

**Luke 11:1-13**

<sup>1</sup> He was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray just 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 for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us, and do not subject us to the final test.”

<sup>5</sup> And he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a journey and I have nothing to offer him,’ <sup>7</sup> and he says in reply from within, ‘Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed. I cannot get up to give you anything.’ <sup>8</sup> I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence.

<sup>9</sup> “And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. <sup>11</sup> What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? <sup>13</sup> If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

**Context**

With the geographical note, “in a certain place” Luke has separated this narrative from the immediate context of Chapter 10 (the conclusion of the mission of the 72, the parable of the Good Samaritan, and the encounter with Martha and Mary). Luke now presents three episodes concerned with prayer:

- the first (Luke 11:1–4) recounts Jesus teaching his disciples the Christian communal prayer,
- the “Our Father”; the second (Luke 11:5–8), the importance of persistence in prayer; and
- the third (Luke 11:9–13), the effectiveness of prayer.

The Matthean form of the “Our Father” occurs in the “Sermon on the Mount” (Matthew 6:9–15); the shorter Lucan version is presented while Jesus is at prayer and his disciples ask him to teach them to pray just as John taught his disciples to pray. In answer to their question, Jesus presents them with an example of a Christian communal prayer that stresses the fatherhood of God and acknowledges him as the one to whom the Christian disciple owes daily sustenance, forgiveness, and deliverance from the final trial.

**Luke on Prayer**

Luke has a greater emphasis on prayer than the other gospels. His vocabulary includes the following (Although last two do not specifically mean prayer, there are instances where requests are made of Jesus or God.):

- *proseuche/proseuchomai* = prayer/pray in the gospels
- *deomai/deesis* = ask, beg, pray/prayer, petition
- *erotao/eperotao* = ask, request, beg/ask for

Even when a pericope (story) is found in other gospels, Luke alone includes comments about Jesus’ praying:

- Jesus is praying at his baptism before heavens open (3:21)
- Jesus spends the night praying to God before selecting the twelve (6:12)
- Jesus is praying before he asks the disciples, “Who do the crowds/you say that I am?” (9:18)
- Jesus is praying on the mountain before the transfiguration. (9:28, 29)
- Jesus is praying before the disciples ask him to teach them to pray. (11:1)

The following parables about prayer are unique to Luke:

- The Friend at Midnight (11:5-8)
- The Widow and the Judge (18:1-8)
- The Pharisee and the Tax Collector (18:9-14)

As well Luke also has passages parallel to other synoptic passages about prayer:

- Pray for those who mistreat you (6:28)
- “When you pray, say . . . (11:2)
- “My house shall be a house of prayer” (19:46)
- Scribes, for a show, make lengthy prayers (20:47)
- Jesus praying in the garden and asks disciples to pray (22:40, 41, 44, 45, 46)

This same emphasis on prayer continues into the *Acts of the Apostles*. Why this emphasis on prayer in Luke? It may be that Luke was writing to a group of people unfamiliar with Christian/Jewish prayer, so he emphasizes the importance of prayer. The effect is to show that if Jesus often prayed, how much more does the true disciple need to pray? Many scholars have pointed out that this is a Lucan characteristic of what it means to be a disciple.

### **The Communal Nature of the Lord’s Prayer**

The context for the Lord’s Prayer in Luke and Matthew (6:5-15) are quite different. Matthew is writing for Jewish Christians that share a common heritage of prayer. Thus Jesus simply begins: “*But when you pray...*” They seem to know how to pray and the importance of prayer, but they need further clarification about prayer – especially vis-à-vis the temple and synagogue exemplar and the pagans. In Luke, the audience, (including the disciples,) don’t know how to pray (at least as Jesus’ followers). The disciples (and Luke’s readers?) ask Jesus to teach them to pray – and this seems to be in distinction from John the Baptist’s disciples (v.1). This introduction also suggests that we are defined by our prayers.

In v. 2 both verbs are second person plural. The prayer is intended to be communal, rather than personal. Note also the plural pronouns in the prayer: “our” and “us”. It has been suggested, and rightly so, that the “Our Father” was given as a prayer to define “us”. Perhaps this suggests that one way the prayer defines **us** as belonging to Jesus is not necessarily the words, but the fact that we pray it together. Culpepper (*Luke*, New Interpreter’s Bible, 234) makes this brief comment:

... use of the first-person plural later in the Lukan prayer shows that it is still understood as the community prayer of Jesus’ disciples. Even in Luke, therefore, the prayer is not an expression of individual piety apart from the life and worship of the community.

In this Culpepper reflects what the Church has proclaimed since the earliest of days:

Before all things the Teacher of peace and Master of unity is unwilling for prayer to be made single and individually, teaching that he who prays is not to pray for himself alone. For we do not say, “My Father who art in heaven,” nor “Give me this day my bread”...Prayer with us is public and common; and when we pray we do not pray for one but for the whole people because we the whole people are one.

*Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage (d. 258)*

### **Commanding God?**

Many of the phrases in the Lucan prayer are imperative – as though the prayer commands God:

- “*Hallowed be your name,*”
- “*Your kingdom come,*”
- “*Give us,*”
- “*Forgive us*”
- “*Do not subject us*” (technically subjunctive but with imperative force)

What does it mean that we are “commanding” God? Last week Martha was politely chastised for telling Jesus what he should do (Luke 10:41). It may be that these requests are asking God to do what God would do anyway. Culpepper (p.234) offers this explanation to the first two petitions:

The petition that God’s name might be sanctified is double sided. On the one hand, it is a prayer that God would act to establish God’s own sovereignty. On the other hand, it voices the longing for the day when all people will revere God. The second petition, therefore, is an extension of the first. If God’s name is sanctified, then God’s sovereignty and dominion will have been established (Ezek 36:22-23).

Green (*The Gospel of Luke*, p.442) also comments on this petition: “Why must God sanctify his name? Because it has been profaned by God’s own people (cf. Lev 22:32; Isa 52:5-6; Ezek 36:29-21). God’s eschatological work to reestablish the holiness of his name, then, invokes shame on the part of his people and invites them to embrace practices that honor him.”

In the petition about bread, Luke uses a present tense, which emphasis the continual giving of God. This seems to indicate a petition for God to take care of daily needs.

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## Commentary

### The Lord’s Prayer

The disciples realize that the right relationship to the Father (and to Jesus) is sought in prayer. Jesus, like John the Baptist, must have a distinctive insight into prayer flowing from his mission. In response to the disciples’ question, he reveals the Lord’s Prayer.

Comparison of the two forms of the Lord’s Prayer reveals that the structure and content are basically the same, reflecting the original instruction of Jesus. They were shaped by different community traditions at a very early stage. Matthew’s text, an adaptation for liturgical use, has been used in worship down to our day; the briefer text of Luke, though less familiar, is probably closer to the original phrasing of Jesus. Both begin with Jesus’ distinctive address for God, “Father” (Hebrew: *abbā* - see note below on v.2), and pray first for the glorification of God’s name on earth and the full establishment of his kingdom. Then they turn to the disciples’ needs: God’s continual protection day by day and his sustaining support in the face of the “final test” at the end of time. In slightly different wording, both formulas relate God’s forgiveness of us to our forgiveness of others.

*Hallowed* means ‘made holy’, ‘reverenced’. The *name* in antiquity stood for far more than it does with us. It summed up a person’s whole character, all that was known or revealed about him. The prayer concerns more than the way people take the name of God upon their lips (though this is included). It refers to all that God is and has revealed of himself and asks for a proper attitude in the light of this – and the realization that we are people that “taken on” the name of God, thus there is something also revealed about us.

The petition “**Hallowed be your name**” is not an appeal to God to sanctify himself, but rather that God act in his people so that his name would not be profaned by them. Ezekiel 36 provides a clear conceptual background, where God’s condemnation of Israel’s profaning *to onoma mou to hagion* (“my holy name”; v. 22, LXX) is followed by this promise: “I will sanctify my great name [*hagiasō to onoma mou to mega*], which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them; and the nations shall know that I am the LORD ... when through you I display my holiness before their eyes” (v. 23). The petition for God’s name to be hallowed can be seen as a call to fulfill his own promises.

This call for God to act is more explicitly noted in the petition concerning the arrival of God’s kingdom, “**your kingdom come.**” The petition looks for the bringing in of the kingdom that was the constant subject of Jesus’ teaching. There is a sense in which it is realized here and now, in the hearts and lives of people who subject themselves to God and accept his way for them (cf. Luke 11:20; 17:20). But

in another sense it will not come until God's will is perfectly done throughout the world (cf. Matthew, "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven") – and that day lies in the future (cf. Luke 19:11). This petition presupposes this tension and points forward to the fulfillment of God's salvation program, which is inaugurated by Jesus himself.

The phrase "**daily bread**" – at least the "daily" part – presents a unique problem for the translators (see the note on v.3 below). That being as it may, whatever Aramaic or other original there may have been, Luke's "daily" is generally accepted by the Christian churches throughout the ages and Luke's own language tells us that we are to pray "*each day*" – today, tomorrow and the day after.

The phrase "**your kingdom come**" (v.2) certainly gives the whole prayer a future look, though in this verse there is perhaps a backward look to the manna of the wilderness as a symbolic model (Exod 16:4). Manna is the morrow's bread, the bread of the coming day, the bread of the kingdom, now urgently longed for. This understanding, already found in some circles in the early Church, has the advantage of linking this petition with those that precede and follow it in the prayer, thus giving it all its eschatological sense. It also confirms possible eucharistic associations of the prayer, apparent in its context in the *Didache* (where a form of the prayer also appears), where the eschatological perception of the Christian meal is emphasized (Did. 9–10). And none of the above says that the petition is not also a plain request for food and the everyday things that are necessary.

In the OT the appeal to divine forgiveness is often grounded in God's own previous acts of kindness (cf. Num. 14:19: "*Pardon, then, the wickedness of this people in keeping with your great kindness, even as you have forgiven them from Egypt until now.*"). The appeal to divine forgiveness is not foreign to OT liturgical traditions (cf. Exod. 32:32; 34:9; 1 Kings 8:33–34, 46–53; Ps. 19:12; 25:11; 32:1; 65:3; 78:38; 79:9). Now we are given this as our prayer: "**forgive us our sins for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us.**" Here the correspondence between human and divine forgiveness is not emphasized in ways that it is in this Gospel (cf. 6:37–38; 23:34).

In our liturgies we follow the Matthean form "*as we forgive others*" (6:12). This raises the idea that we are to understand that God will forgive us only to the extent that we forgive others. This should give us pause. Is a human action, the forgiveness of others, the ground of divine forgiveness? Perhaps a limitation on what God will do for us? The whole of the NT makes clear that divine forgiveness springs from the grace of God and not from any human action or merit. The Lucan form offers an understanding that moves from the lesser to the greater: since even sinful people like us forgive, we can confidently appeal to a merciful God. The question is will we appeal to God for forgiveness? As many spiritual writers have noted, an unforgiving heart is not in a condition that can accept forgiveness.

Again, in our liturgical settings we are quite used to praying, "*lead us not into temptation.*" But note that the Lucan version in our gospel reading is "**and do not subject us to the final test.**" The underlying Greek word is *peirasmos*? Its normal meaning is "test" or "temptation" – not necessarily always with a religious connotation. In the LXX we find the ordinary senses (cf. 1 Sam. 17:39) However we also find the use of *peirasmos* with a religious use: divine testing, in relation to temptation to transgress God's commands, and in regards to the human tempting of God. Here are some examples:

*Human Temptation.* Here *peirasmos* carries the sense of "that which tries to learn the nature or character of someone or something by submitting such to thorough and extensive testing," namely, "examination, testing."

- The best example of divine testing is in Gen. 22:1ff., where Abraham meets the test. In Ex. 20:20 the law is a test of the people, and Dt. 8:2 views the desert experience as a test. In Judg. 2:22 God tests the people's obedience by not driving out the heathen who are still in the land. Here God uses history to test the people's faith and obedience.
- The story of the fall describes human temptation that comes, not from God, but from the adversary,

who forces Adam and Eve to decide for or against God. Satan also appears in Job 1. The temptation is here allowed by God as a test. Job meets the test because, even in incomprehensible suffering, he is ready to count on God and commit himself to him.

- There are many references to testing in the Wisdom writings (cf. Sir. 2:1; 33:1), but here the testing is largely educative. All the life of the righteous is a test, and to pass it one should model oneself on Abraham etc.
- In Dan. 12:10 the last tribulation will be a final testing and sanctifying (a theme prevalent among the Essene and Qumran writings of a later age)

Tempting God. This word group is used of Jesus' temptation by Satan. It is also used of the "testing" of Jesus by other people.

- The OT offers many instances of human tempting of God. In Ex. 17:2 Moses asks why the complaining people are putting God to the test. Num. 14:22 contains God's judgment on those who put him to the proof. To tempt God is to fail to accept his power or his will to save. It is to challenge him in doubt and unbelief. True love of God rules out the testing of God (Dt. 6:16-17). The strong tradition that one must not tempt God explains the reasoning of Ahaz in Is. 7:12, although in this case the prohibition does not apply, for God offers a sign.
- Wis. 1:2 shows that faith does not tempt God. Putting God to the test is not belief in him but questioning his power and love.

What is clear is that *peirasmos* understood as meaning "the endeavor or attempt to cause someone to sin," (i.e., temptation) does not apply to God as James 1:13-14 asserts that God tempts no one. The devil tempts us to sin, not God. God protects us from the hour of temptation/trial (Rev 3:10). However one understands *peirasmos* (temptation now or subject to the final test of end times), temptation and testing do reveal one's character. We are to encourage in ourselves and others an attitude, the attitude that flees from temptation (cf. 1 Cor. 6:18; 10:14; 1 Tim. 6:11; 2 Tim. 2:22). Christians recognize their weakness and the ease with which they give way to the temptations of the world. So we pray to be delivered from them all.

### **The Midnight Visitor**

<sup>5</sup> *And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, <sup>6</sup>for a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a journey and I have nothing to offer him,' <sup>7</sup>and he says in reply from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed. I cannot get up to give you anything.' <sup>8</sup>I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence.*

This parable, which is only found in Luke, is connected to the previous prayer by the words for "bread" (vv. 3, 5) and "give" (vv. 3, 7, 8). The setting is likely a small village where there are no shops. A household would bake its bread each morning. By the end of the day, the household's supply is used. Now comes the unexpected call. At midnight the man must feed his friend, for hospitality is a sacred duty. So he goes to another friend for *three loaves*, i.e. three small loaves which would suffice for one man. But this second householder has shut his door and gone to bed with his children. Most families lived in a one-roomed house. The whole family would sleep on a raised platform at one end of such a room. A man in such a situation could not get up without disturbing the whole family. The friend raises no difficulty about giving the bread; the issue is the family already retired. (or perhaps just the bother of getting).

The key word is "persistence" (*anaideia*) in v.8. This word only occurs here in the NT. It comes from two words: (1) the verb *aideomai*, which means "to feel shame, be ashamed or fear; to respect, reverence; and (2) the prefix *an* which negates the other meanings: e.g., "not to feel shame" or "not to have respect."

From a lexicon: the word means: “a lack of sensitivity to what is proper,” and can be translated with “insolence, audacity, impudence, or shamelessness.”

Yet pronouns in this verse make it unclear who is acting shamelessly. Culpepper (*Luke*, The New Interpreter’s Bible, p.236) makes these comments about this verse:

Following the normal meaning of the term, we may understand v. 8 as posing a comparison between the obligation of friendship and those of the honor-shame code. The ambiguous pronouns leave room for debate over whether the petitioner is shameless for begging for food in the middle of the night or whether we are to understand that the sleeper would be shameless for refusing a neighbor’s request. Either reading is possible, but the latter is preferable. The situation is unthinkable not because of the petitioner’s persistence but because honor demanded that a neighbor get up, awaken his whole family if necessary, and supply his neighbor’s need – if not from friendship, then at least to avoid being shamed.

Malina and Rohrbaugh (*Social-Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels*, p.350-1) agree:

Western commentaries notwithstanding, there is no evidence that the Greek word rendered ... “persistence” ... ever had those meanings in antiquity. The word means “shamelessness,” the negative quality of lacking sensitivity (shame) to one’s public honor status. Thus the petitioner threatens to expose the potential shamelessness of the sleeper. By morning the entire village would know of his refusal to provide hospitality. He thus gives in to avoid public exposure as a shameless person.

However, Tannehill (*Luke*, pp. 189-190) comes to a different conclusion:

Interpretation of this term is difficult. In spite of the NRSV, “persistence” is not quite accurate, for *anaideia* really means “shamelessness,” the negative quality of one who offends social standards. Some interpreters think this refers to the shamelessness of the sleeper in the eyes of the village if he does not get up and help his friend. The alternative is to apply “his shamelessness” to the one asking for bread, with the assumption that, even though the man is preserving his honor by feeding his midnight guests, he is acting shamelessly by rousing a family out of bed. Part of this problem is a confusion of pronouns in verse 8, which leaves uncertain who is meant by “his shamelessness.”

In support of the second reading, it might be noted that shamelessness, even though a negative quality in society, is not necessarily so in the Gospel tradition. The “faith” commended in healing stories is a boldness that refuses to be stopped by social proprieties [*cf.* 5:20 and 8:47-48], and the widow who approaches the unjust judge ... is not only persistent but bold, even impudent (18:1-5). Although it is true that human requests of God may show ignorance and pettiness, this passage seems to deal with a different problem: an unwillingness to ask, out of fear or deference. The following verses (vv. 9-10) speak to the same issue.

On one hand, we don’t have to be afraid of approaching God properly with our prayers with the right words or at the right time. We can be bold and shameless in our requests to God at any time.

On the other hand, does God need to protect his honor by answering our requests? Can we respect a God who tells us to pray for our daily needs, but then doesn’t appear to give what we need? However, the man’s request isn’t just for himself, but for his late-night-visiting friends, that he might properly care for their needs.

Four times in these verses, the word “friend” (*philos*) is used. There is the friendship between the two neighbors and the friendship between the first man and his midnight visitors. The story then suggests that there is a similar friendship between God and us -- we can approach God as a friend -- even waking him up from a deep sleep -- that is, if God ever slept.

The answer to his “prayer” was to be given what he needed v. 8.

### Ask, Seek, Knock and Good Gifts

<sup>9</sup> “And I tell you, **ask** and you will receive; **seek** and you will find; **knock** and the door will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. <sup>11</sup> What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? <sup>13</sup> If you then, who are wicked, know how to give **good gifts** to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

This section is also found in Matthew 7:7-11, not however connected with the Lord’s Prayer (6:9-13). The “ask, seek, knock” are virtually identical in both Gospels. There are a number of differences in the “good gifts” section (listed below). This section of the reading is connected to the previous one by the words “to give” and “to ask”. Both occur five times in the verses.

“Asking, seeking, knocking” in vv. 9 and 10 are present tense = “*keep on* asking, seeking, and knocking” or “*continue* to ask, seek, and knock.” Perhaps like a young child badgering his parents until s/he gets what is wanted. This would seem to connect with the persistence talked about in the previous parable and in 18:1-8.

Note that there is no mention of believing in these verses for an answer. It seems to be the persistent actions of asking, seeking, and knocking. It would seem that the persistent prayer of an unbeliever is answerable, but if someone were praying, could they be called an unbeliever? It is never said what the “it” is that we receive, find, or is opened for us.

- Luke present the pairs: fish/snake; egg/scorpion
- Matthew has: bread/stone; fish/snake.

Luke’s pair of snake and scorpion was used earlier in 10:19 as symbols of the power of the enemy. Perhaps symbols of evil in contrast with the good gifts of v. 13.

- Luke’s conclusion: the Father will give the **Holy Spirit** to those asking him. (Is Luke trying to say that “the Holy Spirit” is undefined “it” of the earlier answers?)
- Matthew’s conclusion: the Father will give **good things** to those asking him

The logic of Jesus’ words are that if it is unthinkable that men would give such evil gifts to their children. – when they indeed give good gifts, even though they are evil. Then if evil people do not harm their children, how much more will God do for his children?

I think that Luke is saying that those who have asked for the Holy Spirit can be certain that God has given it to them, whether or not they speak in tongues, have had an emotional high, or seen a bright light. It also prepares the readers for the events and Pentecost and the Spirit’s work throughout the Book of Acts.

### Reflection

The story of the midnight visitor and the sayings following it are a strong admonition to perseverance in prayer. God always responds to our prayer in ways that are best for us, though not perhaps in ways that we would expect or like. The extravagant examples of the sleeping friend and the father who would give snakes and scorpions to his children drive home the absurdity of thinking of the heavenly Father as harsh or cruel. God wants the best for us — which ultimately is the Holy Spirit, the gift of the age to come (see Acts 2:17). “Ask ... seek ... knock” are three different descriptions of petitionary prayer; but “seek” also implies the search for the kingdom of God and union with the Father.

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### Notes

**General:** Numerous parallels to the Lord’s Prayer have been identified in Jewish prayer traditions, and two in particular stand out. First, the *kiddush* that focuses on the name of God and his kingdom provides a

striking parallel to the first part of the Lord's Prayer. It is unclear, however, whether this prayer was widely circulated in the first century. Second, the *Shemoneh Esreh*, or Eighteen Benedictions, provides parallels to the second half of the Lord's Prayer, where one finds the focus on divine forgiveness and provision. What sets the NT Lord's Prayer apart is its: (1) simple and intimate address, (2) brevity, and (3) eschatological orientation.

The doxology "For the kingdom ..." was added in the early Church. It is based on David's prayer in 1 Chronicles 29:11-13: "Yours, O LORD, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name." It is found in some early manuscripts of Luke.

**Luke 11:1 *John taught his disciples*:** Luke describes some of the details of John's ministry: he preached (3:18) and himself fasted (7:33) – as did his disciples (5:33) in addition to prayer.

**Luke 11:2 *Father: pater*** - Largely as a result of the work of Joachim Jeremias, the idea has become established that behind the term "father" lies the Aramaic *abba* and that this word, allegedly not found in Jewish addressing of God in prayer, expresses a peculiarly intimate, simple and even childlike relationship with God. Many biblical dictionaries and encyclopedias emphasize this and that Jesus both experienced and encouraged his followers to share this relationship. While the latter would be accurate, the view of the uniqueness of Jesus' use of *abbā* has been severely challenged by more recent scholars (Vermes and Barr) who affirm that *abbā* was used of God in Jewish prayer and speech and carried no unique associations with child language. There are scholars who support and insist on the Jeremias' position.

***your kingdom come*:** in place of this petition, some early church Fathers record: "May your holy Spirit come upon us and cleanse us," a petition that may reflect the use of the "Our Father" in a baptismal liturgy.

**Luke 11:3 *daily bread*:** the rare Greek word *epiousios* (daily) occurs in the New Testament only here and in Matthew 6:11. The translation of creates special problems because the word occurs only in the Lord's Prayer (Matthean and Lucan versions) and because its attestation in Greek literature is doubtful and its derivation uncertain. The ancient translations and the interpretations of the Church Fathers differ. According to Origen (*De Orat.* 27, 7) this term was coined by the evangelists. Its meanings have included the following: (a) necessary for existence, (b) for the current day, for today, (c) for the following day (based on St Jerome's report of such an interpretation in an Aramaic version), (d) for the future days, and (e) the time of salvation. The latter would conform better to the eschatological tone of the whole prayer. So understood, the petition would be for a speedy coming of the kingdom (today), which is often portrayed in both the Old Testament and the New under the image of a feast (Isaiah 25:6; Matthew 8:11; 22:10; Luke 13:29; 14:15-24).

***the final test*:** Jewish apocalyptic writings speak of a period of severe trial before the end of the age, sometimes called the "messianic woes." The word "*final*" does not appear in the Greek text. Rather the word is offered here as the translators have given a priority of meaning to the eschatological tone of the prayer. Some manuscripts have the addition "but deliver us from the evil one." This is not attested in the better manuscripts.

**Luke 11:8 *persistence: anaideia*** - literal meaning is "shamelessness"

**Luke 11:4 *sins...debt*:** Debts represents the regular Aramaic term for sin, which literally denoted money debt, here put literally into Greek (Luke has the more ordinary term for 'sins', but retains the idea of debt in the second clause). The thought is of sins in general, as Matthew using the very general term "trespass" (literally 'false step', i.e. wrongdoing), makes clear.

**Luke 11:13 *how much more will the Father***: the phrase *poso mallon* reflects the Hebrew argument *qal wehomer* – from the lesser to the greater.

**the holy Spirit**: this is a Lucan editorial alteration of a traditional saying of Jesus (see Matthew 7:11). Luke presents the gift of the holy Spirit as the response of the Father to the prayer of the Christian disciple.

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