

LORD'S PRAYER

The **Lord's Prayer** (also called the **Pater Noster** or **Our Father**) is a central prayer in Christianity. In the New Testament of the Christian Bible, it appears in two forms: in the Gospel of Matthew as part of the discourse on ostentation in the Sermon on the Mount, and in the Gospel of Luke, which records Jesus being approached by "one of his disciples" with a request to teach them "to pray as John taught his disciples." The prayer concludes with "deliver us from evil" in *Matthew*, and with "lead us not into temptation" in *Luke*. The liturgical form is Matthean. Some Christians, particularly Protestants, conclude the prayer with a doxology, and addendum appearing in some manuscripts of *Matthew*.

The prayer as it occurs in Matthew 6:9-13 (KJV)

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."

The prayer as it occurs in Luke 11:2-4 (KJV)

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation;..."

Though Matthew 6:12 uses the term *debts*, the older English versions of the Lord's Prayer uses the term *trespasses*, while ecumenical versions often use the term *sins*. The latter choice may be due to Luke 11:4, which uses the word *sins*, while the former may be due to Matthew 6:14 (immediately after the text of the prayer), where Jesus speaks of *trespasses*. As early as the third century, Origen of Alexandria used the word *trespasses* (παρὰπτώματα) in the prayer. Though the Latin form that was traditionally used in Western Europe has *debita* (debts), most English-speaking Christians (except Scottish, Church of Scotland, the Church of Christ, Scientist, as well as the Congregational denomination follow the version found in Matthew 6 in the Authorized Version (known as the King James Version), which in the prayer uses the words "debts" and "debtors".

Relation to Jewish Prayer

There are similarities between the Lord's Prayer and both Biblical and post-Biblical material in Jewish prayer especially Kiddushin 81a (Babylonian). "Hallowed by thy name" is reflected in the Kaddish. "Lead us not into sin" is echoed in the "morning blessings" of Jewish prayer. A blessing said by some Jewish communities after the evening Shema includes a phrase quite similar to the opening of the Lord's Prayer: "Our God in heaven hallow thy name, and establish thy kingdom forever, and rule over us for ever and ever. Amen." There are parallels also in I Chronicles 29:10-18.

Rabbi Aron Mendes Chumaceiro has said that nearly all the elements of the prayer have counterparts in the Jewish Bible and Deuterocanonical books: the first part in Isaiah 63:15-16 ("Look down from heaven and see, from your holy and beautiful habitation ... For you are our Father ...") and Ezekiel 36:23 ("I will vindicate the holiness of my great name ...") and 38:28 ("I will show my greatness and my holiness and make myself known in the eyes of many nations ..."), the second part in Obadiah 1:21 ("Saviours shall go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's") and I Samuel 3:18 ("... It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him"), the third part in Proverbs 30:8 ("... feed me with my apportioned bread"), the fourth part in Sirach 28:2 ("Forgive your neighbour the wrong he has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray"). "Deliver us from evil" can be compared with Psalm 119:133 ("... let no iniquity get dominion over me."). Chumaceiro says that, because the idea of God leading a human into temptation contradicts the righteousness and love of God, "Lead us not into temptation" has no counterpart in the Old Testament.

The word "πειρασμός", which is translated as "temptation", could also be translated as "test" or "trial", making evident the attitude of someone's heart. Well-known examples in the Old Testament are God's test of Abraham (Genesis 22:1), his "moving" (the Hebrew word means basically "to prick, as by weeds, thorns") David to do (numbering Israel) what David later acknowledged as sin (2 Samuel 24:1-10; see also I Chronicles 21:1-7), and the Book of Job.