our lives: only unspeakable terror awaits us; the tormentors will surely come. Thank You, Father: for making us a forgiving people.

*The Father’s Deliverance*

The last phrases indicate a concession on our part. “Even though You did not lead us into peril or temptation.” God tempts no one. We have no one but ourselves to blame for the many perils and temptations into which we have fallen: we are the cause of every one of them. Even so You delivered us from the evil.” Deliverance has already taken place. Learn to say thank You, Lord. Were these things not at Satan’s instigation? Yes, of course they were; but, Satan has never had power over our wills: we let ourselves be persuaded. We do need to exercise our wills against Satan’s wiles: but we don’t especially need to pray about that. What we do need to pray for is wisdom (James 1:5). Thank You, Father.

A Liturgical Response

The words, “Because, from You is the kingdom, the power, and the Glory, into the ages. Amen.”, are not part of the Lord’s Prayer; they are the appropriate liturgical response of the people, whenever the Lord’s Prayer is read in a public worship service.

The Son’s Explication

The words, “For if you forgave men their side-falls, then Your heavenly Father will forgive you. Yet if you forgave not men their side-falls, neither will your Father forgive your side-falls.”, are not part of the Lord’s Prayer either; they are Jesus’ explication of the true meaning of forgiveness. If we need additional details we look to Matthew 18, 25, and 28; passages where we learn that God has a world full of forgiveness. These particular passages (Matthew 18, 25, and 28) each summarize the arguments of the previous materials, all of which build in these passage as the summary and climax of the point: God forgives.

The Popular Talisman

Now we are freed from using the Lord’s Prayer as a heavenly “rabbit’s foot”; which, if only rubbed the right way, forces God to grant us every item on our wish list. The Father’s plan is perfect from beginning to end. It cannot be increased or decreased; it cannot be changed. The purpose of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving is not to change God’s will, which is carved in stone; the purpose of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving is to change us: are we paying attention, are we listening? It is appropriate to be thankful and to say thank You. It is appropriate to become more forgiving every day. It is appropriate to seek wisdom: The Spirit is a patient teacher.

Imperatives

Doubtless, someone will now claim that these verbs are all imperatives, which is the normal form of prayer. This claim is true; let me explain why it cannot apply.

*Please*

If this were the normal Hebrew form of prayer, which we might expect; it would include the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word for please: this word is missing. We do not boss God around. We do not tell Him what to do. We cannot come to Him without respect: this much should be obvious.

*You*

The normal form of prayer is always cast in the second person, which is the only form of imperative found in the English language. Yet, the first three of these verbs are in the third person: “Your Name was consecrated by Him; Your kingdom came in Him; Your will was begotten with Him. The normal form of prayer does not explain any of these uses. English does not know what to do with a third person imperative: we suggest that an exclamation point be attached to each verb. The third person cannot be made into a request; but, it can be understood as a Praise!

*Present*

The normal form of prayer is always cast in the present tense. Humans are simply incapable of asking in the past or in the future: the only thing that human beings have is now.

*Unsought*

If the fourth verb were in the present tense, the second person imperative might be interpreted as a prayer; but, the manna came without the Israelites asking: it was only appropriate that they show their gratitude. Similarly, when Jesus, the true manna came, they rejected Him, when gratitude is the only appropriate response. The verb is again cast in the simple past tense: appropriate for Praise; but, not for petitions.

*Unlimited*

The same thing is true of forgiveness, which is also cast in the second person imperative, simple past tense. God has already forgiven us, we need to listen, be thankful, and become forgiving.

*Obligation*

“We forgive” is the only verb cast in the present tense: it expresses what we must do, what we must become like.

*Hypothetical*

The verb is not imperative, it cannot be a request at all; it is subjunctive: “You [Father] could, should, or would not have led us into peril or temptation.

*Deliverance*

The last verb returns to the second person imperative, simple past tense. How are we, who are so insensitive to our own danger supposed to have wisdom to ask for deliverance? God has already delivered without our asking. He delivers from dangers that we do not even realize exist.

*Conclusion*

Nothing about this structure conforms to the standard second person imperative, present tense of prayer, which is always rendered politely with the word please.

[[4]](#endnote-4)

1. It was long before 2010 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. These words all mean the same thing: to set apart from the ordinary. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. A Hebrew exclamation, a declaration of surprise, meaning, “What is it?” [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. 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-4)