

The Lord's Prayer in its 'traditional', Greek and Literal English forms

'Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.'

This traditional form of the prayer is presented in The Methodist Worship Book (1999) and introduced at each turn (39 times) with the words: 'As our Saviour taught his disciples, we pray:' We consider the New Testament sources:

The Primary Source: Mt. 6.9-13:

Οὕτως οὖν προσεύχεσθε ὑμεῖς·
Πάτερ ἡμῶν,
ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς·

A So, therefore, pray you: a
'Father of us, b
the one in the heavens: b'

Ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου,
ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου,
γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου,
ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ
καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς.

B Let it be hallowed - the name of you; a
let it come - the kingdom of you; b
let it be done - the will of you, b'
as in heaven,
also on earth.

Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον
δός ἡμῖν σήμερον·
καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν,
ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς
ἀφήκαμεν
τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν·
καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς
εἰς πειρασμόν,
ἀλλὰ ῥύσαι ἡμᾶς
ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

B' The bread of us belonging to tomorrow a
give to us today; b
and forgive us the debts of us, b
as also we
we have forgiven
the debtors of us;
and do not lead us b'
into temptation,
but deliver us
from the evil one.'

The Secondary Source: Lk. 11.2-4:

Εἶπεν δὲ αὐτοῖς,
Ὅταν προσεύχησθε,
λέγετε,

A And he said to them, a
'When you pray, b
say, b'

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

B "Father, a
let it be hallowed - the name of you b
let it come - the kingdom of you; b'

Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον
δίδου ἡμῖν τὸ καθ' ἡμέραν·
καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰς ἁμαρτίας ἡμῶν,
καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ
ἀφίομεν παντὶ
ὀφείλοντι ἡμῖν·
καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς
εἰς πειρασμόν.

B' The bread of us belonging to tomorrow a
give to us daily; b
and forgive us the sins of us b
for also we ourselves
forgive everyone
owing us
and do not lead us b'
into temptation."

After Matthew, the scheme/the pattern for praying is:

A	(_bb')	Address God
B	(abb')	Pray firstly with regard to him and his cause
B'	(abb')	Only then, pray with regard to your own needs.

In Luke's adaptation of Matthew, his introduction is A and the prayer is reduced to the two parts, B and B'.

Clearly, the traditional version of the Lord's Prayer is both an amalgam and an updating (for our age?) of the two versions. But we may note that it loses the force of the earlier 'bread of tomorrow' and 'the evil one'. And further to this, it retains the doxology which is unsupported by textual and literary evidence. One wonders, then, why Methodism uses a traditional version of the prayer and introduces it as the one that Jesus 'taught his disciples'? The Anglicans and Roman Catholics do better in their introductions of the prayer in their liturgies. The Anglicans also keep a vertical space between the prayer and the doxology.