

The Lord's Prayer (Week 6)

This week we look at the last “double petition” of Lord's Prayer and briefly at the closing doxology which does not appear in most of the Greek texts of Matthew's Gospel.

“And lead us not into temptation,” (New International Version)

The word “*lead*” is the one with which I am uncomfortable! Maybe an alternative translation of the version given in Luke 11, verse 4 is helpful:- “*And do not bring us to testing*”.

Read James 1, verses 12 – 18. The Lord God Himself is wholly good. There is no way that He will tempt and entice me to do evil. Our Lord Jesus Christ was Himself tempted by the Devil without giving way.

He “*has been tempted as we are, yet without sinning.*” Hebrews 4, verse 15. The Devil has been a liar from the beginning Jesus says, (John 8, verse 44) and it is his very nature to lead people astray. Even when the Devil seems to be in control, the promise is “*Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life*” (Revelation 2, verse 10)

What then should I pray? Maybe along the lines of – Heavenly Father, guard me and guide me when temptations come. Strengthen me by your Holy Spirit to do your will in all things.

The words in this first phrase can also be translated “*do not bring us to the time of trial*”. The time of temptation, trial or testing could refer to the time before the end of the age, see Revelation 3, verse 10.

As we pray for the coming of the Kingdom of God it would seem that there will be a time of great distress on earth before that Kingdom comes. See 2 Thessalonians 2 verses 1 – 11. (a Bible study in its own right!)

However, I find it more important to apply this petition to my daily living rather than be overly concerned about future prophecies!

“but deliver us from the Evil One”

The word “*evil*” or “*Evil One*” can be read as either neuter or masculine, making it impersonal or personal. As our Lord Jesus Christ Himself believed and faced the Devil in person, it would seem that the translation “*Evil One*” is the best. In the parable of the wheat and the tares (weeds), the sower of the weed seeds is named as the devil. (Matthew 13, verse 39).

I vividly remember family prayers one evening in the Argentine Chaco . I prayed “*Lord , make a wall round the house so that nothing wicked can harm us.*” After which small daughter said, “*Can I say a prayer Daddy?*” “*Of course you can!*” “*Please Lord Jesus, make it a good high wall!*”

The promise is not that we will be kept from temptation, but that we will be kept through temptation! - James 1, verse 12 and 1 Corinthians 10, verse 13 .

“for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever. Amen.”

This was the normal way to end a Jewish prayer. In the original text it was probably left for the user to fill it in himself. The version we have is a paraphrase of 1 Chronicles 29 verse 11, where King David dedicates the gifts of the people to God for the building of the Temple.

It is appropriate that, at the end of this prayer, we acknowledge that, all that we have and all that we are, belongs to the Lord God, our Heavenly Father.

*And if Satan, vexing sore,
flesh or spirit should assail,
Thou his vanquisher before,
grant we may not faint nor fail!*

George Hunt Smyttan 1856