

A Form of Prayer on the Lord's Prayer

Jeremy Taylor

Anglican · Post-Reformation · Exegesis

STROMATA 88

Downloaded from *The Stromata* (thestromata.com). Free for personal, educational, and ministry use.

INTRODUCTION

Composed by the seventeenth-century Anglican divine who served as chaplain to Charles I and later as Bishop of Down and Connor, this paraphrase expands each petition of the Lord's Prayer into a sustained meditation, drawing the brief dominical words out into a wide field of supplication, doctrine, and praise. Written during the same period that produced Taylor's *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying*, it belongs to a tradition of devotional amplification that shaped later Anglican prayer-book piety and the practice of extempore liturgical composition. The cadenced, suppliant prose carries the marks of a Church under strain, petitions against division and party-names sit alongside affirmations of adoption and inheritance. Read it slowly and aloud; it is built for prayer, not study.

Our Father,

Merciful and Gracious; thou gavest me being, raising me from nothing, to be an excellent creation, efforming me after thy own Image, tenderly feeding me, and conducting and strengthening me all my dayes: Thou art our Father by a more excellent Mercy, adopting us in a new birth, to become partakers of the inheritance of Jesus; Thou hast given us the portion and the food of Sons; O make us to do the duty of Sons, that we may never lose our title to so glorious an inheritance.

Let this excellent Name and Title, by which thou hast vouchsafed to relate to us, be our Glory and our Confidence, our Defence and Guard, our Ornament and Strength, our Dignity, and the endearment of Obedience, the Principle of a holy Fear to thee our Father, and of Love to thee and to our Brethren, partakers of the same Hope and Dignity.

Unite every member of the Church to thee in holy bands; Let there be no more names of Division, nor Titles and Ensigns of Error and Partiality; Let not us who are Brethren contend, but in giving honour to each other, and glory to thee, contending earnestly for the Faith, but not to the breach of Charity, nor the denying each others Hope: but grant, that we may all joyn in the promotion of the honour of thee our Father, in celebrating the Name, and spreading the Family, and propagating the Laws and Institutions, the Promises and Dignities of our Elder Brother; that despising the transitory entertainments of this world, we may labour for, and long after the inheritance to which thou hast given us title, by adopting

us into the dignity of Sons. For ever let thy Spirit witness to our Spirit, that we are thy children, and enable us to cry Abba, Father.

Which art in Heaven,

Heaven is thy Throne, the Earth is thy Footstool: From thy Throne thou beholdest all the dwellers upon earth, and triest out the hearts of men, and nothing is hid from thy sight: And as thy Knowledge is infinite, so is thy Power, uncircumscribed as the utmost Orb of Heaven, and thou sittest in thy own Essential Happiness and Tranquillity, immoveable and eternal. That is our Countrey, and thither thy Servants are travelling; there is our Father, and that is our inheritance; there our hearts are, for there our treasure is laid up till the day of Recompence.

Hallowed be thy Name.

Thy Name, O God, is glorious, and in thy Name is our hope and confidence: According to thy Name, so is thy praise unto the worlds end: They that love thy Name, shall be joyfull in thee; for thy Name which thou madest to be proclaimed unto thy people, is, The Lord, the Lord God, mercifull and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty. In this glorious Name, we worship thee, O Lord; and all they that know thy Name, will put their trust in thee. The desire of our soul is to thy Name, and to the remembrance of thee. Thou art worthy, O Lord, of honour, and praise, and glory, for ever and ever: we confess thy glories, we rejoyce in thy mercies; we hope in thy Name, and thy Saints like it well: for thy Name is praised unto the ends of the world; it is believed by Faith, relied upon by a holy Hope, and loved by a great Charity: All thy Church celebrates thee with praises, and offers to thy Name the Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving.

Thou, O God, didst frame our Nature by thy own Image, and now thou hast imprinted thy Name upon us, we are thy Servants, the relatives and domesticks of thy family, and thou hast honoured us with the gracious appellative of Christians. O let us never dishonour so excellent a Title, nor by unworthy usages profane thy holy Name, but for ever glorifie it. Let our life be answerable to our dignity; that our body may be chaste, our thoughts clean, our words gracious, our manners holy, and our life useful and innocent, that men seeing our good works, may glorifie thee our Father which art in Heaven.

Thy Kingdome come.

Thou reignest in Heaven and Earth: O do thou rule also in our hearts; advance the interest of Religion; let thy Gospel be placed in all the regions of the earth; and let all Nations come and worship thee, laying their proud wills at thy feet, submitting their understandings to the obedience of Jesus, conforming their affections to thy holy Laws. Let thy Kingdome be set up gloriously over us; and do thou reign in our spirits, by thy Spirit of Grace; subdue every lust and inordinate appetite; trample upon our pride, mortifie all rebellion within us, and let all thine and our enemies be brought into captivity, that sin may never reign in our mortal bodies; but that Christ may reign in our Understanding by Faith, in the Will by Charity, in the Passions by Mortification, in all the members by a right and a chaste use of them. And when thy Kingdome that is within us hath flourished and is advanced to that height whither thou hast designed it, grant thy Kingdome of Glory may speedily succeed; and we thy Servants be admitted

to the peace and purity, the holiness and glories of that state where thou reignest alone, and art all in all.

Thy will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.

Thy will, O God, is the measure of holiness and peace; thy Providence the great disposer of all things, tying all events together, in order to thy glory and the good of thy Servants, by a wonderful mysterious Chain of Wisdome. Let thy Will also be the measure of our desires: for we know, that whatsoever thou sayest is true, and whatsoever thou doest is good: Grant we may submit our wills to thine, being patient of evils which thou inflicttest, lovers of the good which thou commandest, haters of all evil which thou forbiddest, pleased with all the accidents thou sendest; that though our nature is weaker then Angels, yet our obedience may be as humble, our conformity to thy will may arise up to the degrees of Unity, and theirs cannot be more; that as they in Heaven, so we in Earth may obey thy will promptly, chearfully, zealously, and with all our faculties; and grant, that as they there, so all the world here may serve thee with peace and concord, purity and love unfeigned, with one heart, and one voice glorifying thee our heavenly Father.

Grant that we may quit all our own affections, and suspect our reasonings, and go out of our selves, and all our own confidences, that thou being to us all things, disposing all events, and guiding all our actions, and directing our intentions, and over-ruling all things in us and about us, we may be Servants of the Divine Will for ever.

Give us this day our daily Bread.

Thou, O God, which takest care of our Souls, do not despise our bodies which thou hast made and sanctified, and designed to be glorious. But now we are exposed to hunger and thirst, nakedness and weariness, want and inconvenience, Give unto us neither poverty nor riches, but feed us with food convenient for us, and clothe us with fitting provisions, according to that state and condition where thou hast placed thy Servants; that we may not be tempted with want, nor made contemptible by beggery, nor wanton or proud by riches, nor in love with any thing in this world; but that we may use it as strangers and pilgrims, as the relief of our needs, the support of our infirmities, and the oyle of our lamps, feeding us till we are quite spent in thy service. Lord take from thy Servants sad carefulness, and all distrust and give us onely such a proportion of temporal things, as may enable us with comfort to do our duty.

Forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespassed against us.

O dear God, unless thou art pleased to pardon us, in vain it is that we should live here, and what good will our life do us? O look upon us with much mercy, for we have sinned grievously against thee. Pardon the adherent imperfections of our life, the weaknesses of our duty, the carelessness of our spirit, our affected ignorance, our indiligence, our rashness and want of observation our malice and Presumptions. Turn thine eyes from our impurities, and behold the brightness and purest innocence of the Holy Jesus, and under his cover we plead our cause, not that thou shouldest judge our sins, but give us pardon, and blot out all our iniquities, that we may never enter into the horrible regions where there are torments without ceasing, a Prison without ransome, reproaches without comfort, anguish without patience, darkness without light, the worm that never dies, and the fire that never goeth out.

But be pleased also to give us great Charity, that we may truly forgive all that trouble or injure us, that by that Character thou mayest discern us to be thy Sons and Servants, Disciples of the Holy Jesus, lest our Prayer be turned into sin, and thy grace be recalled, and thou enter unto a final anger against thy Servants.

Lead us not into Temptation.

Gracious Father, we are weak and ignorant, our affections betray us, and make us willing to die, our adversary the Devil goeth up and down, seeking whom he may devour; he is busie, and crafty, malicious and powerful, watchful and envious; and we tempt our selves, running out to mischief, delighting in the approaches of sin, and love to have necessities put upon us, that sin may be unavoidable. Pity us in the midst of these disorders; and give us spirituall Strength, holy Resolutions, a watchful Spirit, the whole Armour of God, and thy protection, the guard of Angels, and the conduct of thy holy Spirit to be our security in the day of danger. Give us thy grace to flie from all occasions to sin, that we may never tempt our selves, nor delight to be tempted; and let thy blessed Providence so order the accidents of our lives, that we may not dwell near an enemy; and when thou shalt try us, and suffer us to enter into combat, let us alwayes be on thy side, and fight valiantly, resist the Devil, and endure patiently, and persevere constantly unto the end, that thou mayest crown thy own work in us.

But deliver us from evil.

From sin and shame, from the malice and fraud of the Devil, and from the falseness and greediness of men, from all thy wrath, and from all our impurities, good Lord deliver thy servants.

Do not reserve any thing of thy wrath in store for us; but let our sins be Pardoned so fully, that thou mayest not punish our inventions. And yet if thou wilt not be intreated, but that it be necessary that we suffer, thy will be done; smite us here with a Fathers rod, that thou mayest spare us hereafter: let the sad accidents of our life be for good to us, not for evil, for our amendment, not to exasperate or weary us, not to harden or confound us: and what evil soever it be that shall happen, let us not sin against thee. For ever deliver us from that evil, and for ever deliver us from the power of the evil one, the great enemy of Mankind, and never let our portion be in that region of Darkness, in that ever-lasting burning which thou hast prepared for the Devil and his Angels for ever.

For thine is the Kingdome, the Power and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

So shall we thy servants advance the Mightiness of thy Kingdome, the Power of thy Majesty, and the Glory of thy Mercy, from generation to generation for ever. Amen.

Source: The Golden Grove, Jeremy Taylor. London: Printed by J.F. for R. Royston at the Angel in Ivie-lane, 1655. Text sourced from Project Canterbury (anglicanhistory.org).

Transcribed from the 1655 first edition by Project Canterbury (Anglican History Project, anglicanhistory.org). Taylor composed The Golden Grove during his years of enforced exile in Wales under the Interregnum, when Anglican worship had been suppressed and he was living under the protection of Richard Vaughan, Earl of Carbery, at the estate from which the book takes its name. The text is in the public domain; Taylor died in 1667. No translator is involved; this is Taylor's own English.

<https://www.thestromata.com/texts/a-form-of-prayer-on-the-lords-prayer>