

The Lord's Prayer

P RAYER MAY BE said to be an opening up of a channel along which the divine Life and Light may flow into the Spirit, in the same way that the turning of a switch opens the way for the electric current to flow from the power-house into our house. Faith in prayer is like the energy which turns the switch. Without muscular force we cannot turn the switch to obtain physical light, and without faith we cannot pray in such a manner as to secure spiritual illumination. If we pray for worldly ends, for that which is contrary to the law of love and universal good, our prayers will prove as unavailing as a glass switch in an electric circuit. Glass is a non-conductor, a bar to the electric power, and selfish prayers are, likewise, bars to divine purposes and must therefore remain unanswered. To pray to a purpose we must pray aright, and in the Lord's Prayer we have a most wonderful pattern, for it caters to the needs of man as no other formula could do. Within a few short sentences it encompasses all the complexities of the relationship of God to man.

To understand this sublime prayer properly and be able to render it understandingly and efficiently, let us recall that:

The Father is the highest Initiate of the Saturn Period.

The Son is the highest Initiate of the Sun Period.

The Holy Spirit is the highest Initiate of the Moon Period.

The Divine Spirit and the dense body of man started their evolution in the Saturn Period and are therefore under the special care of the Father.

The Life Spirit and the vital body started their evolution in the Sun Period and are consequently



Created by Ariel Agemian exclusively for the Confraternity of the Precious Blood

Right prayer, which opens the channels between the threefold spirit and the threefold body, brings heavenly benediction.

the particular charges of the Son.

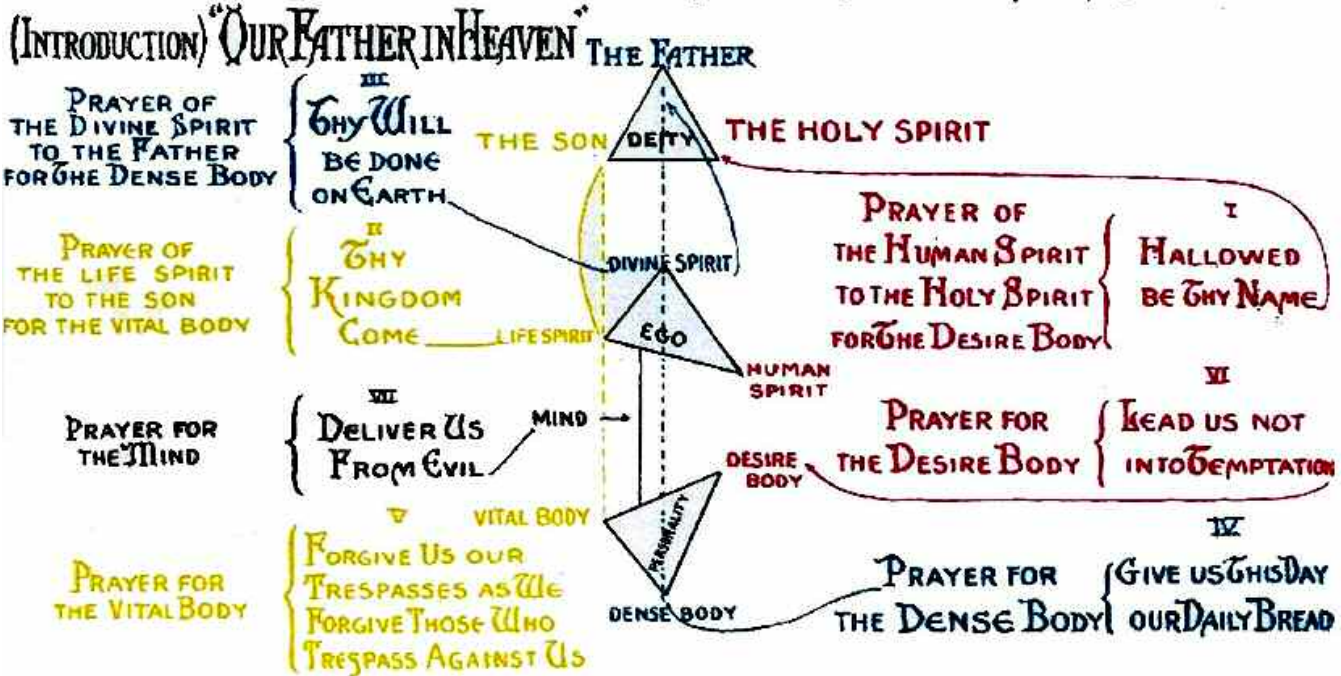
The Human Spirit and the desire body commenced to evolve in the Moon Period and are therefore the special wards of the Holy Spirit.

The Mind was added in the Earth Period and is not cared for by other or outside beings, but is to be subdued by man himself, without any outside assistance.

In the Lord's Prayer there are seven prayers; or rather, there are three sets of two prayers and one single supplication. Each of the three sets has reference to the needs of one of the aspects of the threefold Spirit and its counterpart in the threefold body. The opening sentence, *Our Father Who art in Heaven*, is merely as the address upon an envelope.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

showing how it fully meets the needs of all the seven human principles



The diagram on the following page shows the relation between the Trinity, the threefold Spirit, the threefold body and the Mind, each aspect of the Spirit being connected by a line with the prayer specifically suited to its counterpart in the threefold body and addressed to its guardian aspect in the Trinity.

The Human Spirit lifts itself upon the wings of devotion to its parent aspect in the Holy Trinity and intones the opening incantation, "Hallowed be Thy Name." The Life Spirit raises itself upon pinions of love and addresses the fount of its being, The Son, "Thy Kingdom come." The Divine Spirit soars with superior insight to the fountainhead, The Father, whence it sprang at the dawn of time, and manifests its confidence in that all-embracing Intelligence in the words, "Thy Will be done."

Having thus reached the Throne of Grace, the threefold Spirit in man prefers its requests concerning the personality, the threefold body.

The Divine Spirit prays to the Father for its counterpart, the dense body, "Give us our daily bread." The Life Spirit prays to the Son for its counterpart, the vital body, "Forgive us our trespasses we forgive those who trespass against us."

The Human Spirit utters the supplication for the desire body in the words, "Lead us not into temptation."

Then all join in a concerted appeal concerning the Mind, "Deliver us from evil."

The addition, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever, Amen," was not given by Christ, but is very appropriate as the parting adoration of the threefold Spirit as it closes its direct address to the Deity.

Looking at the foregoing explanation from the analytical standpoint, we find that there are three religious teachings to be given to man in helping him to attain to perfection. One is the Religion of the Holy Spirit; the next is the Religion of the Son; and the last is the Religion of the Father. Under the regime of the Holy Spirit the human race was divided into nations and peoples segregated by their adherence to one group from fellowship with other nations. Each group was further cut off from the rest because of speaking another language. They were all put under certain laws and were taught to reverence the name of their God. One people worshiped him as Iao, another as Tao, others as Bel. Everywhere the name of the

Lawgiver was holy. The method of segregation had the advantage that the Race Spirit-in-chief, Jehovah, could use one people to punish another who had transgressed His law, but it has the disadvantage that it fosters egotism and separates humanity in a manner detrimental to universal good.

It is an axiomatic truth that what does not benefit all cannot really benefit any. Therefore, ways and means must be found to reunite the scattered nations and weld them into one universal Brotherhood. That is to be the work of the Religion of the Son—Christianity. The warring of nations is fostered by the Race Spirit, but the Christian Religion will eventually unite them, cause them to beat their swords into ploughshares and bring peace and good will on Earth when the kingdom of the Son has superseded the tribes and races.

A yet higher religious teaching, the religion of The Father, is to unite mankind still closer. In the Kingdom of the Son there will be a universal Brotherhood of separate individuals having varying interests, but ready to give and take through love, sinking individual preferences for the common good. But when the religion of the Father becomes a fact in life, the self will be entirely submerged in a common purpose, a single will. The Will of God will then be done on Earth as it is in Heaven, where there is neither me nor thee, but where God is All and in All.

In the meantime a certain work has to be performed by the threefold Spirit upon the threefold body, to spiritualize it and extract the threefold soul. The dense body is but an instrument, but a most valuable one, to be cared for and prized as a mechanic cares for and prizes a valuable tool. We hold firmly before our mental vision that we are not the body, any more than the mechanic is identical with his tools, or the carpenter one with his structures. That is plainly evident when we consider that our body is a constantly changing aggregation of cells, while we keep our “I”-density amid and despite all changes—which would be impossible if we were identical with our dense body.

“Give us our daily bread,” says the fourth prayer. Most people eat too much, and for them an occasional fast may be good, but fasting is unnecessary for those who do not feast, but live the sim-

ple life from day to day. When the body is overfed, the Spirit may be ever so willing, but the flesh will be correspondingly weak. Therefore, when a young Spirit gains ascendancy, it seeks to overcome the lower nature by fasting, tortures, etc., as best exemplified in Hindu Yogis who emaciate the body, causing the limbs to wither, etc., that the Spirit may shine. That is a mistake as much subversive of true spiritual growth as is the habit of overeating. As said, where a man can control his appetite and feed his body on pure food he need not fast, but may give to his body its daily bread.

The vital body is the storehouse of the panorama of our life. Our sins and the wrong we have suffered at the hand of others are there inscribed. Hence the fifth prayer, “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us,” enunciates the needs of the vital body. Be it noted that this prayer teaches the doctrine of the remission of sins, in the words, “forgive us,” and the Law of Consequence in the words, “as we forgive,” making our attitude to others the measure of our emancipation.

“Lead us not into temptation” is the prayer for the desire body, which is the storehouse of energy, and furnishes incentive to action through desire. An Oriental maxim says, “Kill out desire,” and the Orientals furnish good examples of the indolence resultant upon the attempt to do that. “Kill out your temper” is the foolish admonition sometimes given those who lose their temper. Desire or temper is a valuable asset, too valuable to be stunted or killed. The man without desire is like steel devoid of temper—of no account. In Revelation, while the six churches are praised, the seventh is utterly anathematized for being “neither hot nor cold,” a wishy-washy community.

“The greater the sinner, the greater the saint,” is a true adage, for it takes energy to sin and when that energy is turned in the right direction, it is as much of a power for good as previously it was for evil. A man may be good because he cannot summon up sufficient energy to be bad; then he is so good that he is good for nothing. While we are weak our desire nature masters us and may lead us into temptation, but as we learn to control our desire nature, our temper may guide us in harmony

with the laws of God and man.

Desire is the great tempter of mankind. It is the great incentive to all action, and in so far as the actions subserve the purposes of the Spirit, it is good; but where the desire is for something degrading, something that debases the nature, it is indeed proper that we pray not to be led into temptation.

Love, wealth, power, and fame: These are the four great motives of human action. Desire for one or more of these is the motive for all that man does or leaves undone. The great Leaders learn thereby. They are necessary, and the aspirant may safely continue to use them as motives for action, but he must transmute them into something higher. He must overcome with nobler aspirations the selfish love which seeks the ownership of another body, and all desires for wealth, power, and fame for narrow and personal reasons.

The love for which he must long is that only which is of the soul and embraces all beings, high and low, increasing in proportion to the needs of the recipient; the wealth, that which consists solely of abundance of opportunities to serve his fellow men; the power, that alone which makes for the upliftment of humanity; the fame, none save that which increases his ability to spread the good news, that all who suffer may thus quickly find solace for the heart's grief.

The guiding power which directs this energy of the desire nature is the Mind, hence the seventh prayer, "Deliver us from evil," is made with regard to the mind.

The animals follow desire blindly and commit no sin. To them there is no evil; that only comes to our cognition by and through the discriminating mind which enables man to see various courses of action and to choose. If he chooses to act in harmony with universal good, he cultivates virtue; if the contrary, he becomes tainted with vice. It should be noted that the much vaunted "innocence" of a child is not by any means virtue. The child has not yet been tempted and tried, therefore

THE ANSWERED PRAYER

Romans 8:26

I prayed for strength, and then I lost awhile
All sense of nearness, human and divine;
The love I leaned on failed and pierced my heart;
The hands I clung to loosed themselves from mine;
But while I swayed, weak, trembling, and alone,
The everlasting arms upheld my own.

I prayed for light; the sun went down in clouds,
The moon was darkened by a misty doubt,
The stars of heaven were dimmed by earthly fears,
And all my little candle flames burned out;
But while I sat in shadow, wrapped in night,
The face of Christ made all the darkness bright.

I prayed for peace, and dreamed of restful ease,
A slumber drugged from pain, a hushed repose;
Above my head the skies were black with storm,
And fiercer grew the onslaught of my foes;
But while the battle raged, and wild winds blew,
I heard His voice, and perfect peace I knew.

I thank Thee, Lord, Thou wert too wise to heed
My feeble prayers, and answer as I sought,
Since these rich gifts Thy bounty has bestowed
Have brought me more than I had asked or thought;
Giver of good, so answer each request
With Thine own giving, better than my best.

—Annie Johnson Flint

it is innocent. In time, temptations from the desire nature will come to test its courage, and it depends upon the control of the mind over desire whether it will stand for the right or fall by the wayside.

If the mind is strong enough to "deliver us from evil" desires, we have become virtuous, which is a positive quality, and even if we fall for a time before we realize our wrong, we acquire virtue as soon as we repent and reform. We exchange negative innocence for the positive quality of virtue.

Thus does the Lord's Prayer cover the various parts of the human constitution and enunciate the need for them all, showing the marvelous wisdom laid down in that simple formula. □

—Max Heindel