COMMENTARY ON LUTHER’S CATECHISMS

LORD’S PRAYER

ALBRECHT PETERS

CHARLES P. SCHAUM,
GENERAL EDITOR, ENGLISH EDITION

TRANSLATED BY DANIEL THIES

FOREWORD BY GOTTFRIED SEEBASS
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Unless otherwise noted, all quotations from Scripture, the Confessions, and other authors in this work are translated from Das Vaterunser, volume 3 of Albrecht Peters Kommentar zu Luthers Katechismen, edited by Gottfried Seebaß (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992).

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<td>Augsburg Confession</td>
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<td>Apology of the Augsburg Confession</td>
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<td>CCSL</td>
<td><em>Corpus Christianorum: Series latina</em>. Turnhout, 1953–.</td>
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<td>CR</td>
<td>Corpus reformatorum</td>
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<td>CSEL</td>
<td><em>Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum Latinorum</em></td>
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<td>DS</td>
<td><em>Enchiridion symbolorum</em>. Edited by Heinrich Denzinger and A. Schönmetzer</td>
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<td>FC Ep</td>
<td>Epitome of the Formula of Concord</td>
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<td>FC SD</td>
<td>Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord</td>
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<tr>
<td>GCS</td>
<td>Die griechische christliche Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte</td>
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<td>LC</td>
<td>Large Catechism</td>
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<td>LCMS</td>
<td>The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod</td>
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PUBLISHER’S PREFACE  
TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

Concordia Publishing House is pleased to present this important scholarly work that interprets Martin Luther’s Small and Large Catechisms, together with the sermons and other documents by Luther that make up their context. This series originally was undertaken by the late Professor Dr. Albrecht Peters, longtime member of the theological faculty of the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität in Heidelberg, Germany. His material was gathered and edited by Gottfried Seebaß, his junior colleague, and published by Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht as the five-volume Kommentar zu Luthers Katechismen. Most recent scholarship regarding Luther’s catechisms refers to this work in some fashion. CPH extends its thanks to the Reverend Paul Strawn for his efforts in organizing the initial work on this series, especially regarding this volume. We thank the Commission on Doctrinal Review of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for their approval to publish these volumes as resources for study purposes.

FORMAT OF THE TRANSLATION

The body text of this volume retains titles in the original language for all works except those of Luther. The first occurrence of titles of Luther’s works in the body text generally includes both the title in the original language and a translation; generally the translated form is used in subsequent references. This convention is observed because in many cases these works do not exist in the American Edition of Luther’s Works, thus translating all titles into English might create the false impression that the represented works themselves had been translated into English. In the footnotes, all titles are given in their original language. The reader is encouraged to consult Heinrich J. Vogel’s Cross-Reference and Index to the Contents of Luther’s Works and Kurt Aland’s Hilfsbuch zum Lutherstudium. To aid the reader in this effort, cross-references to extant works in the American Edition
have been included, but only to the selected works as respective page ranges, not to exact corresponding page numbers. As the process of translating and publishing later volumes affords, more exact references to the American Edition should appear. References to the Bekenntnisschriften are not mapped to an English version of the Lutheran Confessions in order to avoid adding layers of editorial choices onto the extant translation.

Quotations in the body text have been translated into English unless doing so would adversely affect the places where Peters refers specifically to the features and content of the material in its original language. The bulk of the notes, though translated, refer generally to non-English research. The translation intends to remain faithful to the original text. We have also given attention to the consistent use and translation of technical terms. Titles in the notes and of the suggested reading material at the end of each chapter are not translated because many of these resources do not exist in English. This also helps the student or theologian who wishes to look deeper into the Weimar Edition.

HISTORICAL-CRITICAL METHODS

The reader will notice that historical-critical exegetical methods are used throughout the series, but the use remains less extreme than that of some formerly within the LCMS. Peters does look for a Lutheran middle way when he speaks of a Lutheran orthodox “confessionalist hardening” on the right and a humanist tradition on the left, with Luther in the center. He does not embrace the same view of confessional theology long held by the LCMS. There will be points in this volume where the reader that rejects historical-critical methods will come into sharp disagreement with the author on issues such as the JEDP documentary hypothesis, the assertions regarding source and form criticism, and related issues involving philosophical presuppositions. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod rejects the errors of the higher-critical study of Scripture, as explained most pointedly in A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles.

Although Peters criticizes the radical rejection of the third use of the Law based on the philosophy and influence of Albrecht Ritschl,

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1 See Paul A. Zimmermann, A Seminary in Crisis: The Inside Story of the Preus Fact Finding Committee (St. Louis: Concordia, 2007).

2 Zimmermann, 430–36.
nevertheless he has some points of conflict with the third use of the Law. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod affirms the Lutheran Confessions’ teaching that there is a third use of the Law.3

RENEWED INTEREST IN THE CATECHISMS

In recent years, scholarly interest in Luther’s catechisms has been rekindled in the LCMS by the original German edition of this work. For example, consider the recent work of Charles Arand, such as his book on the setting, content, and purpose of Luther’s catechisms, That I May Be His Own (St. Louis: Concordia, 2000). One sees an opportunity to examine again the catechisms of Luther that have only started to realize a scholarly awakening after a hiatus in the LCMS for the better part of a century.

This work by Albrecht Peters sheds needed light on Luther’s catechisms. At the same time it brings a different set of presuppositions to the table. It allows one in the LCMS to examine how people outside the LCMS may view, study, and use Luther’s catechisms. It will doubtlessly create points of friction with readers that reject higher-critical approaches. Nevertheless, it remains a translation that seeks to uphold the responsibility to be faithful to the author’s texts and viewpoints, yet also provide material usable by a faithful Church. We pray that it succeeds to that end.

3 A helpful resource in this area is Scott R. Murray, Law, Life, and the Living God: The Third Use of the Law in Modern American Lutheranism (St. Louis: Concordia, 2002).
FOREWORD

The first critical reactions to the appearance of the first volume have reassured me that it was a good decision to issue posthumously the commentary of Albrecht Peters on Luther’s catechisms. So then, not quite one year after the appearance of the second volume, the third volume follows, which is devoted to the explanation of the Lord’s Prayer.

The origin and character of the commentary was described in the preface to the first volume, which handles the introduction and the Ten Commandments. The principles by which the manuscript was revised are found there. My assistant, Mr. Jürgen Kaiser, has undertaken the revision of this, as well as of the previously released volumes. I very heartily thank him for this work.

For the user the following instruction is put forward. The page and line numbers in the remarks that are without more exact designation refer consistently to the Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherisch Kirche, published in the anniversary year of the Augsburg Confession, 1930, (4th revised and following editions, Göttingen, 1959). With references to works of Luther, the short title of the respective writing is supplied, which corresponds to the given volume and page number of the Weimar Edition (Weimarer Ausgabe, WA) of Luther’s Works. References to the works of the Church Fathers are only partially updated to reflect recent editions. For the most part they are retained as presented by Albrecht Peters. Sources and secondary works are listed in the bibliography. Other references, such as those for documents in the Book of Concord and Migne’s Greek and Latin series, are included in a table of abbreviations. Shorthand not found there and universal abbreviations correspond to those of Siegfried Schwertner, Theologische Realenzyklopädie, Abkürzungsverzeichnis (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976).

Mrs. Andrea Chudaska, Mrs. Gisela Peters and Mr. Kaiser have accomplished the work of correction in a praiseworthy manner. The general format, conceived and carefully executed by the publisher, corresponds to the first two volumes and has proven itself well, I think, for the user. Finally, the Evangelische Landeskirche in Baden,
which has made possible the appearance of the volume through a grant, receives heartfelt thanks. I am convinced that what Ulrich Asendorf has said in the *Lutherischen Monatsheften* (1991, p. 331) about the first volume is also true of this one: Albrecht Peters has achieved “an uncommonly complex lively commentary . . . with always new and surprisingly current insights, that could give renewed momentum to the new embrace of the catechisms not only in instruction, but in the whole life of the Church.” With this hope may the third volume go forth.

Heidelberg, Christmas 1991
G. Seebaß
LORD’S PRAYER
The theologies of the Lutheran Confessions by Edmund Schlink, Friedrich Brunstäd, and Holsten Fagerberg unfortunately only lightly touch upon prayer. This strange omission seems to separate the dogmatic tradition of the Church from the catechetical tradition. Our explanation will endeavor to close the gaping hole found here. For Luther, God’s action in creation, redemption, sanctification, justification, and prayer are inseparably tied together with one another, and all true prayer finds the seed around which it can

1 For sources and literature regarding prayer and the Lord’s Prayer, see pp. 34–37.
3 There are hardly any references to prayer. They are altogether absent in Fagerberg. Brunstäd’s Theologie der Bekennnisschriften has a single reference on p. 198. In Schlink, Theologie der Bekennnisschriften, see for example pages 214, 274, 297, 344.
4 Peter Lombard, in contrast with the Decalogue, Sententiarum III, dist. 37–40, pays no special respect to the Lord’s Prayer. It thus plays little role in the commentaries on his Sentences. The Summa of Thomas Aquinas contains one quaestio: “De oratione” (Summa Theologica 2/2, q. 83) with an ornate, but artificial outline of the Lord’s Prayer (Summa 2/2, q. 83, a. 9 “Utrum convenienter septem petitiones Oracionis Dominicae assignentur” [“Whether the seven petitions of the Lord’s Prayer are assigned suitably”]).
5 Luther already made this connection between justification and prayer in the interpretation of Romans 3 in his Romans lectures. See Rudolf Herrmann, “Das Verhältnis von Rechtfertigung und Gebet,” Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie 3 (1926), 603–47, and Beintker, “Zu Luthers Verständnis vom geistlichen Leben des Christen im Gebet,” Luther-Jahrbuch 31:62ff.; concerning the interpretation of
crystallize in the Lord’s Prayer. The reformer develops these central insights throughout his several different explanations of the Lord’s Prayer. We will show what types of changes took place in Luther’s explanations before reaching the present form in the catechisms. We will provide the needed context of Luther’s interpretation within that of the Western tradition. Finally, we will not be able to avoid the inquiry into the exegetical soundness and dogmatic relevance of Luther’s insights.

THE WORDING OF THE ADDRESS, OUTLINE, AND SCOPE OF THE ADMONITION TO PRAY

The reformer opens the Lord’s Prayer with the following address: “Vater unser, der Du bist im Himmel” (“Father of ours, Thou that art in heaven”); 6 this formulation is found in his first interpretation. 7 Even though in his Bible translation Luther had interpreted it to read “Unser Vater” (Our Father), 8 and the German edition of “Kinder Fragen der böhmischen Brüder” (“Children’s Questions of the Bohemian Brethren”) as also Melanchthon’s Enchiridion had followed in this manner, 9 he retained the traditional word order “Vater unser” in the prayer. This is no slavish adherence to the Latin “Pater noster,” but instead it is an archaic German idiom in which the adjective regularly is made to follow the noun in the vocative. 10 At the same time Luther retains the more explicit “Thou that art in heaven” (qui es in caelis), although the Enchiridion had employed the shortened expression “Unser Vater im Himmel” (“Our Father in heaven”), which Luther had used in his Bible translation and which has also been adopted in the recent German ecumenical text.

Furthermore, from 1519 on Luther uses the singular “in heaven” in place of the text transmitted by Matthew and contrary to established linguistic usage of the evangelists, as well as the nearly

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6 BSLK, 556.20 (LC Preface 20), 512.18 (SC III 1).
7 “Auslegung deutsch des Vaterunser, 1519,” WA 2:82.23, 83.11 (see also AE 42:21, 22); “Eine kurze Form, das Paternoster zu verstehen, 1519,” WA 6:11.17.
8 Emser attacked him sharply, saying he has broken tradition that is “longer than a thousand years” (according to Albrecht in WA 30.1:369, n. 4; SC).
9 See the arrangement in MGP 23:290–93.
10 From Albrecht WA 30.1:369 n. 4; SC. Additional references are found there.
uniform tradition of the Church. On the one hand, the singular may be attributed to the rough juxtaposition of heaven and earth that Luther accentuates in the context of the Third Petition: “O Father, Thou art in heaven, I your wretched child [am] on earth, in distress, far away from Thee . . . ” On the other hand, in this singular, the inspiration of Luther rains down through the topography of heaven. “The heavens” are not the same to him as in late Second Temple Judaism—an edifice that arches upward in two to ten gradations, on the zenith of which is the throne of God. “Heaven” is for him the dynamic center of divine omnipotence and omnipresence that escapes our spatially restricted conceptions. The celestial expanse does not encompass God’s Fatherhood; rather, God’s fatherly existence qualifies “heaven” as the “location” of His presence in sublime holiness as well as the proximity of grace applied to us. The addition ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, which may not originate with the Lord Himself but rather with the “pre-Matthew Jewish-Christian” tradition, is already interpreted in Luther’s translation and thus explained in light of the Gospel: The “Father in heaven” is our “righteous” and

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11 Agricola’s version of 1518 still has “Vater unser, der du bist in den Himmel(e)n” (“Auslegung und Deutung des Vaterunser, 1517/1518,” WA 9:124.29, 125.20).
13 From Traub, οὐρανός, TWNT 5:511.20–512.15.
14 This view prepares the way for an early Church interpretation; it is formulated this way by Augustine, De sermone domini in monte 2:5.18 (CCL 35:108.385): “Deus . . . ubique praesens est, non locorum spatiis, sed majestati potentia” [“God . . . is present everywhere, not in spatial locations, rather, in the majesty of His power”]. See also for example Origen, De oratione 2:23.1–5; Tertullian, De oratione 1:4; Cyprian, De dominica oratione 4; Gregory of Nyssa, Oratio dominica 2.4. Fulgentius of Ruspe painstakingly and systematically unfolded this omnipresence of the whole Trinity for the Vandal King Trasimund and supported it biblically (Ad Trasimundum 3:16–20; PL 65:263–68).
15 According to Kuhn, “Achtzehn Gebet und Vaterunser und der Reim,” Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 1 (1950), 34; also Grundmann, Theologische Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament: Das Evangelium nach Matthäus 1:199, characterizes this as a “customary addendum among the rabbis . . . that serves to differentiate the heavenly Father from the earthy father and simultaneously maintains the distance between God and man.”
17 BSLK, 512.21 (SC III 2).
“dear”\textsuperscript{18} “heavenly Father”\textsuperscript{19} who calls us home “graciously from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven.”\textsuperscript{20}

Together with the Vulgate, Luther ends the Lord’s Prayer with a simple “Amen.” Luther leaves the doxology out of his 1529 Latin Bible in agreement with the Vulgate,\textsuperscript{21} which he inserts into Matt. 6:13 in accord with the Greek text of Erasmus\textsuperscript{22} and of which he, consequently, does the exegesis in his weekday sermons.\textsuperscript{23} He passes it over in all of his explanations of the Lord’s Prayer. Luther does not do this on account of historical-critical investigation into the post-biblical origin of that hymnodical acclamation of the congregation,\textsuperscript{24} but rather “out of piety for the heritage of the Western Church.”\textsuperscript{25} In conjunction with other Evangelical catechisms, the doxology pushed itself through the “annotated catechisms”\textsuperscript{26} into the text of the Small Catechism\textsuperscript{27} (1558) only after Luther’s death.

In the Large Catechism, the reformer introduces the Lord’s Prayer interpretation with an admonition to pray.\textsuperscript{28} This interpretation and its precursor, the catechetical sermon of December 14, 1528,\textsuperscript{29} lean upon the section “Vom dem rechten christlichen Gebet” (“About true Christian Prayer”) of the “Instructions for Visitors of Parish Pastors of Electoral Saxony.”\textsuperscript{30} Luther ends his exegesis with an explanation

\textsuperscript{18} BSLK, 512.23 (SC III 2).
\textsuperscript{19} BSLK, 513.2,11 (SC II 6).
\textsuperscript{20} BSLK, 515.7 (SC III 20).
\textsuperscript{21} WADB 5:486.
\textsuperscript{22} Cf. Meyer, \textit{Historischer Kommentar zu Luthers Kleinen Katechismus}, 380; Albrecht in WA 30.1:647.
\textsuperscript{23} WA 32:421.21–422.18 (see also AE 21:147–8).
\textsuperscript{24} For the textual origin of that Doxology as well as for its meaning, see esp. Lohmeyer, \textit{Das Vater-unser}, 162–74.
\textsuperscript{25} Meyer, \textit{Historischer Kommentar zu Luthers Kleinen Katechismus}, 380.
\textsuperscript{26} Cf. MGP 23:291–93; Aquila in Reu, \textit{Quellen} 2.2:193.
\textsuperscript{27} Cf. BSLK, 515, n. 2; Brenner in WA 30.1:746–48.
\textsuperscript{28} BSLK, 662.17–670.21 (LC III 1–34).
\textsuperscript{29} WA 30.1:95.1–98.17 (see also AE 51:169–72).
\textsuperscript{30} WA 26:204.31–206.4 (= Melanchthon, \textit{Studienausgabe} 1:222.1–226.30, see also AE 40:278–87). Like Luther’s “Sermon von den guten Werken,” WA 6:217.30–220.33, 223.13–224.13 (see also AE 44:40–43, 46–47), Melanchthon associates Prayer with the Second Commandment. He lists three reasons for our prayer: (1) God has asked us to call upon Him. (2) God has promised to hear us; therefore He desires a supplication in contrition and trust, free from all hypocrisy and also all doubt. (3) God desires that we bemoan our temporal need like our eternal need and not let up from it. These theses reach back to Luther’s admonition to pray. The reformer had already formulated it in 1517 with the heading: “Orationis verae conditiones.”
of the “Amen” that draws on the sermon of December 15, 1528.\textsuperscript{32} The core ideas of that exhortation are collected together in the Small Catechism, both in the explanation to the Amen\textsuperscript{33} and in the prayer’s opening address.\textsuperscript{34} Luther first added the latter during his stay at the Coburg.

The admonition to pray encompasses five main ideas:\textsuperscript{35} (1) Prayer rests upon God’s (Second) Commandment.\textsuperscript{36} (2) Prayer takes refuge in God’s promise.\textsuperscript{37} (3) In the Lord’s Prayer God Himself places the manner of prayer He desires into our mouth.\textsuperscript{38} (4) In proper prayer we recognize our basic need and carry this need before the countenance of the heavenly Father.\textsuperscript{39} (5) Prayer is for us both a defensive and also an offensive weapon against Satan and his attacks.\textsuperscript{40}

The Large and the Small Catechism accentuate things differently. Even more powerfully than Melanchthon in the “Instructions for Visitors,” Luther in the Large Catechism thrusts the command character of our praying into the center. We “should know that God

\footnote{\textsuperscript{31} BSLK, 690.13–46 (LC III 119–24).}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{32} WA 30.1:108.13–109.2 (see also AE 51:181–82).}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{33} BSLK, 515.11–18 (SC III 21).}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{34} BSLK, 512.19–24 (SC III 2).}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{35} Luther offered a repetition of those admonitions in the weekday sermon on Matt. 6:5ff., WA 32:413–22. The first section of the Lord’s Prayer—address, BSLK, 662.17–34 (LC Preface 1–2) appends the third chief part through the second to the first. Regarding this bracketing, see Knoke, “Die katechetische Einleitung in Luthers Kleinen Katechismus und die katechetische Überleitung vom 2. zum 3. Hauptstück in ihm,” \textit{Pädagogische Blätter} 26 (1897), 692–710, as well as our description p. 19.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{36} BSLK, 662.41–666.34 (LC III 4–18).}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{37} BSLK, 666.36–667.10 (LC III 19–21).}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{38} BSLK, 667.12–30 (LC III 22–23). The sermon from December 14, 1528, indicates this only in the sentence: “Deinde est praescripta quoque quasi in tabula, quid et quomodo orare debeamus” ["Thereafter each is prescribed as if in a list of what and in which way, we ought to pray"], WA 30.1:98.14 (see also AE 51:172). Therefore the Large Catechism draws from the sermon from May 25, 1528, WA 30.1:11.12–26.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{39} BSLK, 667.36–669.12 (LC III 24–29).}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{40} BSLK, 669.18–47 (LC III 30–32).}
THE THREE THY-PETITIONS: LUTHER’S INTERPRETATION IN ITS INDIVIDUALITY AND ITS DEVELOPMENT


Luther’s explanation of the first three petitions in the Small Catechism especially, but also in the Large Catechism, takes place in two logical steps. Through the question “What does this mean?” we become involved as supplicants in the prayer’s goal. Through the question “How does this happen?” the petition is unfolded with regards to content toward its completion [Horizont] “for us.” One thing here flies “clearly into the eyes, the juxtaposition of the ancient explanation forms passed down and Luther’s very distinctive thoughts of the Reformation. The first are found in the first part of the explanation and the last in the second part of the explanation.” For the first step, Luther brings the tradition concisely together that crystallizes out after passing from Tertullian and Cyprian on through the Early Church and onward through the Middle Ages. In the Lord’s Prayer, it ought not and cannot be concerned with an abstract holiness of God’s name, nor with a spectacularly wonderful bursting in of the kingdom of God, nor with a cosmic-worldly self-implementation of God’s will that does not have anything to do with our daily life. Here by us God wants His name to be kept holy, here to us He wants his

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3 Cf. Dibelius, *Das Vaterunser*, 86–104.
reign to come, and here among us His good, gracious will is to be done.

This emphatic protrusion of the Thy-petitions into our concrete existence appears now indeed only to adjust what the specificity is of each petition according to the recent exegesis. In them the people praying do not look at themselves; they are oriented much more on God Himself; they implore the eschatological breakthrough of the still veiled reign of God. The aorist form of the verb immediately indicates: Here is not implored a continual self-glorification of God among us, but instead a onetime event, that final revelation of God that recreates the whole cosmos. The first strongly Johannine petition aims at the “that eschatological act . . . , through which God sanctifies His name before and in and over all the world, which is the beginning as well as end of all escatological activity.” ⁴ The Second Petition, which bundles together Jesus’ message recorded by the synoptics, desires the incursion of the final reign of God whereby “it is committed to God’s overpowering mercy to perfect people and things as He wills or to create an unimaginably new thing, but nevertheless eschatologically ancient one.” ⁵ The Third Petition, which binds together ancient bowing under the dark divine acquiescence and Jewish appropriation of the revealed will of God, craves the self-imposition and self-glorification of God’s will over His whole creation.

Trusting as children, those praying are given over into God’s sovereign providence. They have so to speak lost themselves from view; all pictorial description of the view through the sights is left behind. Only the time-space of the creation shows itself in broad outline as the workplace of that eschatological self-glorification of God. Of course the believers do not ask for this world encompassing and final outcome out of an unfathomable separation from God. They stand instead in the nearness to God with the childlike certainty of those that are included in Jesus’ Abba-cry. The address “Unser Vater” governs each individual petition. This Father address of Jesus is “community forming, is church constitutive.” ⁶ It makes it possible for the first time for children of men to plead so unconcerned for oneself for God’s final appearance. Present experience and future expectation

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⁴ Lohmeyer, Das Vater-unser, 53.
⁵ Lohmeyer, 72.
⁶ Schürmann, Das Gebet des Herrn, 22.
THE FIRST PETITION FOR THE HALLOWING OF GOD’S NAME

WORDDING AND MEANING OF THE FIRST PETITION

Luther renders the wording of the First Petition according to the medieval tradition: “Hallowed be Thy name.” This phrasing, which is unique in the New Testament and which conflicts with some Jewish parallels in the Old Testament, Luther would have gladly transposed more freely: “Heavenly Father, help that only Thy name may be holy.”

The first two petitions of the Lord’s Prayer link to the Qaddish; that ‘Holy-Prayer’ concluded the synagogue liturgy. As “an ancient Aramaic prayer,” it was for Jesus “familiar from his childhood.” Its original wording may have been:

“Glorified and hallowed be His great name
in the world that He created according to His will.
May His royal rule reign
in your lifetimes and in your days and in the lifetimes of the

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2 “Auslegung deutsch des Vaterunser, 1519,” WA 2:86.17; 87.8 (see also AE 42:26, 27); “Eine kurze Form, das Paternoster zu verstehen, 1519,” WA 6:12.21; “Eine kurze Form des Vaterunser, 1520,” WA 7:221.16 as well as BSLK, 512.26 (SC III 3); BSLK, 556.21 (LC Preface 14); BSLK, 670.30 (LC III 47).
5 Jeremias, Das Vater-unser im Lichte der neueren Forschung, 20 (=Jeremias, Abba: Studium zur neutestamentlichen Theologie und Zeitgeschichte, 164).
whole house of Israel in speed and very soon. And on this say: Amen." 

The verb ‘hallow’ (‘heiligen’) and the adjective ‘holy’ (‘heilig’) originate from the cultic-priestly realm, but they nevertheless obtain a moral accent under the message of the prophets. The tension between the cultic-priestly and the ethical-prophetic still resonates in Luther’s interpretation. The reformer illustrates the term as the counterpart to the sacred misuse and appeals to the traditional ritual understanding: hallow is identical with dedicate, desecrate with profane. Thereafter Luther transposes the object oriented understanding onto the plain of a personal relationship with God and exposes the religious-moral dimension: “hallow means as much as . . . praise, extol, and honor, both with word and deed.” This explanation is empowered through the Jewish and New Testament synonyms ‘magnify’ (μεγαλύνειν Luke 1:46) and ‘glorify’ (δοξάζειν, John 12:28).

Through this the object of that hallowing, the phrase “Thy name,” contains a specific meaning. More exegetically for certain, Luther identifies the name of God not with the address Father, but instead underscores the formal character of the expression ‘hallow the name.’ Along with the Old Testament, God’s name is for him so to speak that side that the exalted, eternal and invisible Creator turns toward his earthbound creation. In His revelation, God makes His name known and in it His incomprehensible essence itself accessible to us so that we call on Him and glorify Him. “The essence of God is in heaven, but His name still on earth.” “The name is . . . God-for-us in distinction to God-in-Himself.” To us Christians this name is

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6 Jeremias, 20; cf. also the collection of similar sounding prayers in Kuhn, ἅγιος, TWNT 1:99.
7 According to Procksch, ἅγιος, TWNT 1:90–94.
8 BSLK, 672.11–20 (LC III 45–46).
9 Cf. Mat. 23:16–22; a similar elucidation is found in Dibelius, Das Vater-unser, 135; With Luther, “Vaterunserpredigt vom 12.10.1516,” WA 1:90.29, this comparison is suggested already in 1516: “. . . sicut sacrae reliquiae in se sanctae sunt, possunt tamen parum sancte et reverenter haberi.” (“just as sacred relics are holy in themselves, they are nevertheless able to be held holy and reverent.”)
10 BSLK, 672.22 (LC III 46).
11 See for example Schürmann, Das Gebet des Herrn, 31.
“given” through the Word of the Gospel of Christ; in applying the shower of the water of Baptism, God himself has “attached himself to us.” God dedicates Himself to us in His name, in order to glorify Himself among us. Already in his earliest interpretations, Luther attaches an application of the ‘name,’ as it, according to older approaches in the time after Deuteronomy as well as from the exile onward, became almost stereotypical. As it resounds in the New Testament: God’s name becomes almost a codeword for the offering to God of praise, respect, glory and honor.

With this the name of God is stratified into its two respective sides. Luther looks first at God’s high exalted essence itself. Secondarily he looks at the honoring which we offer to God. By itself “in its essence” God’s name is and remains pure and holy. Not necessarily is it so “among us,” “in our usage.” If this distinction is made reflexively, then our view is turned back to us. Into the First Petition of the Lord’s Prayer, the everyday struggle of humanity for the obedience of faith is drawn in.

Through this the original literal meaning of that desire for prayer is overstepped. “Father, hallowed be Thy name!”, this humble and almost shy wish opens the Lord’s Prayer and strikes the guiding tone for each of the following petitions. Our praise of God is heard only in the form of a petition, which clothes itself in the “reverent form of the desire for prayer.” That desire directs itself toward God Himself. God alone is able to glorify His name. “The logical subject of the hallowing is singularly and alone God, not the person.” Luther’s revised version: “Father, help, that only Thy name might be holy!” makes explicit that shy looking up to God.

Luther’s revision indeed includes our earthly struggle for the obedience of faith in the call to prayer. As God’s “pious children,” we

15 *BSLK*, 670.40 (LC III 37).
16 *BSLK*, 670.43 (LC III 37).
17 See the evidence on the Second Commandment in the commentary, vol. 1, p. 156.
18 For example Ex. 9:16 and Jos. 9:9.
20 Cf. *BSLK*, 670.47; 671.18f.; 672.11, 40; 673.9 (LC III 38; 39; 45; 48; 49).
21 *BSLK*, 512.28 (SC III 4); *BSLK*, 670.38 (LC III 37).
22 *BSLK*, 512.30 (SC III 4); *BSLK*, 670.38 (LC III 37).
25 *BSLK*, 670.34 (LC III 36).
THE FOURTH PETITION
FOR DAILY BREAD

THE EVOLUTION OF THE MEANING
OF THE PETITION FOR BREAD

The petition for daily bread introduces the second half of the Lord’s Prayer. In it the passive predicates give way to active voices. The possessive pronoun ‘Thy’ changes into an ‘us’ or ‘our.’ After the Thy-petitions, which are set as unfinished stone without cement next to one another, the interrelated Our-petitions are adjoined. They bear before the heavenly Father the essential needs of the summoned flock that hastens toward the approaching kingdom of God.

1. THE DISPUTED MEANING OF THE PETITION FOR BREAD

Even as Luther transmits the wording of this petition in agreement with tradition: “Our daily bread give us this day,” the original understanding is much contested. The small word that is rendered with “daily,” ἐπιούσιος is found still only to be attested to in an Upper

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2 “Auslegung und Deutung des Vaterunser, 1517/18,” WA 9:125.13, 141.4; “Auslegung deutsch des Vaterunser, 1519,” WA 2:86.36, 105.29 (see also AE 42:26, 49); “Eine kurze Form, das Paternoster zu verstehen, 1519,” WA 6:15.28; “Eine kurze Form des Vaterunser, 1520,” WA 7:225.18; WADB 6:32–33; *BSLK*, 513.36 (SC III 12); *BSLK*, 556.23 (LC Preface 14); *BSLK*, 670.10 (LC III 71).
Egyptian papyrus from the fifth century as ἐπιούσια (=diaria, day’s ration),\(^3\) which itself may well trace back to the Lord’s Prayer. Already Origen declared that the word neither exists in the Greek literary usage nor is it prevalent in the folk language.\(^4\) Thus the exegete must resort along with the Church Fathers to guessing. Karl Georg Kuhn suggests the simplest solution: The Hebrew (Aramaic) original might have contained a word that encompassed both “our bread, only as much as is necessary for the day” and also the association “for today give it to us,”\(^5\) thus both ἐπιούσιος and σήμερον.\(^6\) Joachim Jeremias on the other hand makes reference along with the Church Father Jerome to the Aramaic Gospel of the Nazarenes, which read mahar: “what is ours tomorrow, that means our future bread give us today.” This small word ‘tomorrow’ designates in Second Temple Judaism not only the next day,\(^7\) but the worldwide great tomorrow of the fulfillment.\(^8\) The petition would then have had the original intention: Already now this day give us the eternal bread of life of the time of salvation. This understanding would seamlessly integrate itself into the strictly future—eschatological mode of the Thy-petitions; of course it remains incomprehensible why for this ἐπιούσιος should be chosen as an appropriate rendering.\(^9\) Whichever meaning may then be the correct one, the tension targeted from the two extremes in this exegesis characterizes the biblically complete meaning of the petition. In it is

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\(^3\) See in addition Foerster, ἐπιούσιος, *TWNT* 2:587–95; Fiebig, *Das Vaterunser*, 81–83.

\(^4\) Origen, *De oratione* 2:27.7 (GCS Origen 2:366.33–367.2).


\(^6\) Kuhn offers the following wording: lahmana l[j]oma hab lana’.

\(^7\) So it is interpreted in Schlatter, *Der Evangelist Matthäus*, 210–13, he refers to “the bread apportioned for the next day and sufficient for it.”


\(^9\) This Foerster, ἐπιούσιος, *TWNT* 2:591–92 already argues critically; cf. still also Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus*, 353, n. 2. Foerster would therefore like to remove every temporal specification and only think about what is necessary for living and meager. Herrmann, *Der alttestamentliche Urgrund des Vaterunser*, 87–88, refers to Jewish parallels and thinks of the necessary and sufficient daily ration.
concerned the ordering of our physical existence in the little today in the face of the imminent great tomorrow of God.

The petition for bread of the Lord’s Prayer in this way raises itself above the nearly contemporary Jewish prayers in that the view narrows so to speak to today. “Where otherwise in the Old Testament or Jewish prayers, God is asked for food and drink, there is either no time limit at all mentioned or the duration is limited to a person’s lifetime or a season of the year.” Here a community prays for which God has preserved a wide living and breathing space on earth. It prays in the manner of the peasant beneath the rainbow that arches over the earth under the world encompassing promise of Gen. 8:22: “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease” (ESV).

In the Lord’s Prayer on the other hand, the broad horizon of the peasant narrows to the uncertain today of a day laborer that in the early morning still does not know whether he will in this day also find work and food, or still more specifically on the uncertain foot journey of the band of disciples, which following the instruction of their Lord without bread, purse and money (Mark 6:8) are supposed to announce the reign of God. Heinz Schürmann would like to see this petition pointed toward this original situation of the tenuous communication of the kingdom of God. Through this even the ‘our’ obtains a truly communal aspect. The group of disciples sent by the Lord into the world prays for the common sustenance of life and therein for the basis for subsistence and the space to live for the proclamation of the dawning kingdom of God.11

10 Lohmeyer, *Das Vater-unser*, 96. Thus reads the corresponding petition in the eighteenth prayer: “Bless us, Lord, this year with all types of crops!” And the third benediction asks: “Our God, our Father, pasture us, feed us, provide for us, nourish and create for us wide space, yes create for us wide space in a hurry from all our afflictions!” (Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash* 4:631). Indeed there are found in connection with Prov. 30:8 also focused prayers restricted to today and to its necessities; for instance the example of a bold petition that is allowed us men: “I retreat not from here until You satisfy the needs of this day” (Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu* 1:329b).

11 Schürmann, *Das Gebet des Herrn*, 66–70.111f. This interpretation is already found in the Lord’s Prayer explanation that is delivered under the name of Chrysostom, *In Mattheaeum homilia* 14:11 (PG 56:713): “perhaps the apostles were only gathering together what they were to teach through individual cities all the time they were wandering, and the wandering itself was greater than the daily food that they were able to carry.”
THE SIXTH AND SEVENTH PETITIONS FOR THE ESCHATOLOGICAL DELIVERANCE

WORDBING AND MEANING OF THE FINAL DOUBLE PETITION

1. LUTHER’S RENDERING OF THE DOUBLE PETITION

As Origen had already recognized and in the time of the Reformation Calvin in particular showed, the last two petitions form a unit. The Matthean transmission supplies the positive side, our being snatched out of the eschatological tribulations. The wording of this double petition with Luther is rendered without essential variation: “Und fuhre uns nicht in Versuchung, sondern erlöse uns vom (von dem) Ubel.” The “ne nos inducas” of the Vulgate he translates with the more common Germanization with “führe uns nicht;” the more literal

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2 Origen, De oratione 2:30.1.

3 Calvin, Institutes 3:20.46. Augustine vacillated in his statements; sometimes he counted six, sometimes also seven petitions; cf. Sermo 56:19; 57:9; 59:8; 47:10, 12; 58.12.

4 BSLK, 514.29–42 (SC III 17–18); BSLK, 556.26f. (LC Preface 14); BSLK, 686.40; 689.2 (LC III 104, 112); “Auslegung deutsch des Vaterunser, 1519,” WA 2:86.27, 29 (see also AE 42:26, 27); “Eine kurze Form, das Paternoster zu verstehen, 1519,” WA 6:18.28; “Eine kurze Form des Vaterunser, 1520,” WA 7:229.7; WADB 6:32f., 262f.
“einführe” he of course would have gladly used\(^5\) to underscore that we must experience temptations and enticements and continually remain surrounded by them, but should nevertheless through God’s grace not be overcome by them. Πειρασμός (i.e. tentatio) he renders throughout with “Versuchung” [“temptation”]; along with it he references the Low German “Bekörung,”\(^6\) in which the Old German “Korunga, Bikorunga” lives on.\(^7\) Both of these he would have rather replaced with “Anfechtung;” in his explanations, he places this word always very consciously in the primary position.\(^8\)

The expression “sondern erlöse uns vom Übel” [“but deliver us from evil”] is the familiar rendering of ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἁπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ; it follows the Augustian-Western tradition, which interprets the ἁπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ as neuter and expresses it with a comprehensive “malum.” Again in this spot, the reformer might rather, following his exegetical view,\(^9\) have referred along with the Eastern tradition\(^10\) to Satan and simultaneously emphasized the personal-willful character of the mischievous and evildoers.\(^11\) For this reason, he would have

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\(^6\) BSLK, 686.6 (LC III 101); “Auslegung deutsch des Vaterunserns, 1519,” WA 2:122.35 (see also AE 42:71); “Kat.-Pred. vom 27.5.; 23.9.; 15.12.1528,” WA 30.1:16.10f.; 49.26; 106.16; cf. also Dibelius, Das Vaterunser, 168, 174f.; MGP 23:290f.; Dietrich Kolde’s Der Christenspiegel, 182f.

\(^7\) Thus with Notker and in the Freisinger Paternoster; cf. Meyer, Historischer Kommentar zu Luthers Kleinen Katechismus, 72.

\(^8\) See for instance “Auslegung deutsch des Vaterunserns, 1519,” WA 2:86.27; 122.34–37 (see also AE 42:26, 71); “Auslegung und Deutung des Vaterunserns, 1517/18,” WA 9:156.30, 33; “Eine kurze Form, das Paternoster zu verstehen, 1519,” WA 6:17.29; “Eine kurze Form des Vaterunserns, 1520,” WA 7:227.29; “Deutsche Messe, 1526,” WA 19:96.12 (see also AE 53:79); “Kat.-Pred. 1528,” WA 30.1:16.33; 49.24, 26; 106.17; BSLK, 686.3; 687.12 (LC III 100,105); “Vaterunser-Lied,” WA 35:464.26 (“Our Father, Who from Heaven Above,” LSB 766 v. 6); this is adapted in the Nuremberg children’s sermons (Reu, Quellen 1.1:540.14, 50; 541:12, 23, 33, 38 and elsewhere).

\(^9\) “Kat.-Pred. vom 15.12.1528,” WA 30.1:108.3 (see also AE 51:180) and BSLK, 689.6–10 (LC III 113).

\(^10\) See concerning this Chase, The Lord’s Prayer, 103–67 as well as Walther, Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der griechischen Vaterunser-Exegese, 19, 29f., 45f., 66, 122.

\(^11\) BSLK, 689.5 (LC III 113).
been inclined toward the translation that Martin Bucer appropriated in the Upper German Catechism and that was adopted in the ecumenical German version: “erlöse uns vom Bösen.” The dative form in “vom Bösen” allows itself to be interpreted both as masculine and also neuter; so that everything would be “included together, whatever bad things that may happen to us under the kingdom of the devil.”

2. THE ORIGINAL FUTURE-ESCHATOLOGICAL MEANING OF THE DOUBLE PETITION

These questions concerning an appropriate rendering lead us already into the struggle for the intended meaning of the concluding double petition. The aorist form of the verbs together with the singular form of the object places it close again to giving preference to the strictly future-eschatological interpretation. In view here is not the in reality small temptations and help over the bumps in our daily life, but instead the being protected in the ultimate final battle between God and Satan, between Christ and the Antichrist. As the history of God’s people and of the way of God’s Son Himself is a peculiar chain of temptations, everything rushes toward the one “great tribulation” (Mark 13:19), which presages the final verdict. In this double petition, the little flock takes refuge in the divine promise: “I will protect you from the hour of temptation that will come over the whole world to test all those that dwell on earth” (Rev. 3:10). Here the individual petitioner does not ask primarily for the power to be able to properly lead his life in the battle with the Adversary and to resist the continual tests of faith. Here intercedes first of all the band of those that entrust themselves in Christ to the heavenly Father for “salvation from the forces of evil, which wish to plunge man in the end time turmoil into everlasting destruction and which it is unable to fend off.”

12 Already the Cologne Edition of the Christenspiegel of 1508 has (together with the medieval embolisms) a “von allem Bösem;” a “vom Bösem” is found with Loener, MGP 23:293, in Bucer’s Strasbourg Catechisms of 1534 and 1537 (Reu, Quellen 1.1:62, 82, 16), in Marbach’s Catechism following Luther’s SC (Reu, Quellen 1.1:148.26), and in the Heidelberg Catechism, Ques. 127.
13 BSLK, 689.18 (LC III 115).
15 Kasch, ῥύομαι, TWNT 6:1004.17, under the reference to Rom. 11:26; Col. 1:13; 1 Thes. 1:10; 1 Tim. 4:18; 2 Pet. 2:9.
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