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The Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9–13: Reconstructing based on Byzantine text

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Prayer holds a profound significance in a believer's life, with Lord Jesus teaching specific teachings to his disciples on the subject. It serves as a communication tool bridging the connection between God and humanity, constituting a dialogue rather than solely a platform for pleas or requests. This research delved into the specific text of prayer, focusing on Matthew 6:9–13, commonly known as 'The Lord's Prayer'. While many Christians interpret it as a 'prayer of supplication', the study questioned whether it truly falls into that category and explored potential contradictions.

Utilising a qualitative approach with a pure exegesis study, the author employed hermeneutics based on John D. Grassmick's steps of exegesis analysis. The examination was centred on the Byzantine Greek Bible text in the Gospel of Matthew 6:14–15. The aim was to grasp the essence of the message within the studied texts, emphasising Lord Jesus' teachings. Results highlighted the significance of understanding the Lord's Prayer as taught by Jesus in Matthew 6:9–13. The author emphasised the importance for Christians in Indonesia to comprehend the meaning of this prayer.

Contribution: This reconstruction of Matthew's understanding of the Lord's Prayer using the Byzantine text anticipated contributions to *HTS Theological Studies*. The Our Father's Prayer, a blessing to churches and Christians for over 2000 years, was explored for its proper grammatical translation and the profound contents taught by Jesus. This study aimed to assist Christians in understanding and applying the prayer in their lives, aligning with the true faith and fostering spiritual growth as intended by Lord Jesus.

Keywords: exposition; prayer; the Lord's Prayer; Byzantine text; New Testament; gospel; Matthew 6:9–13.

Introduction

Many Christians have wrong assumptions about prayer, so they don't attach importance to life in prayer. Many people have concerns concerning their prayer lives, such as why they should pray. Why do people pray? What is the matter to be prayed? How to properly pray? There is no other way to truly understand what prayer entails than to learn directly from Jesus, who is both a personal figure who serves as an example for Christians in terms of sin (Mt 6:9; Lk 11:1) and a figure who has become a model for prayer (Mt 4:2; Mk 6:31; Lk 6:12) (Henry 1997).

Jesus has taught this extraordinary prayer with the aim that every Christian can grow according to the true faith (Simanjuntak 2020), as well as being able to express precisely the contents of the prayer that has been taught in everyday life. Christian life cannot be separated from the five disciplines that must be carried out every day of his life. The five disciplines are Bible study, prayer, worship, service and stewardship (Wijaya 2019). The researcher will conduct an exposition of the Lord's Prayer and its relevance to the structure of the believer's prayer.

Prayer constitutes a sacred aspect within the realm of Christian faith; however, it is undeniable that, often, it is approached merely as a routine, driven by the demand on prayer time (Andrian et al., 2021) and seen as a complement to one's journey of faith. Despite individual variations in views and understandings of prayer, its ultimate goal remains centered on God. Prayer is the foremost communication tool employed by believers to cultivate fellowship with God (Ngoei & Losong 2020). John Calvin said prayer is a link between man and God. Even though God has

Note: Historical Thought and Source Interpretation.

given His promise, He wants His people to ask in prayer'. Prayer is not just a rule or obligation, but prayer is God's will or desire. (Mareol 2021). Some of the powerful pillars of life that are witnessed and felt by those who believe in Christ are when they have an intimate relationship with the owner of life through prayer. Prayer connects weak and fragile humans with eternity, to get God's revelation and will in his life. Prayer is not just asking God for something, but prayer is how a person involves God. Therefore, in essence, prayer is a place for someone to get involved. Prayer is the work of the Holy Spirit guiding believers to build communication and relationship with God (Wibowo, Tanhidy & Ming 2022), which contains adoration, worship and thanksgiving to God in Christ Jesus for all the works and blessings that have been bestowed in this life every day. Prayer also contains a request for forgiveness of sins and a request for blessings for believers. Prayer is a means for a believer to pour out all that is in his heart, because he has the belief that everything conveyed to God through prayer will not be in vain. It means that when he raises prayer to God there is hope that he is the Most Merciful who will answer every cry of his people. Prayer should be a powerful weapon that can live and grow in the spirit of God's servants serving in the church (Harianto et al. 2023).

Literature review

Background to the Gospel of Matthew

Almost all theologians agree that the Gospel of Matthew was written by a Jew who converted to Christianity, by a tax collector who lived in Capernaum, which is located in Galelia named Matthew (Brown 1997). Regarding when the Gospel of Matthew was written, some theologians have different opinions; for example, Brown said the Gospel of Matthew was written between 80 and 90 AD (Brown 1997). Another theologian says the Gospel of Matthew was written between late 50 AD and early 60 AD (Gundry 1981). While Unger said the Gospel of Matthew was written between 40 and 50 AD (Unger 2006). The real debate about when Matthew's Gospel was written is: was Matthew's Gospel written before the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD or after 70 AD? Based on the biblical references found in the Gospel of Matthew, it is clear that Matthew's Gospel was written before the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD. This can be seen in the mention of the 'Temple' in Matthew 5:35 regarding the city of the 'Great King', Matthew 14:1–2 still mentions the existence of the temple; in Matthew 24:15, the prophecy of the upcoming 'abominable destroyer from destruction' is mentioned. So, based on all the references from the Gospel of Matthew itself, it can be concluded that the Gospel of Matthew was written before the destruction of Jerusalem.

The theology of the Gospel of Matthew

Theologically, the Gospel of Matthew has two intrinsically unified focuses, 'Jesus as the Christ' and 'the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven which Jesus proclaimed' (Viviano 1993). Two other themes that run through Matthew's Gospel are 'justice' and 'law'. Based on text studies that have been carried out starting from Matthew chapter 5, especially after Matthew 5:17–20, it has been found that several verses are the main topic of the text. Viviano observes that the text of Matthew 5:17–20 forms part of the first six chapters of the Gospel of Matthew, where its 'redactional creativity reaches its peak', presenting Jesus as 'the Messiah of speech and Messiah of deed' (Alferdy 2022). Craig Evan observes that Jesus criticized the Gentiles in verse 7 and reflects that most likely, the author was still in the Jewish community when writing the Gospels, and in doing so, actively sought to convince the Jewish people that Jesus was the fulfilment of prophecy. Jewish presenting Jesus as a teacher, Matthew shows an understanding of Jewish teaching, which further emphasizes the Jewish background (Evans 2012).

In the broader context from which the passage on the 'The Lord's Prayer' is taken from Matthew 6:1–34, it is obvious that the text of The Lord's Prayer is a hortatory passage taken from the Sermon on the Mount. The time of occurrence is estimated in the year 27M–29 AD (Carro 1997), which is during the ministry of Jesus Christ in Galilee. The exact location is somewhere in Palestine, probably north of Capernaum. In his advice, Jesus pointed out the difference between then-held religious beliefs about the law of Moses and his own teaching, which was meant to fulfil, deepen and restore the law to its original function (summarized in Mt 5:17–20). Jesus compared the teachings of the Pharisees and their religious observances with the true intent of the law, along with the obedience and motives that God required all along. He also compared the false teachings of the Pharisees with his own and revealed true authority (Fullam & Slosser 1980).

Research methods and design

The author uses a qualitative writing method (Moleong 1997) with a pure exegesis study, by using a literature study based on hermeneutics from John D. Grassmick (steps of exegesis analysis) on the Byzantine Greek Bible text in the Gospel of Matthew 6:14–15. The purpose of exegesis is to capture the essence of the message conveyed by the texts studied. The best way to achieve that goal is to extract the original language of the document (Grassmick 1976). In this case, it is very important for writers to master linguistics, textual criticism, literary criticism, historical criticism, archaeological discoveries and additional tools. The expertise and tools possessed by an exegete are very helpful and greatly determine the process and results of exegesis in their efforts to find the truth. Kevin J. Vanhoozer said that the hermeneutic crisis is basically theological in nature (Poythress 1999). If someone stops believing in God, then everything related to the meaning, the writer, the text, and the reader all become problematic. This becomes the cause of an unhealthy outlook (Poythress 1999). Hermeneutic task is to understand the content of the text (Ricoeur 2017).

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from Kadesi Theological School, Yogyakarta, Indonesia (No. 06/Dir-PS/STTK/P/XII/2023).

Results and discussion

Based on the research results, the text of 'The Lord's Prayer' contained in Matthew 6:9–13 contains seven petitions that all use the Greek verb in the aorist form, which based on the Greek grammatical structure, should be translated into the past tense (Binnick 1991). In Koine Greek, aorist verbs are used to express actions that have taken place, for example: The aorist active verb is indicative of the third person singular εδωκεν (edōken), which comes from the root verb δίδωμι (didōmi) found in John 3:16 has been translated uniformly by various Bible translations in the form 'past', that is: 'had given'. However, regarding the use of the seven petitions based on the results of the grammatical translation, the prayer taught by Jesus in Matthew 6: 9–13. The authors used the KJV translation: Matthew 6:9–13

9 Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
11 Give us this day our daily bread.
12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever Amen.

Thus, there is a very sharp difference between the existing translations when compared with the grammatical translations of the research results. Where, 'The Lord's Prayer' as a result of a grammatical translation refers to 'a prayer of thanksgiving'.[1]

Therefore, based on the above-mentioned differences, a question arises: Is the Lord's Prayer taught by Jesus in Matthew 6:9–13 a 'prayer of supplication' for something that has not yet happened, or is it a 'prayer of thanksgiving' that refers to something that had already happened? This knowledge is crucial because there are disparities in these translations' theological implications, which have the potential to lead to the development of new and distinct theologies. For example, this concern has been proven, where at present there have been various eschatological theologies with different understandings because of the translation of the second petition in the Lord's Prayer as contained in Matthew 6:10 regarding 'the coming of the kingdom of God'. Has the 'kingdom of God' come or not yet?[2]

Is it true that the Lord's Prayer taught by Jesus is a prayer request? If the 'The Lord's Prayer' is a prayer of supplication, then there are at least three contradictions.

1. Of the 46 most popular English translations of the Bible dating back to the 1517 reformation, not one has been found that translates the aorist form of the verb ελθετω (elthetō) found in Matthew 6:10 into the past tense, which describes the action 'coming' has taken place; on the contrary, it has been found that 66% (30 out of 46 versions) have translated the lexical form of the aorist verb ελθετω (elthetō) into the present tense, and as much as 34% (16 out of 46 versions) have translated the aorist form verb ελθετω (elthetō) into the future form. However, based on the sentence structure, almost all English translations use the future form 'Will be', so, it can be concluded, that all existing English translations have rendered the aorist form of verbs describing 'actions that have taken place' as 'actions that have not yet taken place'. As a result, the question arises: Has the 'Kingdom of God' come, or has it not yet arrived?

2. In eschatological theology, there are at least five views on the theology of the kingdom of God, namely A-Millennium Eschatology Theology; Post-Millennium eschatology; Pre-Millennium Pre-tribulational theology; Mid-tribulation Pre-Millennium eschatology; and Post-tribulation Pre-Millennium Theology of Eschatology. The appearance of these differences certainly raises questions for Christians.

First contradiction

In Matthew 6:14 it has 2 clauses:

1. εαν γαρ αφητε τοις ανθρωποις τα παραπτωματα αυτων
2. αφησει και υμιν ο πατηρ υμων ο ουρανιος

The first clause in Matthew 6:14 is an explanation related to the Lord's Prayer, which is found in Matthew 6:9–13, especially in the fifth petition found in Matthew 6:12. In this structural analysis, the first clause that reads: εαν γαρ αφητε τοις ανθρωποις τα παραπτωματα αυτων (ean gar aphēte tois anthrōpois ta paraptōmata autōn) has the explanation as following:

1. The use of the conjunction of the state particle εαν (ean) is related to the use of the verb in the subjunctive mode, implying that the action described by the verb is probable. That is, that what is done is a condition or condition that determines the consequences in the form of a possibility, in the sense: if the conditions are met, then God's law of forgiveness as in Matthew 6:12 will occur. (To understand this concept, please read the illustration given by Jesus in Matthew 18:23–35 about the parable of forgiveness).
2. The use of the post positive conjunction γαρ (gar) in Greek means 'because' or 'for'. Which this word works almost the same as the English equivalent to tie two (or more) clauses or statements together, where one explains or confirms the other. This word differs in function from the word υπερ (huper) which also means 'for', which is used to mean 'utilisation' or 'servitude'. Thus, it can be concluded with certainty, that the use of the post positive word γαρ (gar) is still related to the The Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9–13, which was written before.
3. The verb αφητε (aphēte) used is the theme of the sentence, which implies the theme of 'forgiveness'. In its morphology, the verb αφητε (aphēte) has the second aorist active subjunctive for the second person plural, which has a grammatical meaning: '(if) you had forgiven'. This theme talks about possibility, not certainty, which can be seen from the use of the conditional particle εαν (ean) at the beginning of the clause.
4. The phrase τοις ανθρωποις τα παραπτωματα αυτων (tois anthrōpois ta paraptōmata autōn) means: the faults (offences) of people, referring to those who have wronged them. So, if this clause is translated, the grammatical translation is as follows: 'Because if you forgive people's debts', Based on the sentence structure, the first clause in Matthew 6:14 is a dependent clause that cannot stand alone, but must be read together with Matthew 6:12 and the next clause in Matthew 6:14–15.

In the second clause, which reads: αφησει και υμιν ο πατηρ υμων ο ουρανιος (aphēsei kai umin o patēr umōn o ouranios), is a continuation clause of the first clause, which based on its structural analysis is as follows:

1. The second clause that starts with the same verb in the first clause, but uses the verb in the indicative future active form for the third person singular: αφησει (aphēsei), refers to the subject 'Father in heaven' which is found in

the Lord's Prayer Matthew 6:9–13, which is a response to the use of the same verb in the first clause. The action verb is the theme of this verse, but the future tense is used to indicate that 'forgiveness' from the Father in heaven will be granted, if the condition in the first clause is met. But what must be considered here is that forgiveness is carried out by believers not as an actual condition, but as a condition in the sentence. In a theological sense, the condition meant by the possible subjunctive sentence contained in the first clause is 'response' because the Father in heaven has forgiven first. This must be underlined, because if the theological understanding is wrong, then the understanding of this verse can also have wrong results.

2. Use of conjunctions *και* (kai) basically means 'and' or 'too', depending on the context. In this case, the use of the conjunction και (kai) together with the first clause has made it a sentence that forms the structure: 'Because… then'. Thus, the translation of the first clause and the first part, should be translated as follows: 'Because if you forgive (their) people's debts, then (He) will also forgive …'
3. The use of personal pronouns in the dative form for the second person plural is usually translated with: 'To you'. Which refers to people who come to pray to the Father in heaven.
4. Phrase*ό πατηρ υμων ό ουρανιος* (o patēr umōn o ouranios) which means: 'Your Father who art in heaven', is the subject of the sentence which 'forgives'. So, in the sentence Matthew 6:12, as a whole talks about conditional forgiveness made by the Father in heaven for his children, in the sense, that God's children have already received forgiveness, then they must give forgiveness to those who the person who debts him in response or as a result has been forgiven beforehand. Thus, when compared to Matthew 18:35 it has exactly the same meaning, where Jesus spoke about forgiveness for those who have been forgiven. So, based on the grammatical translation, the second clause reads:

In LAI's new Indonesian translation, which reads: 'For if you forgive people their debts, your heavenly Father will also **forgive you**', the bold phrase contains two translation errors, namely:

- Firstly, the word 'your father', should be in the plural: 'your fathers'. In the original text, the phrase: *ό T-NSM πατηρ N-NSM υμων P-2GP* (o patēr humōn) uses the second person plural: υμων (humōn), which means 'you', instead of using the second person singular: σου (sou).
- Secondly, the word 'which is in heaven', should be translated as 'heavenly one'. Based on its grammatical structure, the original phrase from 'your heavenly father' is:*ό πατηρ υμων ό ουρανιος* (o patēr umōn o ouranios), which uses the nominative form of the adjective ό ουρανιος with a specific article, thus forming the attributive sentence 'which'. The LAI translation showing 'location' should use the noun: ό T-NSM εν PREP τοις T-DPM ουρανοις (o en tois ouranois) as found in Matthew 6:9. Matthew 6:14 has a different sentence structure from Matthew 6:9, so the translation that refers to the location clearly does not match the grammar used.

Thus, based on the grammatical, lexical and structural analysis, the text of Matthew 6:14 has a grammatical translation: 'Because if you forgive people's debts, your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you'.

Second contradiction

In the Lord's Prayer, there are seven petitions that use seven aorist form verbs, all of which grammatically use the form 'past', namely the verb: (1) ἁγιασθήτω (V-APM-3s), which means 'has been sanctified'. (2) ελθετω (V-2AAM-3s) which means 'has come'. (3) γενηθήτω (V-AOM-3s), which means 'has happened'. (4) δὸς (V-2AAM-2s) which means 'You have given'. (5) ἄφες (V-2AAM-2s) which means 'You have forgiven'. (6) μη εἰσενέγκῃς (V-AAS-2s) which means 'had not led'. (7) ῥῦσαι (V-ADM-2s), which means 'You have redeemed (released)'.

Grammatically, the Greek form of the aorist verb is a verb that states that the intended action is an action that has taken place and has been perfectly completed. So, how is it possible that the aorist form of the verb found in the Lord's Prayer is translated into the 'present' form or the 'future' form? The seven petitions contained in the Lord's Prayer based on Matthew 6:9–13 use the aorist form of the verb, that means, if translated as a prayer of supplication, then how is it possible to explain 'the act of asking for something – for something – that has been done by God in the past?'

As a comparison, in John 3:16, there is the use of an indicative active aorist form verb for the third person singular εδωκεν (edōken), which comes from the root verb δίδωμι (didōmi). The aorist form of the verb is consistently translated by almost all Bible translations (English and Indonesian) in the form of 'past,' namely, 'has given'. But why are the seven Greek verbs in the aorist form in the seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer found in Matthew 6:9–13 translated in the present tense? As an example, you can see the use of the active aorist verb for the second person singular δος (dos) which comes from the root verb δίδωμι (didōmi), which in the KJV translation has been translated in present form, namely the English word 'Give'. The Byzantine Greek text of Matthew 6:11 reads: τον αρτον ημων τον επιουσιον δος ημιν σημερον (ton arton ēmōn ton epiousion dos ēmin sēmeron) which should be translated: 'You have given us our daily bread for this day', but by language translation Bibles KJV English with 'Give us this day our daily bread'. Of course, this is a contradiction that requires an explanation.

Third contradiction

Based on the lexical meaning, the word προσεύχομαι (proseukhomai) used by Jesus in his commandment in

Matthew 6:9 is the Greek verb προσεύχομαι (proseukhomai), which lexically means: 'pray' in the sense of not asking only. It means as in making petition to deity not only asking but to give thanks. If what Jesus meant in the 'The Lord's Prayer' was a prayer of request, why didn't Jesus use the Greek verb δέομαι (deomai), which lexically means 'to pray' whose use describes a request? Lexically, doesn't the Greek verb προσεύχομαι (proseukhomai) have a non-asking paradigm? But why are the seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer translated into seven petitions? Isn't this a contradiction?

Text analysis based on Greek grammar

Analysis of aorist tenses

In the grammatical structure of the Koine Greek language, the aorist form of the verb is one of the most frequently used tenses in the New Testament.[3]

In the Koine Greek language, the difference between the present aspect and the past aspect (aorist) is that the 'present stem' is used to describe an ongoing (unfinished) action; whereas 'past stem' (aorist) is used to express an action that occurred only once and has been completed. This is different from the use of 'imperfect stem' which implies an action that has occurred in the past continuously or repeatedly. The following is the classification of aorist form verbs, which are distinguished from their endings: (1) The first aorist is a Greek verb that has the same root in both present or imperfect and aorist. Given that the 'stem' is same, Greek utilizes distinct series of endings to differentiate between the 'imperfect' and the 'indicative aorist'. (2) The second aorist is a Greek verb which has a different root for the present or imperfect and aorist. Because the 'stem' is different, there is no need to use different endings for 'imperfect' and 'aorist'.[4]

Different definitions of Aorists

There is much disagreement among Greek linguists about the meaning of the word 'Aorist'. Some experts argue that the aorist form is not talking about time, but talking about actions that have taken place. For this reason, for some translators, the aorist form does not have to refer to past times, but only refers to actions that are classified as perfect actions. Some experts argue that the aorist form is one of the four subspecies of the past tense (Binnick 1991). Nevertheless, it remains to be acknowledged that the greatest difficulty in the linguistic analysis of the Greek aorist form that occurs in cross-linguistics is the problem of translation. Daniel Wallace has divided the use of every Greek tense in the New Testament into seven tenses: Present, Aorist, Imperfect, Future, Perfect, Pluperfect, and Future Perfect.

The lack of uniformity in the understanding of the Greek aorist form has led to the emergence of different translation forms; for example, in English, the aorist form is sometimes translated as 'Simple Past', but is sometimes translated as 'Perfect' (Burton 1898). According to Burton, 'Greek Aorist' has a wider reach than 'English Simple Past'. Therefore, the translation of 'Greek aorist' into English includes not only the sense of the form 'Past' but also overlaps with the form 'Perfect' and the form 'Pluperfect'. In line with Burton's opinion, in his book entitled 'The rendering into English of the Greek Aorist and Perfect', Weymouth emphasized that 'Greek aorist' is not equivalent to the form 'Simple Past', but is more equivalent to the form 'Perfect' (Weymouth 1891).

Contrary to Burton and Weymouth's opinion, some linguists such as Moulton and AT Robertson have assumed that the Greek Aorist form can be translated into almost every English tense. Moulton agrees that the use of the Greek aorist form is not designed for a clear time, so in translation an interpretive decision is needed, whether the aorist refers to a definite time or an indefinite period (Moulton 1908). On the other hand, in line with Moulton's thoughts, AT Robertson argues that the Greek aorist form has a unique nuance, and does not have exact similarities with any tenses in any other language, so Robertson concludes that it is almost impossible to translate the Greek aorist into English (Robertson 1919).

Another opinion says that the aorist form should always be translated into the 'Simple Present' form. This was stated by Knoch in his book *Concordant Version of the New Testament*, which was first published in 1926. For reasons of absolute formal consistency, according to Knoch, every Greek word must be translated by the same English word, and for that reason, surprisingly, Knoch chose the English equivalent of 'Simple Present'.[5]

Based on the Lord's Prayer taught by Jesus, as contained in Matthew 6:9–13, there are seven petitions that use two different verb forms, namely: (1) One imperative verb in the present form προσευχεσθε (proseukhesthe), which comes from the basic verb προσεύχομαι (proseukhomai), and (2) seven verbs in the aorist form, namely: (1) ἁγιασθήτω (V-APM-3s), (2) ελθετω (V-2AAM-3s), (3) γενηθήτω (V-AOM-3s), (4) δὸς (V-2AAM-2s), (5) ἄφες (V-2AAM-2s), (6) μη εἰσενέγκῃς (V-AAS-2s), (7) ῥῦσαι (V-ADM-2s).

Is it possible that the use of the imperative verb in the present tense for the second person plural προσευχεσθε (proseukhesthe) has the same translation as the use of the seven aorist verbs found in the seven petitions in the body of the Lord's Prayer? In this case, it is clear that Knock's proposal to translate the aorist form into the present tense is impossible.[6] If the aorist form is translated into the present form, then grammatically the aorist form is the same as the present form. The question that arises is: What understanding is the

3.RHEMA – *Journal of Biblical Theology and Practice* 5(2), 53–71.

4.The difference between the first aorist and the second aorist is only in the grammatical structure, which in English the first aorist verb may be similar to the use of a regular verb, while the second aorist verb is similar to an irregular verb. However, the inflection of the two Greek aorist verb forms is much more complex and complicated.

5.Knoch (n.d.). In his explanation, Knoch explained his decision in a pamphlet entitled 'The Greek and English Indefinite', in which Knoch has quoted at once the views of Robertson and Weymouth, thus saying: 'Greek is one of the most difficult languages, and verbs Greek is part of the most complex and complicated grammar, and the only Greek verb that is not resolved is the aorist form of the verb.

6.In his concluding statements, Knoch emphasizes that among the intricate forms in Greek, the aorist form stands out as the most challenging.

significance of the difference between the present form and the aorist form? In this case, the researcher prefers suggestions from Burton or Weymouth, rather than suggestions from Knock. Because, after all, almost all English translations of the Bible have translated the aorist form into the past or perfect tense.

Imperative modus analysis

Based on the grammatical structure of the Koine Greek, the Aorist form is a form that is usually used to refer to an action that has occurred, and usually in an event that only occurs once. In contrast to the imperfect form which occurs repeatedly. This is different from the present tense which is used to refer to an action that has been started, is still ongoing and the action is still not finished. Now what about using the aorist imperative form? Is it possible that the use of an aorist imperative verb referring to an action that occurred in the past could be translated as a request for the present or future?

As a result of these differences in views, there have been different translations in various translation Bibles. Returning to the main issue, whether the imperative mode should be translated as imperative or as indicative has been a long debate among Greek linguists. Porter stated that in the entire New Testament Bible, there are only four verses that use the imperative mode in perfect form (Mk 4:39; Ac 15:29; Eph 5:5; Ja 1:19). The following are some of the most disputed examples, including those found in Ephesians 5:5, Hebrews 12:17 and James 1:19: What is the verb ἴστε (iste) that appears in Ephesians, Hebrews and James must be translated into the imperative form or into the indicative form?

In the text of the Lord's Prayer, especially in the seven petitions found in the text of Matthew 6:9–13, there are seven verbs that use the aorist form, and of the seven verbs, six of them, almost all Greek morphologists agree to use the morphology for the seven verbs in the seven petitions with the imperative mode. This is understandable, because the possible makers are the same. But the question: 'Why have almost all Bible translations translated the Lord's Prayer for the seven petitions as a command or a request?' One of the strongest reasons is, because all translators agree, that the meaning of the word prayer is to ask, so the Lord's Prayer is interpreted as a prayer of request.

Even though in some cases, for example, in James 2:24, the verb ορατε (orate) is given the morphology of the indicative form (V-PAI-2P), as well as the imperative form (V-PAM-2P), that means: Verb ορατε (orate) can be translated in the indicative form, or in the imperative form, depending on the syntax and context. Likewise with the seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer found in Matthew 6:9–13, six of which use six verbs in the aorist imperative form. Here, based on the grammatical structure of the Greek aorist form, and the lexical meaning of the verb προσεύχομαι (proseukhomai), and added to the context of Jesus' words in Matthew 6:8 that 'So do not be like them, for your Father already knows, whatever you need before you ask Him'.

TABLE 1: The first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer.

Petition	Subject	Predicate
1	τὸ ὄνομά (σου)	ἁγιασθήτω
2	ἡ βασιλεία (σου)	ἐλθέτω
3	τὸ θέλημά (σου)	Γενηθήτω

Grammatical analysis

In this section, the discussion of the content of the Lord's Prayer will be divided into two parts, because there are differences in the verbal sound of each sentence. In the first three petitions, namely petitions 1–3, the verbs used are imperative and in the forms (diathesis) 2 passive and 1 active (passive-active-passive). However, in the last four petitions, namely petitions 4–7, the verbs used are imperative but all have an active diathesis. In the first part, there are three petitions with the same verb, as shown in Table 1.

If you pay close attention, there are three different subjects from third person verbs in the given table, namely το ονομα (Name), η βασιλεια (Kingdom) and ο θελημα (will). Meanwhile, the verbs used indicate a parallelism between the verbs αγιασθητω (sanctified), ελθετω (to come) and γενηθητω (to become). Thus, because there are two passive voiced verbs, it means that the subject is not the doer who does the action, but someone else who does it. Who is the actual 'subject' referred to by the 'third person singular' verb that performs every action mentioned by the verb?

In the second part, there are four petitions containing what God had done before the prayer said the Lord's Prayer as has been found in the following sentences:

1. τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον (ton arton ēmōn ton epiousion dos ēmin sēmeron) whose translation is: '*You have given* us our daily bread today'.
2. καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν (kai aphes ēmin ta opheilēmata ēmōn) whose translation is: 'and *You have forgiven* our sins'; ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφειμεν[7]τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν (Os kai ēmeis aphiemen tois opheiletais ēmōn) whose translation is: 'as also we forgive those who are debtors of us'.
3. καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς[8]ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν (kai mē eisenegkēs ēmas eis peirasmon) whose translation is: 'and *has not led us* into temptation'.
4. ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ (alla rusai ēmas apo tou ponērou) whose translation is: 'but *you have redeemed* us from evil'.

Based on the Greek grammatical structure of the verbs, the last four petitions contained in the Lord's Prayer all use the Aorist form of the verb, namely: (1) δὸς, (2) ἄφες, (3) μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς, and (4) ῥῦσαι, all of which show, that all the actions described by the verb 'have taken place perfectly in the past', as can be seen in Table 2.

7.In the majority of the Byzantine text the present form of the verb 'ἀφειμεν' (aphiemen) is used, while the Alexandrian text generally uses the aorist (already happening) verb 'ἀφήκαμεν' (aphēkamen).

8.This is a unique exception because it is in the subjunctive mode.

TABLE 2: The last four petitions contained in the Lord's Prayer.

Petition	Verb	Information	Translation
4	**δὸς**	Aorist (already happening)	You **have** given
5	**ἄφες**	Aorist (already happening)	You **have** forgiven
6	**μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς**	Aorist (already happening)	**had** not led
7	**ῥῦσαι**	Aorist (already happening)	You **have** redeemed

In the sentence of the fourth petition, the fifth petition and the seventh petition, it can be found that there are three verbs where the verb δὸς (You have given), αφες (you have forgiven) and ῥῦσαι (You have redeemed), all three use the aorist form, which shows that all three of them employ the aorist form, demonstrating that the events described in the Lord's Prayer actually did occur. Whereas in the sentence (6th petition), uniquely, the text of the Lord's Prayer uses the aorist verb in the subjunctive active negative form μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς (had not led). In the last petition, namely the seventh petition, the text of the Lord's Prayer again uses the aorist verb ῥῦσαι which means: 'You have redeemed', which shows, that the act of 'redeeming' also really happened. What is interesting here is that in the seventh petition, where the text of the Lord's Prayer uses negative verbs in the subjunctive mode μὴ εισενεγκης (has not led), grammatically gives the sense, that the action intended by the subjunctive verb does not have to be real, but is a sentence of possibility (probability).

In a number of ways, there are indeed sharp differences in understanding between the Biblikos translation and several translations that have existed so far. In the translation of the Biblikos, the use of the verb in the fourth, fifth and seventh petitions is translated as an indicative active aorist form (showing that the action actually happened), whereas in various other translations. It is placed as a mode imperative (which indicates that the action is as a command or request) to God (which indicates that it is as if the prayer has not received the action).

Conclusion

Based on grammatical, lexical and contextual studies, the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9–13 can be concluded as follows:

1. The Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6:9–13 cannot be a prayer of supplication, because grammatically it uses seven verbs in the aorist form which are used to describe actions that have taken place in the past. The use of the aorist imperative form does not have to be translated as a command form, because in many cases, the imperative mode can also be translated in an indicative form, so it is more appropriate if the Lord's Prayer is translated as a prayer of thanksgiving to state that God has done it before the prayer person prays for it.
2. Based on the syntax, it is impossible for the Lord's Prayer to be interpreted 'to ask God for something – that God has given'. Thus, the translation of the Lord's Prayer as a prayer of supplication not only denies the Kingdom of God but also denies: (1) that God has provided daily food (verse 11); (2) that God has forgiven sins (verse 12); (3) that God has not led you into temptation (verse 13a); (4) that God has redeemed mankind from evil (verse 13b).
3. Grammatically, the sentence in Matthew 6:14 is a form of conditional possibility; this can be seen in the first clause which contains prostasis with a grammatical structure that uses the word εαν (ean) and the subjunctive verb αφητε (aphēte). The second clause contains apodosis, which will occur if the conditions in apodosis are met.
4. Based on the context, Matthew 6:14–15 is related to Matthew 6:12 which theologically states that if we have to forgive others, it is because God has forgiven us first. So that the understanding of Matthew 6:14 is our response to the forgiveness that God has given before (Mt 6:12).

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Y.P. contributed in writing original draft and funding acquisition. H.S. was involved in methodology and supervision. M.D. and D.M. were responsible for methodology, writing: review and editing. T.S. was responsible for conception, writing: review and editing.

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