

# A Comparison of the Lord's Prayer/Our Father in Matthew and Luke

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## King James/Authorized Version (1611)

Matthew 6:7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. 9 After this manner therefore pray ye:

Our Father which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.

10 Thy kingdom come.

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

11 Give us this day our daily bread.

12 And forgive us our debts,  
as we forgive our debtors.

13 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.

Luke 11:1 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. 2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say,

Our Father which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins;

for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

Note: In 2022, we know that Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer was once significantly different from Matthew's version (see my pages below), but in the KJV Luke's version has been assimilated to match Matthew's version. This is not a surprise. The translators of the King James / Authorized Version had available to them only a handful of late (i.e., medieval) and quite corrupt biblical manuscripts in the original languages. On the other hand, today we have roughly 5800 copies of ancient Greek New Testament manuscripts alone, to say nothing of biblical manuscripts in other ancient languages. This means that our grasp of what the ancient authors wrote is vastly superior to what the KJV translators had to work with. We can now recognize that the assimilation of Luke's prayer to Matthew's occurred in the centuries of manuscript copying that preceded the translation of the KJV of 1611. The KJV translators were simply following what they found before them in the few, late, corrupt manuscripts they had available to them. Since today we understand better what the original wording probably was, our modern translations are much more faithful to the original wording.

## New Revised Standard Version (1989)

Matthew 6:7 “When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. <sup>9</sup> “Pray then in this way:

Our Father in heaven,  
 hallowed be your name.  
<sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come.  
 Your will be done,  
 on earth as it is in heaven.  
<sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread.  
<sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts,  
 as we also have forgiven our  
 debtors.  
<sup>13</sup> And do not bring us to the time of  
 trial,  
 but rescue us from the evil one.

Luke 11:1 He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” <sup>2</sup> He said to them, “When you pray, say:  
 Father,  
 hallowed be your name.  
 Your kingdom come.

<sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread.  
<sup>4</sup> And forgive us our sins [debts??],  
 for we ourselves forgive everyone  
 indebted to us.  
 And do not bring us to the time of  
 trial.”

Here's a homework exercise: I have inserted what I hope is helpful white space in the midst of the words, in an effort to highlight visually both similarities and differences in wording, but I'll leave to each of my readers to identify for yourselves the words that are in fact similar or different in the two versions of the prayer. Read carefully, with a discriminating eye. Good luck! (You'll find my effort below.)

A new edition of the NRSV has appeared digitally, with print to follow in the months to come. See Hal Taussig, "A new edition of the Bible, with 20,000 revisions, should spark 20,000 thoughtful conversations,"

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-12-24/updated-nrsv-bibles-20-000-revisions-should-spark-20-000-conversations>, December 24, 2021.

## New Revised Standard Version (1989)

<p><u>Matthew 6:7</u> <b>“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. <sup>9</sup> “Pray then in this way:</b></p> <p><b>Our Father in heaven,</b> hallowed be your name. <sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come. <b>Your will be done,</b> <b>on earth as it is in heaven.</b></p> <p><sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And do not bring us to the time of trial,<sup>1</sup> <b>but rescue us from the evil one.<sup>2</sup></b></p>	<p><u>Luke 11:1</u> <b>He was praying in a certain place, and after he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” <sup>2</sup> He said to them, “When you pray, say:</b></p> <p>Father, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come.</p> <p><sup>3</sup> Give us each day our daily bread. <sup>4</sup> And forgive us our sins [debts??],<sup>3</sup> for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us. And do not bring us to the time of trial.”</p>
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Words in black are similar or even identical in the two versions of the prayer. **Words in red indicate differences between the two versions.**

FYI, another version of the Lord's Prayer is found in the *Didache: The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, chapter 8, verse 2. (<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/didache.html>). It is almost identical to the version in Matthew.

<sup>1</sup> "Trial," "testing," or "temptation."

<sup>2</sup> Literally, "the evil one," which probably refers to Satan.

Note that "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever, amen" does not appear in the oldest, best manuscript copies of Matthew. It is therefore most likely a late scribal addition to the text of Matthew. Curiously, this phrase *does* appear in the Didache version. Did scribes copy it from the Didache into later copies of Matthew? Interestingly, this doxology is typically omitted in Roman Catholic worship, thus holding to the older, more original form of the prayer, while it is Protestants typically who recite the later scribal embellishment.

<sup>3</sup> Taken together, both versions of the prayer seem to tilt toward "debt." Literal monetary indebtedness or a more metaphorical meaning of debt?

## Scholars Version (Westar/Polebridge Press, 2012)

**Matthew 6:7** "And when you pray, you should not babble on as the pagans do. They imagine that the more they say, the more attention they get. <sup>8</sup> So don't imitate them. After all, your Father knows what you need before you ask. <sup>9</sup> You should pray like this:

**Our Father in the heavens,**  
your name be revered.  
<sup>10</sup> Your empire be established,  
**Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

<sup>11</sup> Provide us with the bread we need for the day.

<sup>12</sup> Forgive our debts to the extent that we have forgiven those in debt to us.

<sup>13</sup> And don't make us face the test,  
**but rescue us from the evil one."**

**Luke 11:1** And it came to pass when he was praying somewhere that, when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Master, teach us how to pray, just as John taught his disciples." <sup>2</sup> He said to them, "When you pray, you should say:

Father,  
your name be revered.  
Your empire be established.

<sup>3</sup> Provide us with the bread we need day by day.

<sup>4</sup> Forgive our sins, since we too forgive everyone in debt to us.

And don't make us face the test."

Words in black are similar or even identical in the two versions of the prayer. **Words in red indicate differences between the two versions.**

Arthur J. Dewey and Robert J. Miller, eds., *The Complete Gospel Parallels* (Salem, OR: Polebridge Press, 2012), p. 26-27. This is a translation by the Jesus Seminar / Westar Institute, a group of scholars intent on breaking free of traditional churchy wording, while at the same time being scrupulously accurate about the original meaning of the Greek.

## Novum Testamentum Graece, Nestle-Aland, 28th Rev. Ed. (2012)

**Matthew 6:7** Προσευχόμενοι δὲ μὴ βατταλογήσητε ὡς περ οἱ ἔθνη· δοκοῦσιν γὰρ ὅτι ἐν τῇ πολυλογίᾳ αὐτῶν εἰσακουσθήσονται. **8** μὴ οὖν ὁμοιωθῆτε αὐτοῖς· οἶδεν γὰρ ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν ὃν χρεῖαν ἔχετε πρὸ τοῦ ὑμᾶς αἰτῆσαι αὐτόν. **9** Οὕτως οὖν προσεύχεσθε ὑμεῖς·

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς·  
 ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·  
**10** ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·  
**γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς·**

**11** τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δός ἡμῖν σήμερον·

**12** καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν·

**13** καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν,

**ἀλλὰ ῥύσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.**

**Luke 11:1** Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτὸν ἐν τόπῳ τινὶ προσευχόμενον, ὡς ἐπαύσατο, εἶπέν τις τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ πρὸς αὐτόν· κύριε, δίδαξον ἡμᾶς προσεύχεσθαι, καθὼς καὶ Ἰωάννης ἐδίδαξεν τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ. **2** εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς· ὅταν προσεύχησθε λέγετε·

Πάτερ,  
 ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·  
 ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·

**3** τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δίδου ἡμῖν τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν·

**4** καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν, καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἀφίομεν παντὶ ὀφείλοντι ἡμῖν·

καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν.

Words in black are similar or even identical in the two versions of the prayer. **Words in red indicate differences between the two versions.**

This is the standard, scholarly, critical text of the New Testament in the original Koine Greek. It is the 28<sup>th</sup> edition published since the first edition in 1898. What we consider to be 'the text' of the Bible has never ceased to mutate!

## A New Zealand Prayer Book (1988)

Eternal Spirit,  
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,  
Source of all that is and that shall be,  
Father and Mother of us all,  
Loving God, in whom is heaven:  
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!  
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!  
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!  
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and  
come on earth.  
With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever.  
Amen.

A popular contemporary version of the prayer from *A New Zealand Prayer Book: He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*, <https://anglicanprayerbook.nz>, p. 181. For more than a dozen contemporary renderings of the prayer, see this PDF: <https://www.elkgroveumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Alternative-versions-of-the-Lord.pdf>.