

## The Lord's Prayer – 1



Our Father,  
who art in the heavens,  
hallowed be Thy name.

Matthew 6:9, Luke 11:2

## 1. Uses of Prayer

**Matthew 6:5-15.** And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be just as the hypocrites; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, so that they may appear to men. Amen, I say to you that they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy bedroom, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who looks in secret shall repay thee in what is manifest.

And when you pray, do not speak on and on<sup>1</sup>, just as the gentiles, for they think that they shall be heard by their many words. Therefore, do not be like them; for your Father knows what things you need before you ask Him.

In this way, therefore, you should pray: Our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name....

AC 2535. Prayer, regarded in itself, is speech with God, and at that time some internal view of the matters of the prayer. To this prayer, there answers something like an influx into the perception or thought of the mind, so that there is a certain opening of man's interiors toward God. But this takes place with a difference according to man's state, and according to the essence of the subject of the prayer. If man prays from love and faith, and for only heavenly and spiritual things, then there comes forth in the prayer something like a revelation, which is manifested in the affection of him who is praying as to hope, consolation, or a certain inward joy.

AR 376. ...It is common in all Divine worship that man should first will, desire, and pray, and the Lord then answer, inform, and do; otherwise man does not receive anything Divine.... We frequently read in the Word that the Lord answers when they call and cry.... Also, that He gives when they ask.... But yet the Lord gives them to ask, and what to ask. Therefore, the Lord knows it beforehand. But still the Lord wills that man should ask first, to the end that he may do the asking as from himself, and thus that it should be appropriated to him. Otherwise, if the petition itself were not from the Lord, it would not be said in certain passages that "they should receive whatever they asked for."

AE 815:10. ...He who is in faith from the Lord asks for nothing but what contributes to the Lord's kingdom, and to himself for salvation. Other things he does not wish for, saying in his heart, "Why should I ask for what does not contribute to this use?" Therefore, if he were to ask for anything except what it is granted him from the Lord to ask, he would have... no faith from the Lord. It is impossible for angels of heaven to want and so to ask for anything else, and if they were to do so, they could have no faith that they would receive it.

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<sup>1</sup> Greek βαττολογησητε ("babbling or stammering"); see Hebrew bata' 0981

AC 6476. Whenever I have been reading the Lord's Prayer, I have plainly perceived an elevation toward the Lord which was like an attraction, and at the same time my ideas were open, and from this there was effected a communication with some societies in heaven. And I noticed that there was an influx from the Lord into every detail of the Prayer, thus into every idea of my thought that was from the meaning of the things in the Prayer. The influx was effected with inexpressible variety, that is, not the same at one time as another. From this it was also made evident how infinite are the things contained in the Prayer, and that the Lord is present in every one of them.

#### Questions and Comments

1. Have you ever found yourself or someone else praying over and over, as if the Lord would hear you if you kept on asking, even though you know that's not true?
2. How does this fit with the Lord's parable about the friend coming at midnight and persistently asking till he got what he needed? This parable comes immediately after the Lord's Prayer in Luke 11:5-8. The Lord also told a parable about a widow who kept demanding justice from a corrupt judge till he avenged her, just to get her off his case (Luke 18:1-8). "He spoke [this] parable to them, that men ought always to pray and not lose heart."
3. What does it mean, to pray only for heavenly and spiritual things (AC 2535)? Can we pray for earthly needs for heavenly and spiritual purposes, such as the Lord's kingdom and our salvation (AE 815:10)?
4. Have you ever noticed a feeling of being elevated toward the Lord during or after the Prayer, or a feeling of hope, consolation, or inward joy?

## 2. *Praying to Our Father*

**Luke 11:1-2.** And it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He had ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said to them, When you pray, say, Our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name....

AC 6619. That there are countless things in the ideas of thought, and that those which are in order within them are there from things more interior, was... evident to me while I read the Lord's Prayer morning and evening. The ideas of my thought were then always opened toward heaven, and countless things flowed in, so that I observed clearly that the ideas of thought taken from the contents of the Prayer were filled from heaven. And such things were also poured in as cannot be uttered, and also could not be comprehended by me; I merely felt the general resulting affection, and wonderful to say, the things that flowed in were varied from day to day.

From this I was given to know that in the contents of this Prayer, there are more things than the universal heaven is capable of comprehending; and that with man there are more things in it in proportion as his thought has been opened toward heaven; and on the other hand, there are fewer things in it in proportion as his thought has been closed; for with those whose thought has been closed, nothing more appears in it than the sense of the letter, or that sense which is nearest to the words. [Compare SD 1790.]

SD 2435. CONCERNING THE PRAYERS OF INFANTS.

It is given me to learn from experience that the prayers of infants have a much fuller hearing in heaven than the prayers of adults; and still fuller than [the prayers] of those who have closed the way towards interior things by thoughts of natural things and the things of memory; and still fuller than [the prayers] of those who are blinded and so have no faith, for with them, the way towards heaven is closed. [My] experience from which it was given to learn that it is [so is] that when sometimes I paid less attention to what is in the Lord's Prayer, then the angels, as was told me, perceived it more fully; and this was also the case when I read in the Word of the Lord, because the way was open. This seemed surprising to me, yet from experience it was granted to learn that it is true. In like manner from this, that those spirits who are far away from me heard and perceived better when I thought tacitly, for my thought, which was very full of different ideas, hinders the matter from being so well conveyed. - 1748, June 28. [Cp. SD 1826.]

AC 2803. Good itself is "the Father" ....

CL 84. Good has to do with love... for love is composed of good.

Mal. 2:10. Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?

Isa. 63:16. Surely Thou art our Father, for Abraham knows us not, and Israel does not acknowledge us. Thou, O Jehovah, art our Father, our Redeemer; Thy name is from eternity.

Psa. 68:6. A Father of orphans, and a judge for widows,  
Is God in the abode of His holiness.

TCR 306. In the spiritual sense, “to honor father and mother” means to reverence and love God and the church. In this sense, God, who is the Father of all, is meant by “father” and the church by “mother.” In the heavens, little children and angels know of no other father and no other mother, since there they are born anew of the Lord by means of the church.... The Lord teaches this in the common prayer of the Christian churches, “Our Father, who art in the heavens, hallowed be Thy name” ....

TCR 307. In the celestial sense, “father” means our Lord Jesus Christ....

#### Questions and Comments

1. In Swedish, apparently it is customary to speak of “reading” the Lord’s Prayer where we would “say” it.
2. Perhaps we do not need to worry too much if our thoughts wander or we feel sleepy while saying the Prayer sometimes. Possibly our thoughts may be more open at such times.
3. There is a proverb, “The wish is father of the deed.” Perhaps this reflects that a good love is the father of every good thing that we do. This is one way we can see why “Father” in the highest sense signifies the Lord’s Divine Love, that creates and sustains all things.
4. Why do you think the Prayer begins *Our* Father (in Greek word order, “Father of us”), and continues to have “we” and “us” several times? Why does it not say “My Father” or just “Father”?

### *3. Our Father is the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Isaiah 9:6.** Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given.... And His name shall be called... God, the Mighty, Father of eternity, Prince of Peace.

**John 1:1, 14.** In the beginning was the Word... and the Word was God.... And the Word was made flesh....

**John 1:18.** No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has brought [Him] forth to view.

**John 10:1, 9.** He who does not enter by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. I am the door: by Me if any man enters in, he shall be saved.

**John 14:6.** No man comes to the Father but by Me.

**John 14:8-11.** Philip said, Show us the Father. Jesus says to him, He who sees Me sees the Father. How sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me.

AC 8864:4. That the things which precede must reign in the things which follow, and thus in the series... is evident from everything which the Lord spoke, especially from His prayer, which is called "the Lord's Prayer." In this Prayer, all things follow on in such a series that they constitute as it were a column that grows larger from top to bottom, in the interiors of which are the things which precede in the series. What is first in it is inmost, and what follows in order adds itself to the inmost successively and thus grows. That which is inmost reigns universally in those things which are round about; that is, in each and all things; for from this is that which is essential to the existence of all things.

AR 839:5. ...[Evil spirits from Armageddon said,] "The words [of the Prayer] are clear, that one must pray to God the Father; and because Christ is our Savior, that we must pray to God the Father for the sake of the Son." And they soon concluded in indignation that they would go to us and declare it face to face, saying also that they would pull our ears.

AR 839:6. [Angels replied,] "We are from the society of heaven which is called Michael, and we were sent to visit and inquire, whether you who are gathered together in this place have any religion or not; and we cannot know this otherwise than by questioning [you] about God. For the idea of God enters into the whole of religion, and by it conjunction is effected, and by conjunction salvation. We in heaven read [the Lord's] Prayer daily, like men on earth; and we do not then think of God the Father, because He is invisible; but we think of Him in His Divine Human, because in this He is visible. And in His Divine Human He is called by you Christ, but by us the Lord; and thus, to us the Lord is the Father in heaven.

AR 839:7. "Moreover we instructed them from the Word, that the Lord came into the world, that He might glorify His Human, for the end that the angels of heaven and the men of the

church might be united to God the Father through Him and in Him; for He taught that they who believe in Him are in Him, and He in them; which is as the church teaches, that they are in the body of Christ. Finally, we informed them that at this day a New Church is being established by the Lord, which is meant by “the New Jerusalem” in Revelation. In it there will be the worship of the Lord alone, as it is in heaven, and thus everything which is contained in the Lord’s Prayer from beginning to end will be fulfilled.

Invitation to the New Church 37. The whole of the Lord’s Prayer, from beginning to end, has respect to this time; that is, to the time when God the Father will be worshiped in the Human Form. This appears when this prayer is rightly explained.

#### Questions and Comments

1. We can see how important it is to have a reasonably true idea of “our Father, who art in heaven,” at the beginning of the Prayer, since everything else in the Prayer depends on whom we are praying to.
2. Do you say the Lord’s Prayer daily, as angels do in heaven? If not, when might be a good time in your day to say it? Charity 173 speaks of saying prayers “morning and evening, and at dinners and suppers.” Would it be useful to say the Prayer on your way to work?
3. Is the Lord Jesus Christ visible to you? Is He God to you? Can you think of Him being with you all the time, with power to save you from your sins and bring you, little by little, into heaven?
4. Why do you think the Lord taught us to pray, saying, “Our Father,” rather than, “O Lord”?

#### 4. *The God of Heaven is the Lord.*

**Matthew 28:18.** And Jesus coming spoke to them, saying, All authority is given to Me in heaven and on earth.

HH 2. First of all, it must be known who the God of heaven is, since upon that all other things depend. Throughout all heaven no other than the Lord alone is acknowledged as the God of heaven...

I have often talked with angels on this subject, and they have invariably declared that in heaven they are unable to divide the Divine into three, because they know and perceive that the Divine is One and that this One is in the Lord....

But let it be known that all those who have not separated what is true from what is good, or faith from love, accept in the other life, when they have been taught, the heavenly idea of the Lord, that He is the God of the universe. It is otherwise with those who have separated faith from life, that is, who have not lived according to the precepts of true faith.

HH 4. Infants, who form a third part of heaven, are all initiated into the acknowledgment and belief that the Lord is their Father, and afterwards that He is the Lord of all, thus the God of heaven and earth. That children grow up in heaven and are perfected by means of knowledges, even to angelic intelligence and wisdom, will be seen in the following pages.

HH 6. There were certain spirits who while living in the world had professed to believe in the Father; but of the Lord they had the same idea as of any other man, and therefore did not believe Him to be the God of heaven. For this reason, they were permitted to wander about and inquire wherever they wished whether there were any other heaven than the heaven of the Lord. They searched for several days, but nowhere found any. These were such as place the happiness of heaven in glory and dominion. And as they were unable to get what they desired, and were told that heaven does not consist in such things, they became indignant, and wished for a heaven where they could lord it over others and be eminent in glory like that in the world.

TCR 108. ...The Lord is at this day forming a new angelic heaven, and... it is formed of those who believe in the Lord God the Savior, and who approach Him directly, and... all others are rejected. So from now on, when anyone from Christendom goes into the spiritual world, as every man does at death, and does not believe in the Lord and approach Him alone, and is then unable to receive this faith, because he has lived wickedly or has confirmed himself in falsities, at his first approach toward heaven he is repelled. And he turns his face away from heaven and towards the lower earth, to which he goes and joins those who are there, who are meant, in Revelation by "the dragon" and the "false prophet."

Moreover, from now on, no man in Christian lands is listened to unless he believes in the Lord. His prayers become in heaven like ill-scented odors, and like breath from diseased lungs. And even if his appeal is thought to be like the fumes of incense, it ascends towards the angelic heaven only like the smoke of a conflagration, which is blown back into his eyes by a downward

gust of wind; or it is like the incense from a censer hidden under a monk's cloak. Such is the case hereafter with all piety that is directed to a divided trinity, not to a united trinity.

To show that the Divine trinity is united in the Lord is the chief object of this work. To this I will add the following new information. Some months ago, the twelve apostles were called together by the Lord, and were sent forth through the whole spiritual world, as they formerly were through the whole natural world, with the command to preach this gospel; and to each apostle was assigned a particular province; and they are executing this command with great zeal and industry.

#### Questions and Comments

1. Is it comforting that all those who have not separated faith from life accept the heavenly idea of the Lord, that He is the God of heaven and earth? Why does acceptance of this teaching fit with joining what is true with what is good?
2. How kind of the Lord to let those spirits search around for another heaven than the heaven of the Lord! What do we need to do and not do, to make sure we are not among those who wish for a heaven where we can lord it over others?
3. TCR 108 says that all who do not approach the Lord God the Savior directly, but pray to a Trinity divided into separate Persons, "are rejected." They are repelled from heaven, and their prayers are blown back down at them. This sounds harsh. Why does this happen?
4. Can you imagine being assigned a task in heaven by the Lord, and getting to execute His command with great zeal and industry? Even a small task? How cool would that be?! Has the Lord given you such a task in this world, do you think?

## 5. *The Lord is our Creator and Regenerator.*

**Matthew 23:9.** Call no man your father on the earth, for one is your Father, who is in the heavens.

DP 330. As every man is formed by the Lord in the womb in the image according to the likeness (of God) ... it follows that the Lord is the heavenly Father of all men, and that men are His spiritual children.... He alone is the Father as to life, and the earthly father is the father only as to the covering of life, which is the body.

AE 746:13. In the natural sense men may be called... fathers, but representatively; that is to say... fathers in the world are good, and lead their children to good, but from the Lord, not from themselves. From this it follows that although they are called... fathers, still they are not... but the Lord alone is the... Father.

**Genesis 2:24.** Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

**Matthew 10:37.** He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.

AC 4844:6. A father of the orphans, and a judge of the widows, is God in the habitation of His holiness (Ps. 68:5).

“The orphans” denote those who, like little children, are in the good of innocence, but not yet in truth, whose father is said to be the Lord, because He leads them as a father; and [He leads them] through truth into good, that is, into the good of life or of wisdom.

“The widows” denote those who as adults are in truth, but not yet in good, whose judge is said to be the Lord, because He leads them, and this through good into truth, that is, into the truth of intelligence; for by a “judge” is signified one who leads.

Good without truth, which is the “orphan,” becomes the good of wisdom through the doctrine of truth; and truth without good, which is the “widow,” becomes the truth of intelligence through a life of good.

AC 8897. ...That the Lord in the supreme sense is the “father” is because He gives new life to man, and thereby man becomes a son and heir of His kingdom....

**John 1:12-13.** But as many as received Him, to them He gave authority to become the children of God, to them who believe in His name, who were born, not of bloods, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God.

**John 3:3.** Amen, amen, I say to thee, Unless someone be born from above\*, he cannot see the kingdom of God. \*or born anew

**Rev. 21:7.** He who overcomes shall possess as an inheritance all things; and I will be God to him, and he shall be a son to Me.

**Matt. 18:3.** Unless you are converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

**Mark 10:14-15.** Let the little children come to Me and do not forbid them, for of such is the kingdom of God. Truly I say to you, Whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter there into it.

AE 996:2. Innocence is loving the Lord as one's Father by doing His commandments and wishing to be led by Him and not by oneself, thus like an infant.

#### Questions and Comments

1. Is there a value in inviting your adult children to call you by your first name, rather than to continue to call you Father/Daddy/Papa? See also AC 6492: "...after a son has become his own master, he ought not to acknowledge his father as his father, as before.... The Lord is his Father."
2. Why is it especially important in marriage to leave our natural father and mother in order to cleave to our wife? Why is it important for a husband and wife to be able to pray together to "Our Father"?
3. Can you picture the Lord leading you, being a father to an orphan, leading you through truth from the good of innocence to the good of life and the good of wisdom? Or can you picture the Lord as a benevolent judge, giving guidance to you as a widow, while you are in some knowledge of the truth but not yet in much of a good life, and helping you progress through a good life into the truth of intelligence?
4. Can you picture becoming a son (or daughter) and heir to the Lord, and receiving your own special place in heaven as an inheritance, free of charge, from the Lord?
5. What is one step we/you might take toward the innocence of doing His commandments and wishing to be led by Him and not by oneself?

## *6. Hallowed be Thy name.*

AC 6674:8. That the “name of Jehovah” denotes everything by which He is worshiped, thus in the supreme sense everything that proceeds from the Lord, is evident from the benediction:

Jehovah bless thee and keep thee; Jehovah make His faces to shine upon thee, and have mercy on thee; Jehovah lift up His faces upon thee, and give thee peace. So shall they put My name upon the sons of Israel (Num. 6:23-27).

AC 6887. This is My name forever. That this signifies that the Divine Human is the quality of the Divine Itself.... As the Divine Itself cannot be worshiped, because it cannot be approached either by faith or by love, being above every idea... therefore [the name] is the Divine Human, because it is the quality of the Divine Itself, which can be approached and worshiped.

AE 102:5. ...From this it is clear what is meant in the Lord’s prayer by the words, Hallowed be Thy name (Matt. 6:9), namely, that the Divine Human of the Lord is to be accounted holy, and to be worshiped.

DP 230. ...Scarcely anyone in the Christian world knows what is meant by “the name of God,” and for the reason that no one knows that there are no names in the spiritual world like those in the natural world, but each one there has a name that is in accordance with the quality of his love and wisdom. For as soon as anyone enters a society or into association with others, he immediately receives a name that is in accord with his character there. This naming is effected by spiritual language, which is such that it is capable of naming everything, for each letter in its alphabet signifies a single thing, and the several letters joined into a single word and making a person’s name involve the entire state of the thing. This is one of the wonders of the spiritual world.

DP 230:2. ...And as the Word is the Divine going forth, which is the name of God, and as all the Divine things that are called the spiritual things of the church are from the Word, they, too, are “the name of God.”

TCR 112:6. ...the Father in His Human... is the name of the Father; for the Lord said, ‘Father, glorify Thy name,’ that is, Thy Human; and when this is done the kingdom of God comes. And the reason why this Prayer was commanded for the present time is evident, namely, that through His Human an approach may be had to God the Father.... This is the true explanation of the words of that Prayer.

TCR 308. It must be kept in mind that a Divine heavenly sphere of love continually goes forth from the Lord toward all who embrace the doctrine of His church, who are obedient to Him, as children are to their father and mother in the world, who devote themselves to Him, and who wish to be fed, that is, instructed by Him. From this heavenly sphere a natural sphere arises, which is one of love towards infants and children. This is a most universal sphere, affecting not

only men, but also birds and beasts and even serpents; nor animate things only, but also things inanimate....

From the influx of that heavenly sphere into the natural world come the marvelous developments of vegetation from seed to fruit, and again to new seed. It is from this also that many kinds of plants turn, as it were, their faces to the sun during the day, and turn them away when the sun sets. It is from this also that there are flowers that open at the rising of the sun and close at his setting. It is from this also that the song-birds sing sweetly at the early dawn, and likewise after they have been fed by their mother earth. Thus do all these honor their father and mother. They all bear testimony that in the natural world the Lord provides through the sun and the earth all necessities both for animate and inanimate things.

#### Questions and Comments

1. AC 2724 tells how the ancient Jews and others took pride in the special name of God that they used, rather than loving the faith and love to the Lord that His names actually stand for. Could we do something similar by the fact that we speak of "Jehovah" in Kempton?
2. The reason we use the name Jehovah is because the Heavenly Doctrine *always* translates the Hebrew name of the Lord as "Jehovah." We are trying to follow the example of the Heavenly Doctrine. But we often keep "the LORD" in recitations because it is familiar and beloved. The small capitals are a sign that in Hebrew it actually says Jehovah, rather than Adonai (the Hebrew word for "Lord").
3. DP 230:2 says that the Word, too, is meant by "the name of God," which we must keep holy. Do you often hear people not keeping the names of God or the Word holy? Are there situations where you might fall into some bad habits in this regard?
4. Is it (quietly) exciting that the Lord commanded this Prayer for the present time, because now that He is risen, and especially now that He has made His second coming, we can approach our God, Creator, Redeemer and Savior, in the Lord?
5. How do you picture the Divine heavenly sphere of love going forth from the Lord toward all who embrace the teaching of His church? How do you picture responding to and receiving His sphere of love?