A FORM-CRITICISM OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

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In the modern research of the form-criticism of the Lord’s Prayer the article of M. D. Goulder 1) plays a role of importance. It is fascinating to become acquainted with an interpretation, which has tried to take into account the long history that the text of the Lord’s Prayer has undergone before it was inserted in the gospels of Matt. and Luke. The failure of the eschatological exegesis of the Lord’s Prayer, as proposed by E. Lohmeyer 2), J. Jeremias 3), and R. E. Brown 4), became evident not merely from the fact that these interpreters had to make use of extremely intricate reasoning and research to uphold this explanation. Several authors 5) had remained unconvinced by their arguments and rejected an eschatological interpretation for one or the other verse, or for several invocations 6). The problem was dealt with in an even more fundamental way by E. Grässer 7) who showed that the text of the Lord’s Prayer, as we find it presently in the gospels, appears to have been developed at a time in which the delay of the Parousia was no longer a problem. If this is accepted the obstacles are remov-

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6) The eschatological interpretation of the invocation of the remission of sins presents the greatest difficulties, but according to these authors also the invocation of the bread and the πειρασμός need not be interpreted in an eschatological fashion.
ed for a form-criticism of the Lord's Prayer which tries to take into account all the data of the text. Every stage of the history of the text of the Lord's Prayer contributed to the meaning of the text and these meanings have exerted their influence upon the final text. Therefore, the only permissible approach to the interpretation of the text is to integrate these historical influences in the text-interpretations. The article of M. D. Goulder must be understood along these lines. However, since redaction-criticism has made such progress since the publication of Goulder's article, it is necessary to re-examine his conclusion that 'Jesus gave certain teaching on prayer by precept and example, which was recorded for the most part by St. Mark. This was written up into a formal Prayer by St. Matthew, including certain explanations and additions in Matthean language and manner. (...) St. Matthew's Prayer was abbreviated and amended by St. Luke'.

Whether or not the origin of the Lord's Prayer must be sought in a liturgical development of the Gethsemane story is decisive for every form-critical analysis of Matt. vi 9-13. Because the invocation γεννηθέτω το θελημά σου is lacking in Luke xi 2, and corresponds with Matt. xxvi 42 (contrasting thereby with Matt. xxvi 39 and Mark xiv 36), it is assumed either that Matt. added verse vi 10b to the Lord's Prayer 2) or that the current rendition of Matt. xxvi 42 was influenced by Matt. vi 10b 3). Although these arguments evince that Matt. vi 10b cannot have been borrowed directly from Mk xiv 36, they do not prove that Mark xiv 32-42 could not have played an active role in the development of the Lord's Prayer. Although with reference to the redactional character of γεννηθέτω το θελημά σου we can indicate the typically Matthean formulae: ως επιστευεις γεννηθετω σοι (viii 13), κατά την πίστιν ὑμῶν γεννηθήτω

2) J. Jeremias, Paroles de Jésus, 75-80; M. Dibelius, "Die Bergpredigt", in 'Botschaft und Geschichte', Gesammelte Aufsätze, 1, Zur Evangelienforschung, Tübingen, 1953, 127. They are particularly sensitive to the liturgical arguments. Jeremias points out that the three Matthean additions ('father, who art in heaven'; 'your will be done' and 'deliver us from evil') are found exactly at the end of the invocation or verse. Dibelius, referring to Ps. cxix 164, thinks that the congregation wanted to pray a sevenfold prayer to fulfil the psalm which mentions giving thanks to God seven times daily.
3) H. Schürmann, Das Gebet des Herrn, 66, note 101; W. Grundmann, Das Evangelium nach Matthäus, 201.