



# **Peninsula City Church**

**Teach Us to Pray**

**Deliver us from the Evil One**

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# Deliver us from the Evil One

## An Introduction

**Q.** Have you ever stopped and thought why Jesus said to pray “deliver us from the evil one”?

I mean why didn't He just deliver us from the evil one there and then? If He was going to defeat Satan anyway why did Christ-followers need delivering? Well Jesus' perspective is much higher and more far-seeing than our nearsightedness. He knew that we would need His strength against a wounded foe who is now the enemy of our soul because we belong to Jesus. He also knew how weak and clumsy we would be when dealing with temptation.

## 1. Jesus' perspective

Within the context of Matthew's record of Jesus' skeleton or framework with which to wrap our conversation with God around he highlighted three basic sections. Jesus gave clear direction regarding praying to our Heavenly Father. The following is a parallel reading of this directive to use the kingdom framework,

<sup>9</sup> “In this manner, therefore, pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. <sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen” (Matt 6:9-13 NKJV esp. v9).

Notice the focus of the three sections.

Section Focuses	A breakdown of the kingdom Prayer in Matt 6: 9-13	
Sect 1: The Father	v9	<u>Our</u> Father in heaven, may <u>Your</u> name be kept holy
	v10	May <u>Your</u> Kingdom come soon. <u>Your</u> will be done On earth as it is in heaven
Sect 2: Us and our needs	v11	Give <u>us</u> today the food <u>we</u> need
	v12	And forgive <u>us our</u> sins, as <u>we</u> have forgiven <u>those</u> who sin against us
	v13	And do not lead <u>us</u> into temptation, but deliver <u>us</u> from the evil one
Sect 3: The Father	c13	For <b>Yours</b> is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

You will notice that Jesus said, in approaching God that, our first focus is on Him, and then we address our needs. Without this perspective of our Father, we can become needs focused in our perception of life. It is also important to notice where the focus on Satan comes, not at the beginning, but towards the end. How do you talk to our Heavenly Father regarding Satan, is it the main focus, or is He the main focus? Even in the attention to our daily needs, this is the last thing mentioned. Consequently, this shapes the right way to talk to Him, as it is not all about us and ours or even the attacks of Satan. In reality, it is all about Him, and He has invited us into this relationship with Him.

## 2. But deliver us from the evil one

In presenting this framework for talking with our Heavenly Father, Jesus opened with the Heavenly Father and then went on to our needs. Nonetheless, Jesus knew our weakness even as Christ-followers. So, He pointed out that we are weak and clumsy when dealing with temptation; as a result, we need the Father's strength to deliver us from the evil one. Even more than that, He said that we need to ask for His help daily. This may require us asking Him for deliverance as many times in a day that as it is needed. Remember that, this is not a physical battle, but a spiritual one (even if we may suffer physical assaults), so we need the Holy Spirit. This is not a battle amongst equals, even if Satan is stronger than us, he is created just like us. It is only God who is not created.

Here in this verse Jesus builds on what He has already said "And do not lead us into temptation," then He said, "But deliver us from the evil one." But, why would God want to lead us into temptation and then deliver us? This just does not make sense especially in light of James 1:13, which states,

"Let no one say when they are tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no one" (Jas 1:13 ESV).

So if God does not lead us into temptation, what is going on here? Well, we could say that it is possibly lost in translation. This can happen from time to time with translation between languages. This phrase may have been recorded in Aramaic (a Middle Eastern Semitic language of Jesus' day), which was recorded to Greek, to Latin and so on until we have it in English. In light of this suggested issue, the following may help shed some light on the matter.

"An identical phrase was found in the Dead Sea Scrolls following a certain rhythmic pattern. Another thing to keep in mind about this culture is that they had no recording devices and most of what was taught by the rabbis was put to a sort of rhythm, meter or rhyme. Although not poetry, it did form a good device to aid in memorization. The rhythm and rhyme of the Lord's Prayer was lost when it was translated into the Greek. However, when transposed into Aramaic and even Hebrew, you recapture much of the meter. This is why you will find so many idiomatic expressions. It can be difficult at times to express your thoughts in a rhyme and sometimes the only way to make a thought rhyme is to create an idiomatic expression... Hence using the Dead Sea Scrolls rendering as guide we would find a more proper rendering of this phrase: Lead us not into temptation to be: Do not allow us to enter wrongful thinking or testing... If you find the rendering, 'Lead us not into temptation' a bit troubling, you might want to take advantage of the discoveries found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and offer an alternative rendering of Don't allow me to enter into wrong thinking or testings."<sup>1</sup>

The alternative rendering in the Dead Sea Scrolls, of this phrase in the Syriac Psalm III i.e. Psalm 155:11 in fact says,

"Remember me and forget me not, and lead me not into situations too hard for me."<sup>2</sup>

A revised English edition says,

"Remember me and forget me not, and bring me not into unbearable hardships."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Word Study – Lead Us Not into Temptation." <http://www.chaimbentorah.com/2014/05/word-study-lead-temptation/> (Accessed 14<sup>th</sup> June 2017).

<sup>2</sup> VanderKam, James & Flint, Peter. *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance for Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus, and Christianity*. (New York, NY: T & T Clark, 2002), 191-193

<sup>3</sup> Vermes, Geza. *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*. Revised Edition. (London: Penguin, 2004), 361.

So, it could be suggested that the two phrases “And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” are different sides of the one coin. God allows temptations to come our way, to test our strength of trust in Him and our spirit for Him. In other words, the strong language used here in Matthew by Jesus reveals the Christ-follower crying out to their Heavenly Father to be rescued. He wants us to grow strong and mature as His children, so He allows the tempter to test us. Consequently, we find ourselves in a test that is overwhelming us we need to cry out to our Heavenly Father. That is,

‘When the tempter is permitted to come we are too weak to resist, so don’t allow us to enter into temptation; we need You to deliver us from the clutches of this evil one (Satan).’ The concept that is being taught here is,

“So lead us that we may be safe from evil: may the issue ever be beneficent.”<sup>4</sup>

The idea behind this is that we need to be delivered by the Father; He is the One who draws us to Himself, to rescue us from the Satan’s schemes. Although God can use Satan as one who tests our maturity, he still has a will of his own and can attempt to do Christ-followers harm.

“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet 5:8 ESV).

He may even do this can especially be in the area of pride and pain. So, as Paul wrote to the Corinthian Church on the matter of forgiveness and the schemes of Satan,

<sup>5</sup> “If anyone has caused pain, they have caused pain not so much to me but to some degree—not to exaggerate—to all of you. <sup>6</sup> This punishment by the majority is sufficient for that person. <sup>7</sup> As a result, you should instead forgive and comfort them. Otherwise, they may be overwhelmed by excessive grief. <sup>8</sup> Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to them. <sup>9</sup> I wrote for this purpose: to test your character to see if you are obedient in everything. <sup>10</sup> Anyone you forgive, I do too. For what I have forgiven—if I have forgiven anything—it is for your benefit in the presence of Christ, <sup>11</sup> so that we may not be taken advantage of by Satan. For we are not ignorant of his schemes” (2 Cor 2:5-11 CSB).

This is why Jesus said to ask daily for our Heavenly Father to deliver us from the evil one. Or as the Dead Sea Scrolls have proposed, “Remember me and forget me not, and lead me not into situations too hard for me.” However, Paul did write to the Corinthians in light of the history of Israel and their trials,

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to us. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation, He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Co 10:13 ESV).

## Some concluding thoughts

So, coming back to the opening question,

**Q.** Have you ever stopped and thought why Jesus said to pray “deliver us from the evil one”?

Remember that,

“Let no one say when they are tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God,’ for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no one” (Jas 1:13 ESV).

But our Heavenly Father does want us to grow to maturity as His children. So, God can use Satan as one who tests our maturity. He wants us to grow up in His ways and leave the earthly things behind. We are now Christ-followers, not earth-followers. We are born from above and are His.

<sup>4</sup> “Matthew 6.” <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/egt/matthew/6.htm> (Accessed 14th June 2017).

When talking to God regarding our deliverance, we need to keep in mind that He is 'Our Father in the heavens,' so He will see and know things that we do not. So remember that,

"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to us. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation, He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Cor 10:13 ESV).

So, we need to lift our eyes long enough to see Him and His ways, which are so different to our narrow-minded ways.

Let us now begin to talk to Him about all of this starting here.