

Jesus Teaches About Prayer

Here's an expanded chart that compares the **Lord's Prayer (Matthew & Luke)** with two foundational **Jewish prayers**: the **Amidah** and the **Kaddish**. This shows how Jesus' model of prayer was rooted in Jewish tradition but also introduced distinct Kingdom-focused priorities.

The Lord's Prayer and Its Jewish Roots

Segment	Matthew 6:9–13	Luke 11:2–4	Jewish Parallel	Notes on Connection
Opening Address	<i>Our Father in heaven</i>	<i>Father</i>	Amidah : “Blessed are You, Lord our God and God of our fathers...”	Emphasizes God's fatherhood and intimacy; Amidah also addresses God as ancestral and covenantal Father
God's Name	<i>Hallowed be your name</i>	<i>Hallowed be your name</i>	Kaddish : “May His great name be magnified and sanctified...”	Shared desire for God's name to be revered; central to Jewish worship
God's Kingdom	<i>Your kingdom come</i>	<i>Your kingdom come</i>	Kaddish : “May He establish His kingdom in your lifetime...”	Strong messianic and eschatological hope in both prayers
God's Will	<i>Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven</i>	—	Amidah : Prayers for God's will, justice, and mercy to prevail	Jesus includes heaven-to-earth alignment; Amidah often focuses on obedience to God's commands
Daily Provision	<i>Give us this day our daily bread</i>	<i>Give us each day our daily bread</i>	Amidah : Blessing #9 – “Bless this year... provide sustenance”	Asking for daily sustenance was already a familiar prayer theme
Forgiveness	<i>Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors</i>	<i>Forgive us our sins...</i>	Amidah : Blessing #6 – “Forgive us, our Father... pardon us...”	Shared recognition of the need for mercy, with Matthew emphasizing mutual forgiveness
Temptation & Deliverance	<i>Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil</i>	<i>Lead us not into temptation</i>	Amidah : “Remove from us suffering, sickness, and sorrow...”	Both seek protection from spiritual and physical harm; Matthew adds direct request for deliverance
Doxology (later addition)	<i>For yours is the kingdom...</i>	—	1 Chronicles 29:11 (used in Jewish blessings): “Yours, O Lord, is the greatness... the kingdom...”	Later liturgical addition that mirrors biblical doxology language already used in Jewish worship

Summary of Jewish Roots

- The **Amidah** ("The Standing Prayer") was recited **three times daily** and included **petitions** for provision, forgiveness, healing, justice, and the coming of the Messiah.
- The **Kaddish**, often said after teaching or the death of a loved one, is focused on **glorifying God's name and kingdom**, much like the opening of the Lord's Prayer.
- Jesus **distills** and **personalizes** these themes for **daily discipleship** and **Kingdom living**, emphasizing:
 - God as **Father** (intimate relationship)
 - Mutual **forgiveness**
 - Focus on the **coming Kingdom** and **heaven-on-earth alignment**
 - **Daily trust** in God's provision

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The Eighteen Benedictions (*Amidah*)

- The **Amidah** (literally, “the standing [prayer]”) was and still is the **central daily prayer** in Jewish worship.
- In Jesus’ day, it was known as the “**Tefillah**” (**The Prayer**), because it was considered *the prayer every Jew should pray*.



Structure

- **Originally 18 blessings** (hence “Eighteen Benedictions”), later a **19th blessing** was added after the destruction of the Temple (around AD 85–90).
- They cover **praise, petitions, and thanksgiving**, forming the backbone of synagogue prayer.
- Prayed **three times daily**: morning (Shacharit), afternoon (Mincha), and evening (Ma’ariv).



Content Overview (in Jesus’ time)

1. **Praise of God’s fathers** (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob).
2. **God’s might** (giver of life, resurrection).
3. **Holiness of God’s name**.
4. **Knowledge/wisdom**.
5. **Repentance/forgiveness**.
6. **Forgiveness of sins**.
7. **Redemption** (from trouble).
8. **Healing** (the sick).
9. **Blessing of years** (prosperity, rain, harvest).
10. **Ingathering of exiles**.
11. **Justice** (restoration of judges).
12. **Against apostates/false informers** (the one added later).
13. **For the righteous** (support and reward).
14. **Rebuilding Jerusalem**.
15. **Coming of the Messiah (Son of David)**.
16. **Hearing of prayers**.
17. **Temple service restored**.
18. **Thanksgiving to God**.
19. **Peace** (shalom).



In Jesus’ Day

- Jesus and His disciples would have been familiar with the **Amidah**.
- When the disciples asked Jesus, “*Teach us to pray*” (Luke 11:1), many scholars believe the **Lord’s Prayer** echoes the structure of the Amidah — a shortened, kingdom-centered version.
 - For example:
 - “Hallowed be Your name” ↔ Holiness of God’s name.
 - “Your kingdom come” ↔ Prayer for Messiah and restoration.
 - “Give us this day our daily bread” ↔ Prayer for provision of the year.
 - “Forgive us our sins” ↔ Forgiveness blessing.
 - “Deliver us from evil” ↔ Redemption and peace petitions.



So in short: the **Eighteen Benedictions (Amidah)** were the **standard daily synagogue prayers** in Jesus’ day — the foundation of Jewish worship life, shaping how early Jews (and Jesus Himself) thought about prayer.

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Here's a **side-by-side comparison chart** of the **Eighteen Benedictions (*Amidah*)** and the **Lord's Prayer**, so you can see how Jesus' teaching parallels and re-frames the traditional synagogue prayer of His day:



Amidah vs. Lord's Prayer

 Amidah (Eighteen Benedictions)	 Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4)
Opening: Praise 1. God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (patriarchs). 2. God's power (giver of life, resurrection). 3. Holiness of God's name.	Opening: Praise "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. "
Kingdom & Messiah 14. Rebuild Jerusalem. 15. Bring the Messiah (Son of David). 17. Restore Temple service.	Kingdom & Messiah "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. "
Provision 9. Bless the years (rain, harvest, bread).	Provision "Give us this day our daily bread."
Forgiveness 5. Turn us to repentance. 6. Forgive our sins.	Forgiveness "Forgive us our debts/sins, as we forgive our debtors. "
Deliverance & Peace 7. Redeem us from trouble. 16. Hear our prayer. 18. Thanksgiving. 19. Peace (shalom).	Deliverance & Peace "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. " (Later ending: "For Thine is the kingdom, power, glory...")



Observations

- **Jesus simplified:** The Amidah had 18+ petitions; Jesus condensed the core themes into a short, memorable prayer.
- **Fatherhood of God:** The Amidah begins with patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob), but Jesus teaches His disciples to start with "*Our Father*" — a direct, intimate relationship.
- **Kingdom focus:** Both prayers long for God's reign, Messiah, and restoration of Jerusalem.
- **Daily rhythm:** Amidah was prayed three times a day; Jesus likely intended the Lord's Prayer to shape **daily prayer life** too.
- **Continuity & newness:** Jesus didn't reject Jewish prayer tradition — He distilled and fulfilled it in His own words.

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Luke 11:5–13 is a **follow-up to the Lord's Prayer** (Luke 11:2–4) and forms part of Jesus' teaching on **how to approach God in prayer**. He gives both a **parable** (vv. 5–8) and a **set of teachings** (vv. 9–13) to emphasize God's **generous, fatherly nature**.

Let's walk through the section in three parts:

♦ Luke 11:5–8 – Parable of the Midnight Friend

"Suppose one of you has a friend and goes to him at midnight..."

🧠 What happens:

- A man receives a **late-night guest** and has **no food** to offer him (hospitality was a **moral obligation** in Jewish culture).
- He goes to his **friend's house at midnight** and begs for **three loaves of bread**.
- The friend initially refuses, citing the inconvenience (everyone's asleep, the door is locked).
- But **because of the man's shameless persistence** (Greek: *anaideia*), the friend **gets up and gives him what he needs**.

🔍 Key insight:

- This is not about annoying God into action—it's about **bold, shameless confidence** in God's willingness to give.
- The man doesn't stop asking because he knows the friend has bread and can provide it.
- The point: If even a **reluctant human** responds to persistence, how much more will a **willing God** respond to your prayer?

♦ Luke 11:9–10 – Ask, Seek, Knock

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you."

☀️ Three imperatives:

- **Ask** – verbal request
- **Seek** – pursuit/action
- **Knock** – persistence

All three are in the **present tense** in Greek, implying **continuous action**:

👉 "Keep asking... keep seeking... keep knocking..."

💬 Message:

God is not reluctant. He's not sleeping. He **wants** to respond. He invites **ongoing, faithful communication** from His children.

♦ Luke 11:11–13 – Earthly Fathers vs. the Heavenly Father

"What father among you... would give a snake instead of a fish?"

⚖️ Contrast:

- Earthly fathers don't trick or harm their children when they ask for something good.
- If flawed human parents give good gifts...
- **How much more** will your **heavenly Father** give the **Holy Spirit** to those who ask!

✨ Theological emphasis:

- God doesn't just give "stuff"—He gives **Himself**.
- In Luke's Gospel (and Acts), the **Holy Spirit** is the ultimate gift from the Father.
- This climaxes the section: The **goal of prayer is communion with God** and empowerment for life in His Kingdom.