

*The translation question posed to Dr. Morris –*

Good evening professor!

My question is about the Lord's prayer. I have seen a couple instances where an alternate translation is suggested – "deliver us from the evil one" instead of "deliver us from evil."

I can imagine this wording having special meaning for Jesus, having endured his personal encounter in the wilderness with the "evil one," and that he might want us to pray for deliverance from any such encounters.

I have gotten into the habit of beginning my devotional times with saying the Lord's prayer. It is comforting that Jesus gave us this prayer. If anyone would know how best to speak to the Father, it is the Son.

So, your enlightenment would be greatly appreciated. And, thank you.

Sandy H

*The information from Dr. Morris –*

Hi Sandy. Thanks for the question. Here is my brief answer! Yeah, yeah, yeah ... I know...that word "brief" is too much like "grief." O well ... here it is.

On Matthew 6:13:

The Greek text of the part of the sentence under observation:

ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

In the Authorized Version (The King James Version) the translation is:

But deliver us from evil.

The New King James Version, together with the TNIV and the Holman Christian Standard Bible translate this as: But deliver us from the evil one. This probably more accurate since the word for evil, πονηροῦ (ponerou) is prefaced by the appropriate corresponding definite article, τοῦ, (tou) and therefore specifies the noun with which it is used. Therefore, "the evil one" is not only permissible but grammatically proper.

The word ῥῦσαι (rousai – the ai pronounced like the letter i) is the verb, here in the second person singular, imperative form. It is from the verb ῥύομαι (ruomai or ruomy to show the correct pronunciation). It is the verb that means bringing someone out of severe and acute danger. It can be translated by such English words as save, deliver, rescue, and protect. In the New Testament it is always used with God as the deliverer and a person as the object. Personally I like the word protect as a translation. Therefore the sentence identifies a deep seated heart cry to God that He would protect one from the evil one.

You are astute in your observation that this probably had special meaning to Jesus since He fully understood/understands the attacks of the evil one, having fought and won the battle very early in His earthly ministry. Based on Jesus' encounter with the evil one, AND His triumph over the evil one, when I pray the Lord's Prayer (or Model Prayer) as found in Matthew 6, (as well as in Luke 11) I feel very comfortable praying: But protect us from the evil one. Trust this helps a little.