

PART III
THE LORD'S PRAYER
CHAPTER XXIII
PRAYER

PRAYER is the conversation of the believing heart with God.¹ It is as necessary for the life of the soul, as breathing is for that of the body. As children of God we must live in communion with Him; and we cannot be Christians without prayer. For this reason God has given us His name to use in prayer, and the Saviour has taught us how to pray in the Lord's Prayer.

TO WHOM WE SHOULD PRAY. Our prayers should be addressed to God alone,² and not to the Virgin Mary, the saints, the angels, or any other creatures.

WHY WE SHOULD PRAY. We should pray, 1. Because we constantly need God's mercy in temporal and spiritual things. 2. Because we owe God our thanks for his many benefits.³ 3. Because God has commanded us to pray.⁴ 4. Because God has promised to hear us.⁵

WHEN WE SHOULD PRAY. 1. Always;⁶ that is, our soul should live in constant communion with God, and always be open toward Him. 2. Whenever we feel special need of prayer: in danger,⁷ distress, anxiety,⁸ sickness,⁹ bereavement, sorrow,¹⁰ temptation,¹¹ or when we are burdened with the sense of our guilt.¹² 3. At fixed times: ¹³ every morning and evening, at meal-times; in family worship;¹⁴ in church.¹⁵

FOR WHOM WE SHOULD PRAY. 1. For ourselves. 2. For our fellow-Christians.¹⁶ 3. For all men:¹⁷ for friends and foes,¹⁸ the poor and the rich, the afflicted and the tempted. 4. For the Church. 5. For the State.

1 Ps. 19:14.†

2 Matt. 4:10.

3 Ps. 103. Jas. 1:17.

4 Matt. 5:9. Matt. 26:41.

5 Matt. 7:7,8.†

6 Luke 21:36.†

7 Matt. 8:25.

8 Matt. 15:22.

9 Jas. 5:14,15.

10 Ps. 25:16,17.

11 Matt. 26:41.

12 Luke 18:13.

13 Dan. 15:22.

14 Josh. 24:15.†

15 Matt. 18:20.†

16 Eph. 6:18.†

17 I Tim. 2:1.†

18 Matt. 5:44.†

OUR PRAYERS SHOULD CONTAIN: 1. Adoration. 2. Thanksgiving.
3. Confession. 4. Petition. 5. Intercession.

THE MANNER. Our prayers should be the sincere utterance of our hearts; otherwise they will be a mere mockery.¹⁹ They may be in our own words or those of another. It will often be profitable to use the prayers found in good prayer-books or in the Liturgy, and to draw largely from the Psalms, which are a treasury of good and beautiful prayers. We should not lengthen our prayers by vain repetitions, nor repeat the Lord's Prayer or any other prayer a certain number of times as if that were a merit.²⁰ Nor should we shorten our prayers through laziness, indifference, and the like. The Lord's Prayer should generally be added to our own prayers as a summary of those things for which we should pray.

THE POSTURE which we assume should indicate reverence to God. We should kneel or stand with folded hands. If we are unable to assume either of these postures, we may pray in any position. We stand in church on Sunday, because it is the day of the Lord's resurrection and a day of joy. We should not sit still in church while others stand, unless we are too weak or ill to stand. Kneeling is an attitude of humiliation, particularly appropriate for the confession of sins.

IN CHRIST'S NAME. We should always pray in Christ's name, and never omit His name to please men or avoid offence; for our prayers are only heard for Christ's sake. We have the promise that whatever we ask in His name will be given to us.²¹ To pray in Christ's name means to pray, 1. As one who trusts in Christ and asks to be heard for His sake.²² 2. As one who prays in Christ's spirit, submitting all things to God's will, and saying with Christ, "Not my will, but Thine, be done."²³

IN FAITH. We should pray in faith, believing that God will answer our prayer for Jesus' sake.²⁴ If we do not pray in faith, we shall not be heard.²⁵

THE ANSWER TO PRAYER. God always answers the prayer of the believer. Those who ask and receive not, have either asked amiss,²⁶ or have not asked in faith. If we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us.²⁷ He answers our prayer, 1. By granting us what we ask, though perhaps after a long delay, by which He tries our faith and patience. 2. He grants us good things instead of the hurtful things for which we ignorantly ask. 3. He gives us strength to bear the burden which we pray to have removed,²⁸ and thus confers a greater blessing than the removal of the burden would be.

QUESTIONS.--1. What is prayer? 2. To whom alone should we pray? 3. Why should we pray?

19 Matt. 6:5.

20 Matt. 6:7.

21 John 16:23.

22 Eph. 2:18† Rom. 5:2.

23 Matt. 26:39. Matt. 6:10.

24 Jas. 5:16.†

25 Jas. 1:6,7.

26 Jas. 4:3.

27 I John 5:14.†

28 II Cor. 12:9.

4. When should we pray? 5. For whom should we pray? 6. What should our prayers contain?
7. What is to be said about the manner of our praying? 8. What is to be said about the posture in prayer?
9. Why must we pray in Christ's name? 10. What is meant by praying in Christ's name?
11. What is to be said about the importance of praying in faith? 12. Does God always answer prayer?
13. In what way does He answer?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--Ps. 19: 14. Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.

Matt. 7:7,8. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Luke 21:36. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Josh. 24:15. As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

Matt. 18:20. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Eph. 6:18. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching there-

READING.--The Pharisee and the Publican in the Temple, Luke 18:10-14.

ILLUSTRATIONS.--*Prayer for Self*: The Lepers, Luke 17:12,13; The Blind Beggar, Luke 18:36-43; The Publican, Luke 18:10,11; *For Others*: Jesus, John 17, Luke 23:32; Abraham, Gen. 18:23-33; Moses, Exod. 32:11; Stephen, Acts 7:60. *Answer to Prayer*: Israel in Bondage, Exod. 2:23,24; Hannah, I Sam. 1:9-20; Elijah, I Kings 17:21,22; Jas. 5:17; The Early Church, Acts 12:5-17; Paul, Acts 16:25; II Cor. 12:7-9.

unto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

I Tim. 2:1,2. I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

Matt. 5:44. Pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.

Eph. 2:18. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Jas. 5:16. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

I John 5:14. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us.

II Cor. 12:9. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The Lord's Prayer is so called because it was given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ.¹ It teaches us how to pray aright, and is the model after which we should fashion all our prayers. It shows us the manner in which we should come to God, and the things for which we should ask.

ITS CONTENTS. The Lord's Prayer contains an Introduction, Seven Petitions, and a Conclusion. The first three petitions regard God's glory, and deal with His Name, His Kingdom, and His Will; the last four regard our bodily and spiritual needs, and deal with our Daily Bread, Forgiveness, Temptation, and Deliverance from Evil. Six petitions, the first three and the last three, refer to spiritual gifts; and only one, the fourth, refers to earthly gifts. Thus we are taught that, when we pray, we should think first of God's glory; and that we should pray more for spiritual than for temporal benefits.

INTRODUCTION

Our Father Who art in Heaven.

What is meant by this Introduction?

God would thereby affectionately encourage us to believe that He is truly our Father, and that we are His children indeed, so that we may call upon Him with all cheerfulness and confidence, even as beloved children entreat their affectionate parent.

This Introduction shows us the manner in which we should come to God in prayer; namely, as His children, who are asking their Father for what they need, and who are sure that He loves them and will answer their prayer.

Our Father. God is our Father and we are His children through Christ our Saviour.² We should therefore be sure that He will receive us kindly for Jesus' sake whenever we come before him with our prayers. We should **call upon Him with all cheerfulness and confidence, even as beloved children entreat their affectionate parent.**³

We are taught to say *our* and not *my* Father, because the Lord's Prayer was given to believers to use in their common worship as well as in their private devotions; and because we should pray not only for ourselves, but for our fellow-believers and for all men.

Who Art in Heaven. An earthly father is not always able to do what his children ask, even if he desires to do so. But the Father to whom we here pray is our Heavenly Father, and is abundantly able to answer all our prayers.⁴ He not only loves us *with an

1 Matt. 6:9-13. Luke 11:1-4.

2 Gal. 3:26. † I John 3:1,2. Rom. 8:16.

3 Matt. 7:11. † Rom. 8:15. † Heb. 4:16.

4 Eph. 3:20. †

* Observe how the name "Father," by which we are here taught to address God, corresponds with the

everlasting love, but is almighty, omniscient, and all-wise. He is able to do all things which He wills to do and will answer all our prayers in the very way that is best for us.

QUESTIONS.--1. Why is the Lord's Prayer so called? 2. What does it teach us? 3. What does it contain? 4. What can you say about the seven petitions? 5. What does the introduction show? 6. Why do we say *Our Father*? 7. How should this encourage us to call upon Him? 8. Why do we say *Our Father*? 9. What is to be said about our heavenly Father in comparison with earthly fathers?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--Gal. 3:26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Matt. 7:11. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? Eph. 3:20. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Rom. 8:15. For ye have not received the spirit

READING.--Christ teaches His Disciples to pray, Luke 11:1-4.

CHAPTER XXV

THE FIRST PETITION

Hallowed be Thy name.

What is meant by this Petition?

The name of God is indeed holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may be hallowed also by us.

How is this effected?

When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, lead holy lives in accordance with it; to this may our blessed Father in heaven help us. But whoever teaches and lives otherwise than as God's Word prescribes, profanes the name of God among us; from this preserve us, heavenly Father.

In this Petition we pray for grace to hallow God's name* by the pure teaching of His Word and by childlike obedience to it.

The Name of God means not only the names by which we address Him, but all by which he is known to us. Compare the Second Commandment.

Is indeed Holy in Itself.¹ God's name is holy, because he is holy. We cannot increase or diminish God's holiness by anything that we do. This petition does not imply, therefore, that we are to *make* God's name holy.

But we pray in this Petition that it may be hallowed also by us. We hallow God's name when we regard and treat it as holy; in other words, when we honor and glorify God by worshiping and serving Him in accordance with the revelation which He has given of Himself in His Word.²

I. HOW GOD'S NAME IS HALLOWED

1. **When the Word of God is taught in its Truth and Purity.** God has revealed Himself to us in His Word, and it is only from that Word that we can learn to know Him and worship Him aright.³ Those, therefore, who in the Church, the school, or the home, teach God's Word, as well as those who gladly hear, read, and learn it, hallow His name.⁴ But the Word must be taught in its truth and purity; that is, it must be taught as it is recorded in the Scriptures, with nothing added, taken away, or changed.⁵

And we as the Children of God lead Holy Lives in accordance with it. In order to

* There is a parallel between this Petition and the Second Commandment. We here pray for grace to avoid what the Second Commandment forbids, and to do what it commands.

1 Ps. 99:3.

2 John 17:6.†

3 John 1:18.†

4 John 17:17.†

5 Gal. 1:9. Rev. 22:18,19.

hallow God's name, we must not only hear but obey His Word.⁶ As God's children we should think, speak, and act according to the rule which He has laid down in His Word, and thus glorify His name.

To this may our Blessed Father in Heaven help us. We cannot preserve God's Word in its truth and purity against its foes, nor believe and obey it by our own strength; hence we pray for God's help.

II. HOW GOD'S NAME IS PROFANED

But whoever teaches and lives otherwise than as God's Word prescribes, profanes the name of God among us.⁷ False teachers, who deny God's Word, or change it, or add to it, or subtract from it, profane the name of God, because they hide the glory of God from those who believe their teachings. Those who live otherwise than as God's Word prescribes, and are hypocrites or impenitent and unbelieving persons, profane God's name, because they refuse to glorify Him by obedience to His Word.

From this preserve us, Heavenly Father. We pray thus, because we are by nature inclined to error and sin, and have need of God's grace to preserve us from profaning His name.

QUESTIONS.--1. What do we pray for in this first petition? 2. What does the name of God mean? 3. Why is God's name holy in itself? 4. What does it mean to hallow God's name? 5. How is God's name hallowed? 6. Why do we pray for God's help? 7. How is God's name profaned? 8. Why do we pray God to preserve us from profaning His name?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--John 17: 6. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 17:17. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Jas. 1:22. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

READING.--The Name of Jesus, Acts 4:1-21.

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⁶ Jas. 1:22.† Matt. 5:16.

⁷ Rom. 2:21-24. Tit. 1:16.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE SECOND PETITION

Thy kingdom come.

What is meant by this Petition?

The kingdom of God comes indeed of itself without our prayer; but we pray in this petition what it may come unto us also.

When is this effected?

When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word, and live a godly life here on earth and in heaven forever.

In this Petition we pray that the Kingdom of God may come to us* and to all men; that is, that we all by true faith and a godly life may become members of the Church on earth and in heaven.

The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom which Christ has founded, and to which all who believe in Him belong. It is the Kingdom of Grace in this world and the Kingdom of Glory in the next.¹

Comes indeed of itself without our Prayer. Christ has established His kingdom and will continue to extend it, whether we pray for it or not.² But we pray in this Petition that it may come to us also; that is, into our hearts. In other words, we pray that we may become true Christians;³ and if we are Christians, we pray that we may become better Christians.

Missions. This petition is also a prayer for missions.⁴ We here pray that God's kingdom may come to all men. If our prayer is sincere, then we must be willing also to give liberally, so that the Gospel may be preached to the heathen (Foreign Missions) and to the spiritually destitute in our own land (Home Missions and Inner Missions).

HOW GOD'S KINGDOM COMES TO US

When our Heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit. Since only believers belong to God's kingdom, and we “cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ our Lord,” we pray in this petition that God would give His Holy Spirit to us,

* Since the Kingdom of God comes to us through the Gospel, there is a close relation between this Petition and the Third Commandment, which commands us to “deem God's Word holy and willingly hear and learn it.”

1 Mark 1:15. Matt. 25:34.

2 Isa. 9:7.

3 Matt. 7:21.

4 Matt. 9:37,38.† Mark 16:15.†

So that by His Grace we believe His Word,⁵ and live a godly life⁶ here on earth and in heaven forever. The Holy Spirit must teach us to repent of sin and to believe in Christ, and preserve us in a life of daily repentance and faith. Then God's kingdom will come to us more and more in this world, and in the next world we shall belong to it for ever.

QUESTIONS.--1. What do we pray in this petition? 2. What is meant by the kingdom of God? 3. How does God's kingdom come without our prayer? 4. What do we mean when we pray that it may come to us? 5. What is to be said about this petition and missions? 6. How does God's kingdom come to us? 7. Why do we need the Holy Spirit?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--Matt. 9: 37,38. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Mark 16:15. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

Tit. 2: 11-13. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

READING.--The Harvest and the Laborers, Matt. 9:35-38.

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⁵ I Cor. 12:3.

⁶ Tit. 2:11-13.†

CHAPTER XXVII

THE THIRD PETITION

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

What is meant by this Petition?

The good and gracious will of God is done, indeed, without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may be done by us also.

When is this effected?

When God frustrates and brings to nought every evil counsel and purpose which would hinder us from hallowing the name of God and prevent His kingdom from coming to us,--such as the will of the devil, of the world, and of our own flesh; and when he strengthens us and keeps us steadfast in His Word and in the faith even unto our end. This is His gracious and good will.

In this Petition we pray for grace gladly to believe, do and suffer all that God wills us to believe, do, and suffer, so that His name may be hallowed, and His kingdom may come.

Thy Will. God's will is, 1. That we should believe the Gospel and be saved.¹ 2. That we should obey His commandments and be holy.² 3. That we should willingly submit to all His dealings with us, and suffer patiently when He lays a cross on us.³

Be Done on Earth as it is in Heaven. We pray that God's will may be done by all men and especially by us, as heartily, as continually, and as completely as it is done by the holy angels.⁴

The Good and Gracious Will of God. The will of God is always good and gracious, because He always wills those things which He, in His wisdom and love,⁵ sees are best. He does all things well, even when we do not understand His ways.⁶

Is Done indeed without our Prayer. There will always be some persons who permit God to accomplish His good and gracious purposes in them, whether we pray for it or not.⁷

But we pray in this Petition that it may be done by us also;⁸ that is, that we may

1 I Tim. 2:4.†

2 I Thess. 4:3.†

3 Rom. 8:17.†

4 Ps. 103:20,21.

5 I John 4:16.

6 Isa. 55:8,9. Rom. 8:28.

7 Isa. 55:11.

8 Rom. 12:12.

believe His Gospel, obey His Commandments, and trustfully permit Him to lead us in whatsoever paths He will.

WHAT WE PRAY GOD TO DO

In order that God's good and gracious will may be done by us, all opposing wills must be overcome.⁹ We therefore Pray God

1. **To frustrate and bring to nought the Will of the Devil,¹⁰ of the World¹¹** (wicked persons), **and of our own Flesh¹²** (our natural heart). For these are the great enemies of our souls, who by their **evil counsels and purposes would hinder us from hallowing the name of God and prevent His Kingdom from coming to us.** They tempt us to oppose God's will by despising His Gospel, disobeying His Commandments, and murmuring against His dealings with us. We pray God

2. **To strengthen us,¹³** so that we may be able to overcome these enemies and do God's will in spite of them.¹⁴ They are very powerful, but if we are in earnest about overcoming them, God will give us the needful strength in answer to our prayer. We pray God

3. **To keep us Steadfast in His Word and in the Faith even unto our End,¹⁵** so that we may believe the Gospel with all our heart, live holy Christian lives, trust God to lead us as He sees best, and be faithful unto death, that we may receive the crown of life.

QUESTIONS.--1. What do we pray for in this petition? 2. What do we mean by God's will in this petition? 3. How do we pray that God's will may be done? 4. Why is the will of God good and gracious? 5. How is God's will done without our prayer? 6. When do we do God's will? 7. What three things do we pray God to do? 8. What three wills oppose the will of God? 9. What do the devil, the world, and our own flesh seek? 10. Why do we pray God to strengthen us? 11. When do we remain steadfast in God's Word and in the faith?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--I Tim. 2: 4. Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

I Thess. 4:3. For this is the will of God, even your sanctification.

Rom. 8:17. And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Gal. 5:17. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

Eph. 6:11,12. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

READING.--Jesus in Gethsemane, Matt. 26:36-44.

9 Luke 22:31.

10 II Cor. 2:11.

11 I John 2:15,16.

12 Gal. 5:17.†

13 Phil 2:13.

14 Eph. 6:11,12.†

15 Phil. 1:6. I Pet. 4:19.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE FOURTH PETITION

Give us this day our daily bread.

What is meant by this Petition?

God gives, indeed, without our prayer, even to the wicked also, their daily bread; but we pray in this petition that He would make us sensible of His benefits, and enable us to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is implied in the words “our daily bread”?

All things that pertain to the wants and the support of this present life; such as food, raiment, money, goods, house and land, and other property; a believing spouse and good children; trustworthy servants and faithful magistrates; favorable seasons, peace and health; education and honor; true friends, good neighbors, and the like.

In this Petition we acknowledge that every good gift comes from God;¹ and we pray that He would give us, day by day, those things which we need for our earthly support and comfort, and would make us content and thankful.

THE PETITION ITSELF

While we are to pray first and chiefly for spiritual blessings, the Saviour here teaches us that we may and should pray for temporal benefits also.

Give. By praying God to *give* us our daily bread, we acknowledge that it comes from Him.* He is the absolute owner of all things,² and divides to all men as He will. All that we have is His gift. He gives it as a blessing upon our labor; hence, we must work as well as pray.³ But without His blessing, our labor would be in vain.⁴ The farmer sows, but God gives the increase.

Us. We are taught to pray not only for ourselves, but for others also. We should be concerned that they too may have their daily bread; and, when necessary, we should give them a portion of what God has first given to us, and thus become the means through which He supplies their wants.⁵

This Day. We are not to pray for “much goods for many years,” but only for this one day's needful supply. When the morrow comes, if we are still alive, we are to pray

1 Jas. 1:17.

* Compare this Petition with the First Article of the Creed and its Explanation.

2 I Cor. 10:26.

3 II Thess. 3:10.

4 Ps. 127:1.

5 Heb. 13:16.

again.⁶ We are to depend upon God from day to day. We are, indeed, to make a proper provision for our future, but we are not to give way to anxious, unbelieving care about it.

Our. We ask for bread which we may call our own, bread honestly gotten, bread which God intends we shall have as a reward of our labor; not some one else's bread, and not such things as God, in His wisdom, sees fit to withhold from us.

Daily Bread. According to Luther's explanation in the Catechism, our daily bread includes

All Things which pertain to the Wants and the Support of this Present Life; such as:--

Food, raiment, to supply our bodily wants;

Money, Good, House and Land, and Other Property, by means of which we may procure the supply of our bodily wants;

A Believing Spouse and Good Children, that we may have a good Christian home;

Trustworthy Servants and Faithful Magistrates, that we may have the help and protection which we need for the enjoyment of our own;

Favorable Seasons, Peace and Health, Education and Honor, True Friends, Good Neighbors, and the like,--all those things which increase our earthly well-being and happiness.

While we pray in this petition that God would give us all the things enumerated above, *if He sees fit*, we should remember that He is still giving us our daily bread when He gives us only those things which we actually must have for the support of our life.⁷

WHY WE PRAY THUS

God gives indeed, without our Prayer, even to the Wicked⁸ also their Daily Bread; for God is good, and seeks to lead men to repentance by His goodness.⁹

But we pray in this Petition that He would make us Sensible of His Benefits, so that we may acknowledge them as His gifts,¹⁰ and not ascribe them to our own efforts or to chance, as the worldly and unbelieving do.

And enable us to receive our Daily Bread with Thanksgiving.¹¹ Since all the blessings we enjoy are God's gifts, bestowed without any worthiness on our part,¹² we pray that we may always receive them with thankful hearts, and express our gratitude with our lips and in our lives. We should give thanks at every meal, and in all our

6 Matt. 6:34.†

7 I Tim. 6:8.

8 Matt. 5:45.

9 Rom. 2:4.

10 Deut. 8:10.

11 Eph. 5:20.†

12 Gen. 32:10.

prayers.

Contentment. True thankfulness implies contentment with those gifts which God sees fit to bestow upon us.¹³ We must not murmur because he does not include in our daily bread some things which we desire to have; nor dare we permit the withholding of those things to prevent us from being truly thankful for the many benefits which God does bestow upon us.

QUESTIONS.--1. What do we acknowledge and for what do we pray in this petition? 2. Why do we pray God to “give”? 3. Why do we pray, “give *us*”? 4. Why do we pray “this day”? 5. Why do we say *our* daily bread? 6. What does daily bread include? 7. How much must God give us in order to answer this prayer for daily bread? 8. Why does God give, even to the wicked? 9. What should we bear in mind with respect to all our blessings? 10. How should we receive our daily bread? 11. How should we express our gratitude? 12. What is to be said about contentment?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--Matt. 6: 34. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Eph. 5:20. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Heb. 13:5. Let your conversation be without

covetousness: and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

I Tim. 6:6-8. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

READING.--The Feeding of the Five Thousand, John 6:1-13.

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¹³ Heb. 13:5.† I Tim. 6:6-8.†

CHAPTER XXIX

THE FIFTH PETITION

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us

What is meant by this Petition?

We pray in this petition that our heavenly Father would not regard our sins, nor deny us our requests on account of them; for we are not worthy of anything for which we pray, and have not merited it; but that He would grant us all things through grace, although we daily commit much sin and deserve chastisement alone. We will, therefore, on our part both heartily forgive and also readily do good to those who may injure or offend us.

In this Petition we acknowledge our sinfulness, pray for forgiveness, and promise to forgive our fellow-men.

The word “And” connects this petition very closely with the preceding one. The daily forgiveness of our sins is as necessary for our souls as our daily bread is for our bodies.

AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES

These words are at once a Confession of Sin, and a Prayer for Pardon.

1. *A Confession.* The praying of this Petition presupposes a penitent state of heart. If we are not truly penitent, this petition is a mockery on our lips. We have need to confess our guilt, because

We daily commit much sin.¹ If we are true Christians, we do not sin wilfully and intentionally. But with our best efforts, we still sin much through weakness,² not only by commission, but still more by omission. Not a day passes by, in which we do not transgress God's law by thoughts and words and deeds. We often do the wrong and omit doing the right without even knowing that we have done so.³

And deserve Chastisement (Punishment) alone. Our sins make us guilty and deserving of punishment, even though they be sins of weakness. We must not excuse or extenuate them. God never excuses any one. But if we penitently confess our sins, He will forgive us for Jesus' sake.⁴

2. *A Prayer for Pardon.* As in the fourth petition we daily pray “Give,” so in this fifth petition we daily pray “Forgive.” Since Jesus has taught us to pray thus, and we pray as God's children, this petition presupposes that we pray in faith. We pray as those who believe that God will be gracious and merciful to us for Jesus' sake.

1 I John 1:8.

2 Rom. 7:19.

3 Ps. 19:12.

4 Ps. 32:5.†

We pray in this Petition that our Heavenly Father would not regard our Sins,⁵ but would look upon the righteousness which Jesus has acquired for us “with His holy and precious blood and His innocent sufferings and death.”⁶

Nor deny us our Requests on account of them. If God should regard our sins, He would send only punishment upon us,⁷ and not give us any of those benefits for which we ask in our prayer.

For we are not Worthy of Anything for which we pray, and have not merited it. Nothing which we have done or are able to do can make amends for our sins, or earn any blessing from God.⁸ We therefore pray that **He would grant us all things through grace** alone for Jesus' sake.

AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US

3. *A Promise to Forgive our Fellow-men.* God's mercy to us must move us to be merciful to others.⁹ If it does not, God will withdraw His mercy from us,¹⁰ as the master withdrew his from the unmerciful servant in the parable.¹¹ Forgiving others is not a merit which entitles us to receive God's forgiveness. It follows as a result of God's mercy to us. Because God so mercifully forgives us for Jesus' sake, we promise that

We will, therefore, on our part, both heartily forgive and also readily do good to those who may injure or offend us. No matter how greatly others may have sinned against us, we have sinned much more against God. If He is willing to forgive us our great debt, we should be willing to forgive our fellow-men their lesser debt. If we refuse to forgive others, God will lay our own sins to our charge, and punish us.

QUESTIONS.--1. What three things do we do in this petition? 2. What is to be said about the close connection between this petition and the preceding one? 3. What does this petition presuppose? 4. Why do we need to confess our guilt to God? 5. Is sin ever excusable? 6. Why does this petition presuppose faith? 7. What do we pray God to do with our sins? 8. If God regarded our sins, how would He treat our requests? 9. Why do we promise to forgive others? 10. Why must we be willing to forgive them?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--Ps. 32:5. I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

Ps. 130:3. If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

Matt. 6:14,15. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Luke 15:18,19. I will arise and go to my father,

5 Ps. 25:7. Ps. 51:9.

6 I John 1:7.

7 Ps. 130:3.† Ps. 143:2.

8 Dan. 9:18. Luke 15:18,19.†

9 Eph. 4:32.

10 Matt. 6:14,15.†

11 Matt. 18:32-35.

READING.--The Unmerciful Servant, Matt. 18:23-35.

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QUESTIONS.--1. What three things do we do in this petition? 2. What is to be said about the close connection between this petition and the preceding one? 3. What does this petition presuppose? 4. Why do we need to confess our guilt to God? 5. Is sin ever excusable? 6. Why does this petition presuppose faith? 7. What do we pray God to do with our sins? 8. If God regarded our sins, how would He treat our requests? 9. Why do we promise to forgive others? 10. Why must we be willing to forgive them?

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READING.--The Unmerciful Servant, Matt. 18:23-35.

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CHAPTER XXX

THE SIXTH PETITION

And lead us not into temptation.

What is meant by this Petition?

God, indeed, tempts no one to sin; but we pray in this petition that God would so guard and preserve us, that the devil, the world and our own flesh may not deceive us, nor lead us into error and unbelief, despair, and other great and shameful sins; and that, though we may be thus tempted, we may nevertheless finally prevail and gain the victory.

As children of God we must not only seek forgiveness for past sins, but be anxious to avoid sin in the future. We therefore pray that, as far as is possible according to His gracious will, God would keep us from being tempted, and would give us strength to overcome when we are tempted.

If we are in earnest in praying this Petition, we will not *run* into temptation ourselves,¹ nor lead others into it.

HOW WE ARE TEMPTED

God indeed tempts No One to Sin: for He wishes us to do good, and not evil. But He leads us into circumstances in which we are *tried*, and must decide for or against Him, for good or for evil. This is the sense in which the Bible speaks of God as tempting persons.² He tries or tests us. Remembering that we are weak, we pray in this petition that God would spare us such trials as much as is possible according to His will, and strengthen us in them, that we may be faithful.

The Devil, the World, and our own Flesh tempt us to Sin. These are the great enemies of our souls, who will lead us to destruction if we do not earnestly resist them and repel their temptations.

WHAT WE PRAY

1. *That we may not be Deceived or Misled by these Enemies.*

We pray in this Petition that God would so guard and preserve us, that

The Devil, who puts evil thoughts into our hearts,³

The World (wicked persons in the world),⁴ which tempts us by example, allurements, and threats,

1 Matt. 4:7.

2 Gen. 22:1.

3 Gen. 3:4,5. II Cor. 11:3.

4 Prov. 1:10.† John 15:18.

And our own Flesh (our natural heart),⁵ which inclines and urges us to sin,

May not deceive us, by promising us happiness in the paths of sin, while in reality such paths lead only to misery and destruction.⁶

Nor lead us into error and unbelief, and thus into ruin, since our salvation depends on believing the truth as it is in Jesus; nor into

Despair; because we are lost if we despair of God's mercy, instead of believing His precious promises in Christ;

And other great and shameful sins, in addition to the error, unbelief, and despair mentioned above.

2. That we may Overcome these Enemies and be saved.

And that though we may be thus tempted, we may nevertheless finally prevail, and gain the victory. The struggle against these enemies is a warfare (the good fight of faith)⁷ which lasts to the end of our days. We dare never think that we are safe without further watchfulness, effort, and prayer.⁸ If we sometimes fall, we must not despair nor give up, but repent and determine to do better. If we earnestly pray for God's help, arm ourselves with His Word, and beware of false security, we shall be enabled to overcome these foes more and more each day.⁹ And when, at last, our end approaches and the warfare is over, God will give us the victory, and bestow upon us for Jesus' sake the crown of life.¹⁰

QUESTIONS.--1. Why do we pray this petition? 2. What do we mean by it? 3. If we are in earnest in praying it, what will we not do? 4. In what sense does God tempt? 5. Who tempts us to sin? 6. What do we pray against these enemies? 7. How does the devil tempt us? the world? our own flesh? 8. How do they try to deceive us? 9. Into what do they try to mislead us? 10. How long must we fight against these enemies? 11. If we fall, what should we do? 12. How may we overcome these foes? 13. When only shall we be completely victorious over them?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--Prov. 1: 10. My son, the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. that find it.

Rom. 8:7. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. I Tim. 6:12. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Matt. 7:13,14. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is I Cor. 10:12. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

READING.--Peter denying the Lord, Luke 22:54-62; or, The Temptation of Jesus, Matt. 4:1-11.

5 Rom. 8:7.†

6 Matt. 7:13,14.†

7 I Tim. 6:12.†

8 I Cor. 10:12.†

9 I Cor. 10:13.

10 Jas. 4:7. II Tim. 4:7,8.

CHAPTER XXXI

THE SEVENTH PETITION

But deliver us from evil.

What is meant by this Petition?

We pray in this petition, as in a summary, that our heavenly Father would deliver us from all manner of evil, whether it affect the body or the soul, property or character, and at last, when the hour of death shall arrive grant us a happy end, and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to Himself in heaven.

As in the sixth Petition we pray to be preserved from sinning, so in this seventh Petition we pray to be delivered from all the evil which has come upon our race as a consequence of sin.* But this petition comes last, because we should be more anxious to be delivered from the sin itself, than from the evil results which follow upon it.

We Pray in this Petition as in a Summary. All the petitions which precede it are included in this last one.

That our Heavenly Father would Deliver us from all Manner of Evil:--

I. IN THIS WORLD

Whether it affect the Body,--sickness, pain, hunger, thirst, destitution,

Or the Soul,--sin, impenitence, unbelief, sorrow, anxiety, care, despondency, insanity, and the like,

Property,--poverty, want, famine, fire, flood, wars, riots, etc.,

Or Character,--disgrace, slander, and the like.

How we pray for this Deliverance. God wills that we should sometimes suffer affliction, in order that our repentance and faith may be increased.¹ Consequently, our prayer for deliverance from evil in this world is a prayer: 1. That, whenever it is possible according to His will, God would ward off affliction from us. 2. That He would give us grace to bear patiently those afflictions which He sends,² and would make them a blessing in disguise for us. 3. That in His own time He would remove from us whatever distresses us.³

We should not grow discouraged or despondent under affliction, but trust in God's mercy and bear our cross cheerfully.⁴ And we should see to it that we do not, by our own

* There is a very close connection between the last two petitions, marked by the word "But."
"Temptation will not cease until deliverance from evil [and from the evil one] has come; and again, when deliverance from evil has come, temptation will cease to assail us."--*Luehrs*.

1 Isa. 48:10. † Rev. 3:19. † II Cor. 4:17,18.

2 II Cor. 12:9. † Rom. 8:28.

3 I Sam. 2:6,7.

4 Matt. 10:38.

sin and folly, bring upon ourselves evils which might have been avoided.

II. IN THE NEXT WORLD

In this world we shall have to endure some evils as long as we live.⁵ But if we are faithful, God will not only overrule them all for our good,⁶ but will finally, at death, deliver us from all evil.⁷

And at last, when the Hour of Death shall arrive, grant us a Happy End. An unhappy death is the worst of all evils. But a happy death will more than compensate for all the evils endured in this world.⁸ A happy death will be ours, if we persevere in the faith and die in Christ.⁹ For then God will pardon all our sins for Jesus' sake,

And graciously take us from this World of Sorrow to Himself in Heaven.¹⁰ There all evils shall cease for ever.¹¹ For sin, and all that follows upon sin, shall be no more. In this entrance into heaven at last, all our highest hopes and prayers shall find their complete and eternal fulfillment.

QUESTIONS.--1. What do we pray for in this petition? 2. What connection exists between the sixth and seventh petition? 3. Why is this petition called a summary? 4. From what kind of evils do we suffer in this world? 5. How do we pray for deliverance from evil in this world? 6. When shall we be completely delivered from all evil? 7. What is to be said about a happy end? 8. Why shall we suffer from no evil in heaven?

SCRIPTURE VERSES.--Isa. 48: 10. Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.

Rev. 3:19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

II Cor. 12:9. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Rom. 8:18. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared

Rev. 14:13. Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

Rev. 21:4. These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

READING.--The Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31.

5 John 16:33.

6 Gen. 50:26.

7 II Tim. 4:18.

8 Rom. 8:18.†

9 Rev. 14:13.†

10 Rev. 7:14, 15.

11 Rev. 21:4.†

CHAPTER XXXII

THE CONCLUSION

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

What is meant by the word "Amen"?

That I should be assured that such petitions are acceptable to our heavenly Father, and are heard by Him; for He Himself has commanded us to pray in this manner, and has promised that He will hear us. Amen, amen, that is, yea, yea, it shall be so.

In this Conclusion we give the reason why we address our prayer to our heavenly Father, and why we expect to be heard. It contains a Doxology, and an Amen.

THE DOXOLOGY

For Thine is the Kingdom: Thou art King and Lord of all;¹ from Thee all gifts must come.²

And the Power: with Thee nothing is impossible;³ Thou art able to do abundantly above all that we ask or think.⁴

And the Glory: Thou art God alone,⁵ infinite in holiness, power, and love; to Thy name alone be all praise.⁶

For ever and ever. The kingdoms of earth and their glory pass away; but Thy kingdom and power and glory endure for evermore.⁷

THE AMEN

Amen means Verily. By adding it to our prayer we express our assurance,

That such Petitions are Acceptable to our Heavenly Father and are heard by Him. The petitions for temporal and spiritual blessings which we here bring before Him are the very ones which He desires us to present.⁸

For He Himself has taught us to pray in this Manner, and to ask for these things,

And has promised that He will hear us.⁹ The promise is, that whatsoever we ask in

1 I Tim. 1:17.

2 Jas. 1:17.

3 Luke 1:37.

4 Eph. 3:20.

5 Isa. 46:4.

6 Ps. 115:1.

7 Dan. 4:3. Ps. 145:11-13.†

8 I John 5:14.

9 II Cor. 1:20.

Christ's name shall be given to us.¹⁰ Hence we add at the end of our prayer: Amen, that is, it shall be so; God will answer our prayer.¹¹

QUESTIONS.--1. Why do we add the conclusion to the Lord's Prayer? 2. What two parts does the conclusion contain? 3. What do we mean by saying, "Thine is the kingdom? the power? the glory? Forever? 4. What does Amen mean? 5. Why do we add it to our prayer? 6. Why are we sure that these petitions are acceptable to our heavenly Father? 7. What promise have we with respect to our prayers?

SCRIPTURE VERSE.--Ps. 145:13. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.

READING.--Asking and Receiving, Luke 11:5-13.