

# Thoughts on the Lord's Prayer

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I propose to examine the Lord's prayer as briefly as is consistent with a plain perspicuous exposition: first, looking at it as it is given in its most comprehensive form in the Gospel of St. Matthew; next, comparing the form which St. Luke presents; and, in the third place, seeking, as far as the Lord enables me, to gather His design, touching its use, whether at the time it was given, or afterwards.

1. — The first thing I desire to point out is the accordance of the Lord's prayer with the place it holds in the first Gospel, and with the object the Lord Jesus had then in view. It occurs in the sermon on the Mount, where He is addressing Jewish disciples, and leading them out of their previous thoughts and feelings and ways into the new principles of the kingdom of heaven, which He was about to introduce. This is important to remember for understanding either the meaning or the object of the prayer. It does not contemplate, as it was not addressed to, the whole human race indiscriminately; it does not express the state, wants, and feelings of every person who has certain desires after God or a fear of coming wrath. Thus, when the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast, realizing his sin and unworthiness, he does not venture to say, "Father," or "Our Father, which art in heaven." He has no thought of taking up the profound and lofty petitions with which the Lord's prayer opens, nor has he leisure of heart to think of the full supplies and the tender mercy counted on in God, which the latter portion breathes. "God be merciful to me a sinner" was the just and becoming cry from his contrite heart. Here was a man under the guidance of the Spirit of God, contrasted by our Lord Himself, not with disciples of course, but with the Pharisee who trusted in himself that he was righteous and despised others, whose prayer, if prayer it is to be called, betrayed his self-gratulation, and whose thanks were not for what God, but for what *he*, the Pharisee, was. The publican, on the other hand, might be dark as to the riches of divine grace; but at least, so far as his conscience was enlightened, he really felt and owned his condition as a sinner before God. "He who is mighty despiseth not any;" and the publican went down to his house justified rather than the other. At the same time, it is not to despise a man if we call his attention to the actual condition of his soul, and remind him that the Lord's prayer supposes discipleship and the relationship of children with a Father. Sincerity can never change wrong into right, and ignorance, though less guilty than the conscious utterance of language which goes beyond our state and experience, is a sorry excuse before the full blaze of God's revealed light in His word.

If asked how we are to know for whom the Lord's prayer was meant, I would answer that there are two ways of ascertaining, which, if rightly applied, lead to a right conclusion. First, we have to observe whom the Lord had in view in the prayer or the context in which it occurs; and, next, we must consider the nature of the petitions, separately and as a whole, which, if duly appreciated, will be found in harmony with the true wants of those for whom the prayer was designed.

Now, it is obvious that, when the sermon on the Mount was pronounced, there was an immense crowd listening, but it was not directly addressed to them. They heard the Lord, and were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. Wherever confidence in man usurps the place of the truth, uncertainty before God is the never-failing result; and hence the craving after tradition, official and successional authority, and such-like props of conscious weakness. This was the case with these scribes in a very large degree. Their employment even of scripture had no power in it, neither flowing from nor producing simple happy-hearted confidence in God. They were a

class who handed down a measure of scriptural knowledge, crusted over with a coating of tradition which often obscured and perverted even what was true in itself. Such is the inevitable effect of tradition: it always brings in foreign ingredients, which so mix themselves up with truth as to put a blind between the soul and God. The Spirit of God, on the contrary, uses the word to detect and expel all hindrances, and thus to place the soul without disguise in the presence of God, there to learn *His* thoughts. And if what God thinks of me as a poor convicted sinner crushes me, what He reveals of His own perfect love towards me calls me from the dust, sets me firmly on my feet and bids me fear not. It is so now where the Holy Spirit works in any power by the vessels whom He deigns to use; how much more when Jehovah-Jesus was there! "For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."

In that discourse, then, the Lord had His own disciples immediately before Him. For their wants, as having been Jews, and not yet taken from under the law, He was providing. "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, *his disciples* came unto him; and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit," etc. The disciples were a class, who (excepting Judas, or any other special case of the kind, if such there were) had truly received Jesus as the Messiah by the Spirit of God. They had not chosen Him, but He had chosen them that they should go and bring forth fruit, and that their fruit should remain. They were gathered around Him as His witnesses, and separated from the rest of the nation even now in a measure (*i.e.*, in faith and affection to His person), soon to be so far more fully by His death and resurrection and in the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. These were the persons to whom the Lord addressed Himself in the sermon, and of whom He thought in His prayer.

Hence, while the discourse consists of an admirable exposition of the principles of the kingdom, and announces great and precious truths of God which must ever abide, the actual circumstances of the disciples were not overlooked by their gracious Master. On the contrary, the proper application and only full meaning of many parts in detail are found in their necessities, and adapted to their condition. And most blessedly He did provide for them, as One who, though a divine person, was made of a woman, made under the law, and thus by experience, and not omniscience only, knew what they lacked most and where their real dangers lay. "For though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." For Him obedience was indeed a new thing, assuredly not because He had a rebellious nature as we have (for He was God, as well as with God, and even as born of the Virgin He was "that holy thing"), but because from everlasting He was the Word who had spoken into being all things, all creatures, heavenly and earthly, visible and invisible. Therefore had He to *learn* obedience, and learn it He did, in a pathway of such suffering as none but He could know. What, then, was His first, last, and constant thought as He walked and served in perfect grace here below? It was His Father's name: as He says elsewhere, "the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father." Viewed as man, it was the power of His communion, as it was the aim of His work. And it is as the One who was thus familiar with the Father, whose heart was ever overflowing with the sense of His glory, that He puts forward His own heart's feeling as the first and prominent thought for His disciples in their intercourse with God. Some of the petitions He was about to put in their mouths were only suitable for them (*e.g.*, that about the forgiveness of their debts or sins); but He would have them begin with their Father, not with themselves.

Accordingly, viewed in its structure, the prayer naturally divides into two sections. The first portion is made up of the desires proper to righteousness in the largest and highest sense — the atmosphere, I think I may say, in which our Lord Himself lived and moved here below. The second part is composed rather of supplications suited to those who were needy in every way, but withal the

objects of grace.\* The three first petitions form one division, and the last four the other.

\* The old and common assertion that the Lord borrowed most of His prayer from existing forms is now confessed by competent authorities to have very slender proof. Lightfoot and others, to have a show of making out the case, have been forced as much to exalt these Rabbinical relics as to depreciate the Lord's incomparable prayer. I cannot but feel that such an hypothesis is as irreverent as it is unfounded.

The very opening title or address to God appears to me in beautiful keeping with the Gospel and the then position of the disciples: "Our Father which art in heaven." It is a phrase which constantly occurs in Matthew's Gospel and there only. It is true that the authorized Bible has in it the corresponding passage of St. Luke (Luke 11: 2); but it is known to every person of competent acquaintance with these matters, that there are weighty reasons for reducing the clause there to the single word "Father." My own conviction is that the larger form which appears in the common text of Luke was borrowed from Matthew, and this probably either through the mistake of some ancient copyist who trusted to his memory, and thus introduced confusion, or through the graver fault of designedly making as exact a harmony as possible in the language of the two evangelists. It is unnatural to suppose that, if an open enemy tampered with the sacred text, his corruption would gain currency in Christendom. On the other hand, no friend of revelation could possibly justify to himself the deliberate introduction of a discrepancy with another Gospel. The tendency, therefore, and more particularly in the Gospels, has always been, on the part of misguided professing friends, to interpolate words or clauses from one into another, so as to give not only concurrent testimony but as much as might be of verbal resemblance. I need hardly say that it is grievous and presumptuous thus to meddle with a word or letter of that which the Holy Ghost has inspired; that such a step, even if well meant, invariably spoils, so far, the beauty and perfection of scripture, though of course the substantial truth remains; and that they are the truest friends of the Bible who seek to go back to the earliest and purest sources, relying on the abundant evidence which the goodness of God affords in order to arrive at a just decision.

Assuming that this difference is well founded, what does it teach us? or why, we may reverently ask, is it thus written? In Matthew, I think, the disciples are regarded according to their connection with God's ancient people Israel, accustomed therefore to look on or hope for the earth as the sphere of their exaltation as a nation. Here the Lord is gradually breaking their merely Jewish links by the revelation of a Father in heaven with whom they would have to do. It is not now "the Lord of all the earth" causing the Jordan to be not a barrier but a highway for His conquering people to pass over and take possession of the land. Neither is it "the God of heaven" conferring imperial power, in His sovereign will, on a heathen when His people had utterly, shamefully, sinned away, for a season at least, their heritage. But, again, it is no such fulness of blessing as was conveyed in our risen Lord's message to the disciples through Mary Magdalene: "Go to my brethren, and say to them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."

The address, in Matthew, wears to my mind an intermediate or transitional character. It supposed certain elements in the ancient oracles which Israel had; but there was an accession of light in accordance with the state of disciples, who were associated with a Messiah whom the people did not receive, and who were thus in process of weaning from their former prejudices and of training for yet higher privileges. "The heaven, even the heavens, are Jehovah's; but the earth hath he given unto the children of men." "Like as a father pitieth his children, so Jehovah pitieth them that fear him." These sentiments from the Psalms, or sentiments akin springing from the Lord's divine wisdom, seem to me the basis of the address, though there is (naturally, when we think Who the speaker was) that degree of

progress in it which exactly met and reflected the due place of the disciples at that time. The Father is regarded as in heaven, and those who look up to Him were on earth,\* far from Him as it were, and in circumstances of weakness, want, and danger, though with hearts in a measure yearning for His glory. The Lord, in the address, would fix their first thought on the Father above, would familiarize their spirits with looking up to Him as infinitely blessed and benignant as well as most high. There was not, nor could be at that time, the sense of nearness which was afterwards their privilege: nevertheless, the Lord Jesus assumes them to be real believers from among the Jews, and, while maintaining the authority of the law and enlarging its scope, leads on their souls to higher things.

\* How different is the measure of blessedness conveyed by the phrase in St. Matthew, from what we find in Eph. 1: 3, Eph. 2: 6! In these last scriptures the Christian, even while in this world, is regarded as at home with the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, seated together in Christ in heavenly places. It is an immense step forward.

But there is not an allusion to redemption in the prayer, nor indeed throughout the whole of the sermon on the Mount. Those who are taught to pray are in no way regarded as worshippers once purged, having no more conscience of sins: indeed, far from having and enjoying such a place, they would scarcely, I think, have understood then what such language meant. There is no thanksgiving to the Father "who *hath* made us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light, who *hath* delivered us from the power of darkness, and *hath* translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." All this and more could not be so said; because the work of redemption was still a promise merely and not accomplished. This gives its tinge to the whole prayer; for there is no haste in the ways of God, nor would He so far slight the suffering of His Son, nor the mission of His Spirit, as to anticipate in the experience of the saints the precious results which were to follow from these two glorious facts when once they had come to pass. God forbid that I should insinuate any thing imperfect as to the Lord's prayer or His sermon! For any one to speak disparagingly of either would be, in my judgment, blasphemy.

The Lord takes up the disciples where they were. If He had uttered the as yet undeveloped truth which was revealed when redemption was wrought and the Holy Ghost thereon given, His language would have been unintelligible to the disciples. If anything had exceeded what was suitable to their then state, if the standing, experience, or worship proper to accomplished redemption had been supposed, it would not have been the perfect prayer it was for them.

Take the instance of a person in prison. A petition is framed on his behalf to the sovereign. If the documents were rightly drawn up, two things at least would characterize it; a full owning of the majesty offended against, and a humble but thorough acknowledgment of the prisoner's guilt. Such would be the only language becoming one under such painful circumstances. He might have such grounds to hope that the petition would find favour in his sovereign's eyes and that its prayer would be granted. This would not be by ignoring the actual circumstances of the case, but rather by a frank confession: to adopt the tone of a freeman would be false ground.

Now, the condition of those under the law was, in the main, analogous to this, till redemption, when accomplished, changed all. Confidence in God that He would save they had, and it was right; for it rested upon a believing estimate of God's character, and upon His positive promises, spite of what they knew themselves to be. He had announced over and over again, by word and oath, in type and prophecy, that He would, through the Messiah, accomplish the deliverance of all who trusted in Him. Still, they were not yet set free, however certainly they were to be, because this depended on His faithful goodness and truth; and "God is not a man that he should lie." But as yet it was a thing desired,

not possessed — a privilege longed and prayed for, but not bestowed and enjoyed as a constant settled portion, till the death and resurrection of Christ made it to be God's righteousness so to deal with the believer.

This consideration, by the way, explains much in the Psalms, and in particular the alternations of conflict found there. Sometimes the speakers are hoping, sometimes fearing; one moment confessing themselves the sheep of God's pasture, and the next moment afraid of being consumed in His hot displeasure. All this was the experience of the saints, before the cross of Christ made it possible for the Holy Ghost to bear witness to the soul of a complete and eternal putting away of sins. It was well and of God that they should feel their state, without presuming to run before the dealings of God, and thus it was with the disciples also. Many prophets and kings had desired to see what they saw and to hear what they heard; but redemption, with all its fruitful issues, was still a blessing in prospect only. And the Lord's prayer was the perfect expression of their desires and wants before that mighty change came in as a fact. It is essential, I believe, to an adequate understanding of the prayer, that we should realize the position of those to whom primarily it was given; and it will always be misapplied, if we do not appreciate the new ground on which accomplished redemption sets the faithful.

It is well to observe also that the prayer is the expression of individual wants. I do not mean that the disciples may not have used it together as well as singly, but it nowhere supposes the Christians formed into one body. A prayer for the Church, therefore, as such, it is not; for it never passes beyond an aggregate of individuals, irrespective of the uniting bond of the Spirit who baptizes into one body. But this may appear more distinctly as we look briefly at its several parts.

"Hallowed be thy name" is the great foundation of all, the first and strongest feeling of a renewed mind. Flowing from the sense of the holiness due to the Father's name, and obligatory on every soul that has to do with Him, as well as on His house for ever, there is also in the following clause the desire of the glory in which all shall answer to the Father's heart and character.

"Thy kingdom come." It is not exactly Christ's kingdom, but the Father's. The Gospel of St. Matthew, if examined with care, shows the Father's kingdom is distinguished in scripture from that of the Son of man. Thus, in Matthew 13: 41-43, we are told that the Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of *His kingdom* all scandals, and them which do iniquity . . . then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of *their Father*. At the end of this age the Lord will take the world as His kingdom, and must have evil purged from it, sooner or later, by His judicial power. But the Father's kingdom is another and heavenly sphere where only the righteous shine.

But it does not satisfy the heart that the Father's will should be done in heaven only. Accordingly, the third petition runs: "Thy will be done on earth as in heaven." When the Father's kingdom comes, this will be the moral answer to it, if I may so say, though in a lower sphere. The Father's will, instead of being despised or resisted, is yet to be the guide and ensurer of all blessing in that which was still but a rebellious province. The disciples were to pray that it might be done on earth, where there was nothing like it yet, save in His ways who thus led their desires Godward. This closes the first division of the Lord's prayer.

Next, comes what was suited to the disciples, as the objects of divine compassion, in circumstances of sorrow and trial here below. First, their bodily need is confessed, then that of the soul. "Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive"\* the first calling for no comment here (but see Appendix B, on the word "daily"); the last being put on the ground or pattern of the merciful spirit which had been so strongly inculcated on the disciples at the close of the chapter before. It was no longer to be "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," no longer evil for evil, but

good only, good always. The model for their imitation was their heavenly Father, and not merely God as God. As the latter, as God, He has vindicated Himself from time to time, and He shall yet deal most righteously with all that demands judgment in man. As Father in heaven, He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust, not to speak of His intimate and everlasting relations with His children, who enjoy the overflow of all His love. So here the Lord teaches His disciples (not as a question of remission as sinners, but of divine government as children) to say, "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." That is, we have this principle of forgiving mercy to others not only enjoined on the disciples as the will of the Lord, but solemnly interwoven with their own habitual need of it when they lifted up their hearts to their Father. The application and value of this to such as had been Jews must have been manifest; because as a nation they were responsible to walk according to the law, the character of which was not mercy in case of wrong, but the infliction of just punishment on the guilty. Thus it was that Israel of old was employed to purge the land of Canaan of its defiled and defiling inhabitants. And therefore it was that they themselves, when they and their kings thoroughly apostatized from God, fell under its terrible lash. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities." But now another principle was about to govern — not earthly retributive righteousness, but heavenly grace, which has power to transform as well as forgive the guilty. The Jews who believed were to be taken out of their previous standing and set in a new place as children, having to do with their Father in heaven, and responsible to reflect His character on earth.

\* There is very good authority, Greek and Latin, for "forgave." The aorist here, if well founded, certainly makes the sense more specific. Our forgiving is viewed as summed up in one and complete. Its spirit agrees well with Matthew 5: 23, 24, of which it is the converse.

Again, we do well to remember who they were that the Lord instructs thus to plead with their Father. They were *disciples*, who were thereby shown the continual necessity of dependence upon Him and of confession. Nevertheless, it is the Father besought to forgive the debts of His children, not a poor sinner in an agony about his iniquity and without the knowledge of Christ. Scripture provides for such an one elsewhere but it is not the question here; and if the Lord's prayer were applied to, or appropriated by, an unrenewed soul as the prescribed means of blessing for his case, a real injury would be done. Does God make the forgiveness of an unconverted man depend, in any sort or degree, upon his forgiveness of others? By no means. *That* were to ask a very high practical requirement from a person in the lowest possible condition; it were to impose a new law more fatal to the sinner's hopes than that of Sinai: in a word, it would ruin and deny the gospel, which in that case would be of works, and no more grace.

Thus, this very petition, which ignorance would cite to prove that men indiscriminately were provided for here, is enough to show the utter inapplicability of the Lord's prayer to their condition. It supposes a living link with God by faith, and proves that the nature of the petitions is an additional ground for affirming that the prayer was not meant for men in their natural unrenewed state. Those whom the Lord was instructing how to pray were persons ignorant, it is true, of redemption and of the new rights its accomplishment would usher into, but possessed of real faith in the Lord Jesus — persons who would assuredly have gone to heaven, had they died then. They were, so far, on the same footing with the Old Testament saints; they were all alike forborne with by virtue of a work not yet accomplished but sure; they were safe in God's mind, because He was looking on to that work. The disciples had the privilege of the Saviour present with them; but the rich, blessed, perfect salvation which He was to bring in by His death and resurrection was still vague and dimly understood, if at all. In and for this condition of things the Lord's prayer was given.

Then they were to ask their Father not to lead them into temptation, which cannot therefore mean sin here. With temptation in the sense of lustful evil, as St. James says, God tempteth not any man, as He, of course, cannot be Himself. But scripture uses the word in the same chapter and in other places, from Genesis to Revelation, for a man's trial and sifting in a greater or a less degree.

Take Peter's case in the Gospels. It was no sin that he should be put to the proof, whether he would in the face of shame confess his Master. The Lord had already warned him of his weakness; but the too confident apostle heeded not the word, slept when he should have been praying against the temptation, and consequently, when it came, he fell — fell miserably, repeatedly. It was quite right, therefore, for the disciples, conscious of their own powerlessness, to ask that they might not be led into circumstances so sorely trying. Knowing their liability to fail under its pressure, they ought humbly and earnestly to deprecate such a sifting. No such prayer is or could be in the Bible as, Lead us not into sin; for this would be to impute moral evil to God. The temptation here was the putting a person thoroughly to the proof, and the consequence of it would be that, if there were unjudged evil in the heart, it would come out to his humiliation. The undetected mischief working within would be brought to the surface and the light. The Lord Jesus Himself passed through every kind of temptation, first in the wilderness, and again, at the close, in the garden of Gethsemane, when the power of darkness assailed Him to the uttermost. But *He* had nothing in Him that could be touched by Satan, as He said, "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." In us there is something that is brought out by the temptation, and then, if we do not lean very simply on the Lord, we break down in sin against Him.

Therefore it is added in the next and last clause, "but deliver us from evil [or the evil one];" because the effect of temptation, where the flesh is not judged, is that evil is manifested, and he who is its source and prime mover acquires advantage over the soul.

I do not enter into the doxology which concludes the prayer in the received text of St. Matthew; for while everybody agrees in leaving it out of St. Luke, it is well known that its authority, even in the other Gospel, is, to say the least, doubtful. Probably it was an accretion derived from ecclesiastical usage in the fourth century, or perhaps earlier. Chrysostom comments on the doxology without a note of distrust; but previously to him not a trace of it appears in any exposition or citation, in either the East or the West. It would appear that the prayer began to be, or at least was, spoken of in the third century as "oratio legitima et ordinaria." But this seems scarcely to have been the case in the days of Justin Martyr,\* who speaks of the ruler offering up prayer and thanksgiving ὄση δύναμις αὐτῷ (that is, I presume, extempore). But I trust I have shown that which we started with — the special suitability of the prayer to the class with which our Lord was thus dealing. I do not go farther now; for the question of His will, as regards later times, must be inquired into before I have done. But it is well to bear in mind, that, everlastingly true as is every word which our Lord spoke, we have to take care that all be rightly divided and applied. I yield to none in reverent admiration of the most sublime and the most pregnant form of prayer ever written. The question nevertheless remains, not of its intrinsic value, but of its due and intended use after redemption and the descent of the Holy Ghost.

\* Pro Christianis Apol. I. § 67, p. 270, Ed. Otto, 1842.

2. — We must now turn for a few moments to St. Luke's report of the prayer, which differs in several respects from St. Matthew's, though both I hold to be of equal (*i.e.* divine) authority, and the points of distinction therefore to be not the slips of the evangelists, but the result of a different object in the mind of Him who inspired them. Difference there is unquestionably even in our common and excellent English version; but that difference is considerably greater if we adopt the text which flows

from the combined testimony of the most ancient and best witnesses (manuscripts, versions, and Fathers). It is notorious that there has always been a tendency on the part of copyists to assimilate the language of the various portions of scripture as much as possible; and clearly from their nature we might expect, as we find in fact, that no part has suffered so much in this way as the synoptic Gospels. These copyists seem sometimes to have assumed that, if they found the same truth or fact variously represented in Matthew and Luke, there must needs be an error: and then they sought, by marginal glasses and even by textual changes, to make the corresponding passages almost a verbal repetition of one another. This of course has entailed trouble on those of our day who desire in all cases to know the very words of the Holy Ghost; for if they, resting on the weightiest authorities, recur to a better text than the vulgar one, they are open to the charge of innovation — at least from the ignorant or the prejudiced. Most groundless charge! for they are in truth those who alone vindicate the oldest vouchers for the word of God against comparatively modern change and corruption.

To return, however: the place or connection in which the prayer is given in the two Gospels may be noticed with profit. In Matthew the Lord speaks as Jehovah-Messiah, not neutralizing the statutes of His servant Moses, but with the conscious authority of the Master. And hence, I think, it is that whether or not the questions of the disciples drew out any part of that instruction, nothing is permitted in the first Gospel to break the onward continuous flow of its sententious wisdom and lofty discourse. Hence such notes appear as "ye have heard that it was said to [not 'by'] them of old time . . . but I say unto you," not annulling the law or the prophets, but giving fresh heavenly light on some things, and opening the way for other things far higher. Hence, too, the prayer is introduced by St. Matthew in pointed contrast with Jewish or Pharisaic love of publicity and lack of pitifulness. It is one of the three examples of the righteousness (not 'alms') in Matthew 6: 1, which was not to be done before men to be seen of them.

By Luke, on the other hand, the Lord meets the condition of *man* here below — if there was any difference, of the Gentile more emphatically than the Jew. Therefore it is that here only we have the scene of the woman of the city that was a sinner (whom there is no good reason for identifying with Mary Magdalene or with the sister of Lazarus), the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, the rich man and Lazarus, the preaching at Nazareth, the Samaritan leper, Zacchaeus the chief publican, etc. Facts and parables like these plainly indicated the affections of God about to burst the barriers they had been pent up in under the Jewish dispensation, and soon to overflow wherever there was need created by sin and wretchedness. At the end of Luke 10 the Lord shows us the all-importance of the word of God — of His own words indeed. This had tested the two sisters, Martha and Mary, both of whom we know He loved. (John 11) While Martha was cumbered about much serving, and *her* love, most true in its way, went forth in actively providing for the Lord's outward need, Mary, unconsciously perhaps, proved her stronger faith and deeper love by sitting at His feet and drinking in His words. The thought of Martha's heart was, What a feast I must give the Messiah when I receive Him at my house! Mary, on the contrary, felt that the best feast for Him, as for herself, was to receive and treasure up all she could from Him — to see, and hear, and be with, *Himself*. If we are learning thus from the Lord Jesus, we honour and please Him incomparably more than by any thing we think to confer upon Him. In the long run, too, it is the listening at His feet which best fits for the most acceptable worship and service. (Compare John 12: 1-8.)

But, besides the word of God, we want another element and exercise of spiritual life. By that word we were begotten again, and then nourished (1 Peter 1, 2): by it we are cleansed and instructed, kept from the paths of the destroyer, and set apart to Christ in heaven. But withal we need something more, and this is prayer. Without prayer the word, not being received in dependence on God, may be

used as new material for mere mental activity, and thus the soul may find a positive and grave snare. Really to thrive in the things of God is from hearing the word, not with the ears or mind only, but with a conscience quickened and freed by the Holy Ghost's presentation of Christ. Now prayer is the great means by which we are practically kept in God's presence, and the word is made welcome, profitable, and sanctifying. It is the proper expression of our weakness to God and of our confidence in His love and care day by day and evermore. Instead of presuming, as men, to enter into the deep things of God, or to take and pursue the path of the cross of Christ, we confess in prayer our constant need of dependence upon God. And hence it is that throughout Luke the Lord Himself; "born of a woman," is so often brought before us as One that habitually walked thus with God. (Luke 3: 21; Luke 5: 16; Luke 6: 12; Luke 9: 18, 28, 29; Luke 22: 41-45; Luke 23: 34. See also His exhortations there to perseverance in prayer — Luke 11: 5-13, and Luke 18: 1-8 — besides the following parable.) It was indeed His own praying which gave occasion to the request of the disciples in Luke 11.

In comparing the prayer in Luke with that in Matthew, it will be observed that, though the manner of its introduction be somewhat different, the application to the disciples is, if possible, more precise in the latter Gospel. "And it came to pass, that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, *one of his disciples* said unto him, Lord, teach *us* to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Father." It has been already noticed that the formula, "Our Father which art in heaven," was in all probability an interpolation from St. Matthew. A scribe, from habit of using the longer address, may have written it down by mistake in Luke's Gospel, or he may have designedly assimilated the two reports of the prayer.

"Father, Hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come." These two petitions are alike in both Gospels. It did not matter under what circumstances the Lord spoke, or with what special aim or outlook. That the Father should be exalted in His holiness, and that the bright scene and season may come when His love and power shall establish it without dispute or effort, must always be the prime desire of a true heart, and the necessary condition of unalloyed and changeless blessing.

But it is remarkable that the next clause in the ordinary text was foisted in, probably in the same way as the address has suffered. "Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth" is a petition peculiar, I believe, to St. Matthew. And I wish to state once for all that, in these questions of the true text, I *never* give a mere conjecture, but a judgment founded on a full survey of the extant evidence, and one which is generally received by those who are best informed and most able to pronounce on matters of the kind. If the omission be allowed here, it becomes us to ask why it is that the Spirit drops that clause in Luke which He had given in Matthew? What are we taught by the omission?

It is well known that, throughout Luke, God has Gentiles in view, and not Jews merely. Therefore such words of Christ and such circumstances as bear upon the uncircumcision, both in their natural outcast condition and in the character of their privileges when brought in, are recorded there with care and precision. With this agrees the very genealogy of the Saviour; for He is not, as by Matthew, traced down from Abraham and David, the heads of Jewish promise and glory, but traced up beyond all such limits to the first man, the head of the whole human family — "Adam, which was the son of God." What then would the poor heathen have known about the righteous expectation of Israel as regards the earth? To the latter it was an ever present desire of faith, whatever their temporary degradation through their own sin. "For Jehovah loveth judgment and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved for ever: but the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land and dwell therein for ever." Then and thus would God's will be done on earth as in heaven. This expectation is kept up in the sermon generally as well as the Lord's prayer in Matthew, while other and brighter hopes accompany it; but from Luke it disappears in the wisdom which ever marks the Holy

Ghost. Peculiarly familiar to the Jew, it was foreign to the Gentile's proper hope even when converted; *his* outlook was to be exclusively heavenly.

Then we have a perceptible difference in the language of the next petition. Luke says "Give us *day by day* our daily bread;" Matthew had "Give us *this day*," etc. The believing Jews looked simply at the one day, it might be, before them. It was a definite request for the present exigency. How soon the trumpet of Jubilee would sound, and the true liberty and final return and everlasting possession would come, they knew not; meanwhile they say "Give us *this day* our daily bread." But the Gentile believer, for whose instruction the Lord was specially providing in Luke, is characterized by a more constant spirit of dependence — "day by day" is the word.\* He was never to expect rest, or establishment on the earth, as the other might. His inheritance lay elsewhere; his portion here was to be always that of a stranger. I think that this is strengthened by the mode of its introduction here. The prayer is much later and nearer the close than in Matthew. All hope of Messiah's reception by the Jews was manifestly at an end. Thus, in Luke 9, He had His rejection and death ever before Him, and repeatedly names it to the disciples, both before and after His transfiguration. (*cf.* 1. Peter 1: 11.) In Luke 10 the mission of the seventy follows, as a sort of final message, in which He pronounces woe on the cities which had seen His mighty works but had despised Himself. Grace is then shown as replacing law, and doing what law could not do. The prayer in Luke 11 partakes of the progressive character of the circumstances which surround it.

\* The word for "give," though the same verb, has a slightly different form and force in the two Gospels. In Matthew it implies a bare transient act; in Luke the continuous habit, which naturally accompanies the phrase "day by day."

But that is not all. In the next petition — "Forgive us our sins" — the expression is worthy of note. The always sound principle for interpreting God's word is, that God never changes without reason. It is our own ignorance if we do not see the bearing of different words used in Scripture. Thus, if in Matthew it is said "debts" and in Luke "sins," there is a slight shade of difference that ought not to pass unnoticed. What is the distinction? I believe it to be this: that "sin" expresses, in all plainness of speech, the depth of the soul's moral need. The simplest Gentile would understand the word "sin." The Jew would feel what a *debt* was in his responsibility to God: it supposes a known relationship in which he had been placed and had failed. To the Gentiles who had not been in such a position the idea of "debt" was not so obvious or applicable, unless the word "sin" prepared the way for it and made it more intelligible. The word "sins" has a more evidently moral meaning, being equally true whether people were without law or under it. "Debt" is figurative rather, though perfectly understood by a Jew. The parable of the merciless servant in Matt. 18 sets forth the Lord as dealing with Jew and Gentile in a way substantially similar. The servant that owed his lord ten thousand talents is the Jew guilty of the rejection of Christ. How deeply was he involved? Forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, etc. But moved with compassion, he forgave him the debt. Then the same servant went out and found one of his fellow servants which owed him one hundred pence. The Gentile was certainly indebted to him, but found no mercy (1 Thess. 2: 14) for a debt small indeed compared with that which had been forgiven the Jews; and therefore wrath is come upon the Jews to the uttermost. (Compare also Matt. 5: 25, 26, and Luke 12: 58, both of which refer to Israel's position in our Lord's time.) There is another expression which confirms this, the Gentile dispensation being one of full grace; "*for* we ourselves also [poor as we are] forgive *every one* that is indebted to us." It is a stronger broader word than the expression in Matthew.

The conclusion in Luke appears to be, "Lead us not into temptation," what follows ("but deliver us from evil") being probably copied into it from the first Gospel. No motive can be assigned for

leaving out this clause, like the former one, if it had been originally inserted; whereas it is natural that men, observing that they undoubtedly are found in Matthew, should hastily conclude that they ought to be in Luke also. Nor is anything lost thereby, but the contrary. For the omissions in an inspired book, as well as the things declared there, are meant to arrest attention and to instruct.

The last clause is most appropriate in Matthew, where it has special reference, I think, to the power of Satan which, beside what is ordinary, is directed against Israel as God's great earthly witness, and the severity of which is yet to fall upon them in the last days. (*Cf.* Zech. 3) Luke, as usual, brings out general moral principles, and hence retains the petition "lest we enter temptation."

3. — Having stated these points of distinction, I come now to a question of great practical importance: What was the Lord's intention in regard to the use of this prayer? The answer is involved in my first statement. I showed that, while intended for disciples, it exactly suited the condition they were in before Christ had finished His work. It therefore follows that, when redemption became a fact and a known basis of relationship with God, prayer suitable to those who stand in the enjoyment of its full results would be formed according to their new circumstances. In other words, referring to my former illustration, the man's prayer when out of prison would not be the same as his prayer in prison, unless he were under a delusion. If he had afterwards to do with the sovereign, he would owe, not a petition for deliverance, but a memorial of gratitude and a lifelong service of devoted loyalty.

But, besides this, we shall find that the accomplishment of redemption was the foundation of another and a most exalted privilege — the gift of the Holy Ghost, in a way of which the Old Testament saints had no experience. It must be remembered that there are certain operations of the Holy Ghost, common to all saints in every age, such as the new birth, conviction of sin, holy obedience produced in the heart and ways. These ways of the Spirit are not peculiar to any time; they were always true of every saint of God from the first — true of Noah, Abraham, David, etc. They were all born of God, and believing men. But while this is matter of common knowledge, there is another thing equally true, but not so generally acknowledged. When the Lord Jesus Christ was about to finish His work on earth and ascend on high, He promised His disciples that the Holy Ghost should be given in a way never before known.\* The disciples were certainly believers then, and possessors of eternal life. Yet we find that, when the Lord was about to depart, He says: "It is expedient for you that I go away." What could make it expedient that they should lose their best Friend and Saviour? Why was it not rather preferable for them in every way that He should stay with them? The word is plain: "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but, if I depart, I will send him unto you." Does not this imply that there was to be some further and immense blessing imparted to them that they had not enjoyed before? Clearly so. But more than this. There are persons who confine the gift of the Holy Ghost to tongues, miracles, ministerial gifts, etc. But "the Comforter" is not to be confounded with the various powers that the Comforter produces. It is the Holy Ghost in person whom the Father would send in Christ's name. This was the grand truth that the Lord was teaching His disciples. All saints had had the Holy Ghost operating upon them from the beginning, but besides and beyond that, after the departure of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost Himself was to come down, in a personal and more direct and immediate way, to be in the disciples and with them unto the end. The Son of God had come down in a special way and become incarnate. The Holy Ghost would come, after Christ had accomplished redemption and gone up to the Father.† Therefore it is said in Acts 2: "Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear." The powers that were conferred on the day of Pentecost drew attention to this blessed divine person, whose presence these powers indicated; they were valuable chiefly as the outward evidence and effect of that

unprecedented gift, the Father's promise.

\* It was from not distinguishing these two things that, if I remember rightly, Professor Olshausen and the late Archdeacon Hare fell into no slight error as to the Old Testament saints; for they actually taught that the new birth is a peculiar blessing of this dispensation! Dean Alford is also confused on the subject. The new birth, though of the Spirit, is entirely distinct from His baptism.

† *"The gift of the Spirit at and since the day of Pentecost, was and is something TOTALLY DISTINCT from anything before that time: a new and loftier dispensation."* — Alford's Greek Test. I., p. 783; cf. p. 706. (Second Edition.) The emphasis is the author's.

This, then, is the great truth that lies at the bottom of the question as to the Lord's prayer. It was intended for those who were true believers, but for whom redemption was yet a prospective thing, and to whom the Holy Ghost had not been given in this fuller and unexampled way. In the very context in Luke the Lord says, a little afterwards, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" That was their condition. They were already children, and yet were to ask the Father to give them the Holy Spirit. It could not mean the Holy Spirit to make them believers: such they were already — "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." But there was still the Holy Ghost to be given personally, to bring them into all the full consequences of the redemption of Christ, when this should be effected, and to form them into union with Him as the glorified man at the right hand of God, members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. These privileges, which were neither known nor possible to be enjoyed by the saints before the cross, are nevertheless the essentials of Christianity, properly so called. Therefore, I do not hesitate to say that, while the Lord's prayer was the perfect expression of the disciples' requests to God in their then circumstances and actual condition, for this reason it was not intended to be the expression even of the same men when their whole standing and condition was changed: when the work was done, and all trespasses were forgiven; when all that believed, whether Jews or Gentiles, were by one Spirit baptized into one body, and were all made to drink into one Spirit.

The change indeed was so momentous and complete, that our Lord Himself prepares the disciples for it solemnly in John 16, when, after having fully brought out the mission and presence of the Comforter in and with them, He says, "In that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." . . . "At that day ye shall ask in my name," etc. What did our Lord mean when He said, "In that day ye shall ask me nothing?" This was what they had been doing while He was upon earth; they always went to Him as the blessed and gracious Messiah, and were quite right in doing so. Yet He adds, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, etc. . . . Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name." What! asked nothing in His name? Had they not been using the Lord's prayer for some years? Certainly they had; and yet they had asked nothing in Christ's name.\* Now, He says to them, you are going to be put upon a new ground; no longer to be merely coming to Me and asking Me, but asking the Father, and asking in Christ's name. What is meant by asking in Christ's name? Is it merely saying "for Christ's sake" at the end of a prayer? No. The meaning is no less than this: that, by virtue of redemption when accomplished, and by the Holy Ghost uniting them to the Lord Jesus in heaven, they would be put in the same position as Himself. Therefore it is said in 1 John 4: "As he is, so are we in this world." And so St. Paul, in 1 Cor. 6, "he that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." This may illustrate the meaning of asking in the name of Christ, or rather of the ground on which it rests. It is to ask the Father in the consciousness of all their sins being put away, and of their being in Him brought nigh to God, and in the full enjoyment of His favour, without a question or cloud between God and their souls: going to God and making supplication to

Him as standing in the possession of the full blessing to which Christ above, and the Holy Ghost below, should entitle them in that day: this is asking the Father in Christ's name.

\* The late Dean of Canterbury had the intelligence to perceive and the candour to own, in his comment on this passage, that "*it was impossible, up to the time of the glorification of Jesus* (ἕως ἄρτι proleptical, as before), *to pray to the Father in His name*. It is a fulness of joy peculiar to the dispensation of the Spirit to be able so to do, Eph. 2: 18." The reader will hence infer how he is to estimate Wheatly's assertion that the Lord's prayer" is so framed, that it is impossible to offer it up, unless it be in the name of Christ." (Rat. Illust. of the Book of Common Prayer, p. 6.) It is singular, however, that Dr. Alford was guilty of the contradictory remark on the preceding verse, (John 16: 23,) that "that day," in its full meaning, cannot import this present dispensation of the Spirit, but the great completion of the Christian's hope when he shall be with his Lord. His own note on 24, already quoted, sufficiently refutes him, not to speak of verse 26 and his note thereon. — (Greek Test. pp. 788, 9.)

The Lord had given the prayer already, and the disciples had been using it. Yet He intimates to them here that there was a new position into which they had to be put, and that the old ground would no longer suffice. Their circumstances being changed by the gift of the Holy Ghost, prayer must now take its form from the new standing, the full grace into which they were brought. What is the effect of believers now putting themselves back into the position of disciples before redemption was accomplished? They never can know what it is to have real settled peace; they cannot take the place of worshippers once purged, having no more conscience of sins. In a word, they forfeit, as far as enjoyment goes, the vast and entire sum of blessing which Christ's death and resurrection have procured.

Still more manifest is the mistake for a company of believers, alas! of believers and unbelievers mixed together, to take up the Lord's prayer, as the expression of their common need and worship. There is no such thought in the passage as a *body* thus using it. Indeed, just before, the Lord had told them, when each prayed, to enter his closet; and then follows this prayer as the suited language of an individual's wants. But whether it be a company or one alone now expressing wants to God in the Lord's prayer, I have only to repeat, You are putting yourselves back into the state of the disciples under the law and before the Lord had done His work of reconciliation, and thus you are doing, unconsciously, great disrespect to the will of God the Father, to the work of Christ, and to the present witness of the Holy Ghost. (Compare Heb 10.)

If a soul, converted indeed, but still under bondage of spirit and ignorant of the Lord's ways and of the full extent of His redemption, were to kneel down and pour out his heart in the words of the Lord's prayer, I could, for my own part, quite sympathize with the feeling; for I believe that such a condition of heart and conscience as nearly as possible approaches that of the disciples whom the Lord actually had before Him. Still, under the gospel of God's grace, the state I have described is altogether anomalous. It is themselves who go back — not God who puts them — as it were, before redemption. Though they believe in Christ, they are not quite sure that they are justified from all things, or whether they do not fall short of the full favour of God. They certainly do adopt and use a prayer given to disciples who *could not* know what every Christian since the cross ought to have his heart filled with, and what his prayers should assume and more or less express to God. So that, without questioning the final security of such believers in Christ, I dare not withhold my conviction that they do not see their most precious privileges, and thus, without intending it, are guilty of real dishonour to the Lord's sufferings and glory.

The fact is then, that saints on earth are contemplated and provided for in the prayer before Christ died and rose, and before the Holy Ghost was sent down from heaven, the witness of perfect acceptance in the Beloved. True honouring of Christ is to apply His words as He intended. If our souls have entered into this, that we are brought nigh to God, that our sins are all forgiven; that we have got the Holy Ghost sealing us, and uniting us to Christ in heaven; we *are* on altogether new ground, and our prayers should savour of it. This would be to ask the Father in the name of the Son.

It will be said, How was it that the Lord gave the prayer in His word, if it was not intended for the permanent use of all His people? I answer that the Lord said much which did not and could not apply to all. Look, for example, at Matt. 10. While many principles are found there which abide for our instruction, who will deny that the mission of the twelve was Jewish? Supposing a person were to quote verses 5 and 6, and to say, "These are the Lord's own words: we are not to go into the way of the Gentiles, nor to enter any city of the Samaritans, but rather to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," the absurdity would be manifest. We ourselves, poor Gentiles\* and yet saved, are proof enough that such an application of our Saviour's words must be false. It would set a few words here against the great mass of the New Testament, which supposes special mercy to those very Gentiles. As the Lord was then sending out the disciples on a special errand, so He had previously provided for their then state in the prayer. The death of Christ, in my judgment, necessarily interrupted the prohibition of testimony to the Gentiles, deepened and extended the ground of prayer, and laid the foundation for the introduction of another order of things. Therefore, after His resurrection, the Lord, at the close of the same Gospel, charges them to go and make disciples of all the Gentiles; as in the Gospel of St. John He, anticipating His ascension, tells them that at that day they were to ask the Father in His name. Hitherto they had not done so.

\* Some have objected the fact that one form of the prayer is given by Luke, the evangelist, who treats all in view of the grace of God and the call of the Gentiles. But this in no way proves that it was meant to be used by us of the Gentiles; for this Gospel tells much that was said and done then, though with a special design to *instruct us* who are called, not to be said or done by us.

Much, therefore, as I desire to sympathize with those who continue to use the Lord's prayer now, or at least to feel for their difficulties, I must say that we ought to understand His word and will, besides having upright intentions. And what intelligence can there be if it is not seen that the redemption of Christ and the gift of the Holy Ghost have wrought a total revolution as to the conscience, communion, worship, and walk? They have brought us out of bondage into liberty, and consequently put our prayers on a different footing from what would have been right and comely before our deliverance.

Hence, in the Acts of the Apostles, not a trace appears of such a use of the Lord's prayer as has become the traditional practice of Christendom. And when you read the various prayers which the Holy Ghost inspired in the different epistles, such as those in Romans, Ephesians, etc., everywhere the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ form the great substance and basis. The petitions were founded thenceforth upon the great and glorious facts, on which rest alike our faith and hope; they were not made and were inapplicable before.

Evidently this is a question of no small importance for the child of God who desires to know his full standing in Christ since the Holy Ghost has been given. We all believe that the Lord's prayer was divinely suited to the actual state of the disciples. But for this reason it could not fully express their subsequent relations nor the outgoing of affections proper to them then. Those who appreciate the extent of the change can profit by every clause of the prayer, even if they do not repeat it literally. But

to ignore the results of redemption is not to the honour of Christ, but rather a slight on the presence of the Spirit, and voluntary poverty in the midst of the riches of grace which are now lavished upon us. The humble and obedient heart will seek to know and do the Lord's will in this, as in all else.

May we receive things as the Lord puts them in His word. May we rise above our natural thoughts and be thoroughly rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith as we have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.

#### APPENDIX A.

It may interest some to see the text of the Lord's prayer, as presented in the two Gospels, according to the readings of the most ancient and valuable Greek MS. extant — the celebrated No. 1209 in the Vatican Library of Rome: so also the Sinaitic with slight errors. The Alexandrian approaches the latter text in some respects, as the Dublin rescript of Matthew does the former.

#### ΚΑΤΑ ΜΑΘΘΑΙΟΝ, 6: 9-23.

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου, ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου, γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς. τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον, καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν, καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν, ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

Our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done, as in heaven, also on earth; our necessary bread give us today; and forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors; and bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil [or the evil one].

#### ΚΑΤΑ ΛΟΥΚΑΝ, 11: 2-4.

Πάτερ, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου, ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου· τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δίδου ἡμῖν τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν, καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν (καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἀφίομεν παντὶ ὀφείλοντι ἡμῖν), καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν.

Father, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; our necessary bread give us day by day; and forgive us our sins (for we ourselves also forgive every one if indebted to us); and bring us not into temptation.

To show that this difference was well known of old, we need only summon two witnesses, of distinct country, time, language, school of doctrine, and ecclesiastical position; but both of them unusually acquainted with Scripture, and, of course, thoroughly trustworthy as to matters of fact. 1. The ablest critic of Christian antiquity, Origen, expressly says (*De Oratione*, p. 240) that Luke, after "Thy kingdom come," passes in silence over "Thy will be done;" etc., and sets down "Give us day by day," etc. Διόπερ ἅς προετάξαμεν λέξεις, ὡς παρὰ μόνῳ Ματθαίῳ κειμένας, κ. τ. λ. And again, as to the end of the prayer, he observes (p. 256), Τὸ δέ, ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ, παρὰ τῷ Λουκᾷ σεσιώπηται. 2. Just so speaks Augustine, the greatest theological light of the Western Church: "Evangelista vero Lucas in oratione Dominica petitiones non septem, sed quinque complexus est." (*Enchirid.*, cap. cxvi.) He tries, like Origen, to solve the difficulty on the plea that the two clauses omitted by Luke are virtually contained in the petitions that preceded them; a plea which, in my opinion, hardly consists with the perfection of either Gospel, especially the apostle Matthew's, even if it could account for the other points of difference, which it does not so much as touch.

The process of corruption is very palpable in the famous Codex Bezae. (now in Cambridge), which contains several patches obviously borrowed from Matthew, which are repudiated not only by all critics, but even in the *Textus Receptus*. But the same thing is true of MSS. better in every way than

that venerable document.

This being so, what are we to infer? Let Dean Alford answer. "It is very improbable that the prayer was regarded in the very earliest times as a set form delivered for liturgical use by our Lord. The variations . . . in Luke, for the corresponding clauses in our text, however unimportant in themselves, are fatal to the supposition of its being used liturgically at the time when these Gospels were written." (Greek Test., vol i., p. 52. ) So say I, for reasons of greater weight perhaps than these variations. We are next referred to the notes on Luke 11: 1; but there, singular to say, the Dean seems to question his own deduction in the remarks on Matt. 6: 9; for he quotes from Meyer an argument identical in sense with his own, and then asks, "If the Apostolic Church did not use the Lord's prayer as a form — *when did its use begin*, which we find in every known liturgy?" The liturgical application of the prayer at no great interval from the apostolic days I admit, but what is that to the purpose? The true question is as to the Lord's intention, when the Holy Ghost was given. What was the apostolic practice *then*? The Gospels of Matthew and Luke were not written for years after Pentecost; and the Dean admits that there are reasons fatal to the supposition of a liturgical use when they were. Was the Church wrong under inspired men, and right under guides so erring as Tertullian and Cyprian, or Fathers later and more mistaken still? In a word, "*when did its use begin*?" after the inspired writers passed away, may be an interesting inquiry, but it is of no consequence to our faith and practice. But is it not strange to be remanded from Matt. 6 to Luke 11, and then to find a strong and positive statement, in a note to the former, sought to be undermined by a query in a note to the latter?

What a mercy it is, in the midst of human uncertainty of old or now, have the sure unfailing word of God, the sole standard of truth, and the Holy Ghost, the sole applier and interpreter of it, to the glory of the Lord Jesus!

#### APPENDIX B.

Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον.

Few words in the New Testament have given rise to more discussion, and with less satisfactory results, than the adjective ἐπιούσιος. It occurs only in the Lord's prayer. (Matt. 6: 11, and Luke 11: 3. ) Origen is the first ecclesiastical writer who discusses the question of its derivation and meaning; and certainly, whatever was the eccentricity of his dogmatic views and the frequent extravagance of his interpretations, none of the Fathers was his equal in matters of language. According to him, the word had not been employed by the Greeks, learned or unlearned, and it appeared to be a coinage of the evangelists. (De Oratione, Ed. de la Rue, vol. i., pp. 245,6.) He compares ἐπ. with περιούσιος, deriving both from οὐσία. Καὶ δοκεῖ μοι ἑκατέρω λέξι παρὰ τὴν οὐσίαν πεποιῆσθαι· ἢ μὲν τὸν εἰς τὴν οὐσίαν συμβαλλόμενον ἄρτον δηλοῦσα, ἢ δὲ τὸν περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν καταγινόμενον λαόν, [alluding to Ex. 19: 5,] καὶ κοινωνοῦντα αὐτῇ, σημαίνουσα. He was, of course, aware of the alternative derivation from ἐπίεναι (or its participle); indeed, he expressly alludes to it to affirm his preference of the first source and sense. Ἐρεῖ δέ τις τὸν ἐπιούσιον παρὰ τοῦ ἐπίεναι καὶ ἔσχηματίσθαι, [which is evidently corrupt, and to be corrected with Bentley into κατεσχηματίσθαι,] ὥστε αἰτεῖν ἡμᾶς κελυέσθαι τὸν ἄρτον τὸν οἰκεῖον τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰῶνος, κ.τ.λ. (ib. p. 249). The Greek Fathers seem to me, in general, to have agreed with Origen's derivation of the word, though they diverged in interpreting or applying it; for *he* held it to mean Christ, Chrysostom (Homil. xxx,) Theophylact (Comm. in loc.), etc., applied to the necessities of life. Hence in Cyril we read, ἔστι γὰρ ἔτι διὰ τούτων ἰδεῖν ὅτι τῆς ἐφημέρου τροφῆς ποιοῦνται τὴν αἴτησιν, ὡς ἀκτήμονες δηλονότι· ἐπιούσιον δὲ τὸν αὐτάρκη ποιεῖσθαι χρή.

The Latins were, for the most part, indifferent judges of such a matter; and, until Jerome, seem to

have acquiesced in the reading of the Itala, all the copies of which, as far as I know, had *quotidianum* (cot.). But the learned secretary of Pope Damasus did not improve upon the old versions, as far as ἔπ. is concerned, but rather increased the confusion. For even in the Vulgate he gave "supersubstantialem" in Matt. 6, and "quotidianum" in Luke 11; while in his Commentary on Titus (2: 14) he says, "Melius in Graeco habetur *panem nostrum* ἐπιούσιον, id est, *praecipuum, egregium, peculiarem*, eum videlicet qui de caelo descendens, ait: Ego sum panis, etc. Absit quippe ut nos qui in crastinum cogitare prohibemur, de pane isto qui post paululum concoquendus et abjiciendus est in secessum, in prece Dominica rogare jubeamur. Nec multum differt inter ἐπιούσιον et περιούσιον: praepositio enim tantummodo est mutata, non verbum. Quidam ἐπιούσιον existimant in oratione Dominica panem dictum, quod super omnes οὐσίας sit, hoc est super universas substantias. Quod si accipitur, non multum ab eo sensu differt quem exposuimus. Quidquid enim egregium est et praecipuum, extra omnia est, et super omnia." What can one think of the consistency of all this? What of its philology or its logic? Who would have guessed that the author does not adopt his own "melius" in *either* of the texts where the word occurs? Who could expect that in *one* of them (Luke 11: 3) he so translates as most naturally to convey the sense of needful food for the day which; in one of his sentences he sternly denounces? And as to the idea that there could be no great distinction between the two words, have I to convince the merest tyro that composition with a preposition *may* effect a far more decided change in the sense than if many a totally different word were used? Again, will it be credited that among the "quidam" who think ἔπ. in the Lord's prayer means above all substances is — Jerome himself, not only in his version of Matt. 6, but in his vacillating comment on the passage in that Gospel? (Ed. Migne, vol. vii. col. 43.) In his Dialogue against the Pelagians (lib. iii. 15), I may also observe that he seems to take for granted another view — not daily supplies, nor Christ, but the Eucharist. "*Panem* quotidianum sive super omnes substantias, venturum Apostoli deprecantur, ut digni sint assumptione corporis Christi." This last was a favourite and early notion especially in Africa, as may be gathered from the treatises of Cyprian, Tertullian, and a host of successors. They took care, however, not to err on the score of deficiency, for they appear to have held all three senses of the phrase. Augustine, in due time, added the meaning of the word of God, sacred lessons, and hymns, to the force of the expression, already burdened enough; though I have not found that any of these writers deduced them save from the old Latin "panem quotidianum."

On the other hand, a large body of modern scholars, though with shades of distinction among them (as Grotius, Scaliger, Wetstein, Wahl, Winer, Meyer, Bretschneider, etc.), incline to the derivation from ἐπίεναι, or ἐπιούσα, and therefore to the sense of "our coming (future) bread," or "our bread of tomorrow." But this is obviously awkward, whether one considers Matthew or Luke, and hardly reconcilable with Matt. 6: 34. If ἐπιούσα were certainly the parent of ἐπιούσιος, it might mean "sufficient" or "necessary," on the same principle as ἐπηρετανός is used for "abundant," as well as for "year by year." Dr. John Mill (Prolegg. lxxxii.) derives it from ἐπιούσα, and yet thinks that it means "*diem qui jam advenit, instantem, praesentem;*" but this is resisted by the plain fact that ἐπιούσα is never used in Scripture, or elsewhere, for this day, but for the *next (or following)* day. And as to the objection that from οὐσία it must have been ἐπιούσιος, the most learned of the Greek Fathers did not so feel. In fact, too, we have ἐπίοπτος and ἔποπτος, ἐπίουρα, etc. But "of tomorrow" is unquestionably ancient, in spite of Salmasius's assertion to the contrary; for, besides the Coptic and Sahidic versions (supposed to be of the third century), Jerome so understood the reading of the old Hebrew or Nazarene Gospel of Matthew. And this Gabelentz and Loebe take to be the meaning of the word "sinteinan," which answers to ἔπ. in the ancient Gothic version of Ulphilas.

There remains to be noticed another signification, grounded upon οὐσία and giving ἐπί a more distinct force in composition than Origen's suggestion. Instead of being equivalent to περιούσιος, as

Jerome assumed, it is distinguished from it and even in contrast. Περιούσιος is, in ordinary Greek, used for "abundant," "superfluous;" being derived from περιούσια = that which is *over and above* necessary expenses, and hence *wealth, luxury, etc.* Ἐπούσιος, from analogy of many words similar in formation (as ἐπιβώμιος, ἐπίγαμος, ἐπιδεικτικός, ἐπιδίφριος, ἐπιδόρπιος), and from the requirements of the prayer, would naturally mean *necessary, or proper for subsistence*. There is no doubt that οὐσία, besides its metaphysical usage for the *essence* or true nature of a thing, and the Stoic application to matter, was commonly used both in Attic and Hellenistic Greek for "what is one's own," "one's substance," etc. (cf. Luke 15: 12), the transition from which is easy to the sense required, as I conceive, by the evangelists. The reader may compare the last clause of Prov. 30: 8, the beginning of which verse, I see, Augustine had already connected with it (Epist. 130 alias 121: 22): also Matt. 6: 25-34, and James 2: 15. It was thus Suidas understood the word — ὁ ἐπὶ τὴν ἡμῶν οὐσίαν καὶ τροφήν ἐπαρκῶν, or ὁ ἐπὶ τῇ οὐσίᾳ ἡμῶν ἀρμόζων. "Quae interpret." (says H. Stephens, Thes. Ling. Gr. iii, col. 3584, Ed Valpy) "aptissimum quidem sensum habet, sed similis signif. τοῦ οὐσία exemplum desidero." But is not the comparison with περιούσιος a sufficient answer to the great lexicographer's demand, especially bearing in mind the absolute newness of the word ἐπ.? On the whole, then, I am of opinion that the mystical references, "substantial," "peculiar," etc., are forced and unnatural; that the sense of "tomorrow" is inconsistent with the context; that the meaning "daily," though followed by many and weighty names, ancient and modern, has no probable source in the word itself, and is tautological in its connection in both Gospels; and that "our necessary (or sufficient) bread" has the best claim to be received, as in fact it is, in the oldest known version, the Peschito Syriac.