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## THE LORD'S PRAYER

an introduction by Robert Powell to

A course held by Valentin Tomberg  
in Amsterdam between 1940 and 1942

Those who have studied the anthroposophical writings of Valentin Tomberg (see literature - following) will acknowledge the deep Christological content of these works. Among these writings, his *New Testament Studies* occupy a central position, comprising a compendium of Christian esotericism. The Lord's Prayer Course goes a stage further in offering a Christian esoteric schooling. The profundity of this schooling will be immediately recognizable. For a deeper appreciation, however, it is perhaps helpful to view the Lord's Prayer Course in a historical context, which is the purpose of this brief introduction.

The Lord's Prayer Course pre-supposes an acquaintance with the spiritual science (Anthroposophy) of Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). Right from the outset, Rudolf Steiner's activity comprised a more public aspect - his writings and public lectures - and a more esoteric aspect. Prior to the First World War the latter came to expression in the Esoteric School (1904-1914). Notes of lectures held by Rudolf Steiner in the Esoteric School are now being published. A volume containing notes of lectures held between 1904 and 1909 was published in 1995 (Volume 266, Part I in Rudolf Steiner's *Complete Works*). Two earlier volumes provide a documentation of the structure of the Esoteric School into different classes or grades (volumes 264 and 265). From these it emerges that whereas the first grade was concerned with esoteric study and meditation, in the second and third grades ritual played an important role. Little is known about the higher grades (fourth to ninth) other than that they were concerned with moral instruction. When the First World War broke out, Rudolf Steiner disbanded the Esoteric School.

The framework chosen by Valentin Tomberg for the Lord's Prayer Course is the main exercise (morning meditation) and six subsidiary exercises from the Esoteric School (see "Deepening the Morning Meditation" notes by Valentin Tomberg). In this respect, during World War II, Valentin Tomberg took up something of the impulse that had been discontinued by Rudolf Steiner at the outbreak of World War I. Owing to the difficult circumstances prevailing in World War II, it is understandable that Valentin Tomberg was obliged to discontinue the Lord's Prayer Course at a certain point. Thus, the schooling in Christian esotericism that it offers was not completed.

Against this background, the monumental work *Meditations on the Tarot: A Journey into Christian Hermeticism* takes on a new light. It comprises twenty-two Letters/Meditations offering a schooling in Christian hermeticism and signifies a further development of the Christian esotericism of the Lord's Prayer Course. In particular, the connection with the Egyptian mysteries—Hermes was the founder of the Egyptian mysteries of hermeticism—clearly emerges. Also highly significant is

the fusion with the Christian tradition and the delineation of the interweaving of Christian esotericism and exoteric Christianity. Hence the importance of working with the Lord's Prayer Course in conjunction with *Meditations on the Tarot: A Journey into Christian Hermeticism*, the latter being a course in moral instruction of extraordinary depth.

Again, an inner connection with the Esoteric School emerges here. For, as stated in *Meditations on the Tarot* (p. 547):

*It is she—the "Virgin of light" of the Pistis Sophia, the Wisdom (Sophia) sung of by Solomon, the Shekinah of the Cabbala, the Mother, the Virgin, the pure celestial Mary—who is the soul of the light of the three luminaries, and who is both the source and aim of Hermeticism.*

Thus, Isis-Sophia is the "source and aim" of hermeticism. And it is she who is referred to again and again by Rudolf Steiner, also within the context of the Esoteric School, as indicated by the following quotes from the documentation of the ritual content of the Esoteric School from Volume 265:

*Anthroposophy is spoken of directly as (stemming) from the new Isis wisdom of the New Age . . . Also a deep connection between the Isis mystery and the Grail mystery is referred to, including the Christianized re-emergence of the Egyptian mysteries . . . A special nuance (is given) through the tradition that the Eleusinian mysteries should be renewed again through the Misraim rite (Misraim is the ancient Hebrew name for Egypt). The origin of these most famous mysteries of antiquity goes back to the goddess Demeter, who personified the same for the Greeks as Isis did for the Egyptians.*

(The Misraim rite was central to the ritual work of the Esoteric School.)

In taking up the Lord's Prayer Course (meditation instruction) in conjunction with *Meditations on the Tarot* (moral instruction) within the framework of the main exercise and subsidiary exercises of the Esoteric School, a line of continuity from the first part to the middle to the end of the twentieth century is drawn, one that reveals the Isis-Sophia mysteries of the New Age. This may be held in consciousness in embarking upon the Lord's Prayer Course at the advent of the renewed working of the Etheric Christ during the last three and a half years of the twentieth century.

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## LORD'S PRAYER COURSE

Valentin Tomberg

**Weeks 1-15** (15 weeks) of the *Lord's Prayer Course* serve as an introduction to the esoteric work with the Lord's Prayer.

Basic daily exercises: Daily Prayer Sequence (daily praying of the Lord's Prayer)\*  
Six Subsidiary Exercises  
Main Exercise (morning meditation – see notes)

[See *Esoteric Study Material* distributed by the Sophia Foundation of North America]

\*Valentin Tomberg indicated the daily praying of the Lord's Prayer as an intrinsic part of the course work. Many course participants pray not only the Lord's Prayer daily but also the entire Daily Prayer Sequence given by Valentin Tomberg, and many work with the expanded Prayer Sequence as sacred dance (prayer in movement). *The Prayer Sequence in Sacred Dance* (which describes the sacred dance movements) is available from the Sophia Foundation.

As referred to at the end of the notes on the morning meditation (main exercise), the morning meditation provides a framework for the ongoing meditative work. The meditations on the Lord's Prayer can be included as Part 3 (concentration upon a single image) of the morning meditation.

The meditations follow a weekly rhythm. Normally the week begins on Sunday morning. In an esoteric sense, however, it begins on Saturday evening, as in the Hebrew calendar, where Day 1 begins at dusk on Saturday and extends to sunset on Sunday, and Day 7 (sabbath) begins at dusk on Friday and extends to sunset on Saturday. It is appropriate, therefore, if the study material for the coming week is read on Saturday evening, by way of preparation, to be taken into the morning meditation each day from Sunday through Saturday during the week, throughout the fifteen weeks of this introductory material.

The starting point for Week 1, and each subsequent week, is Sunday, reading the study material on Saturday the evening before if possible, and beginning with the meditative work on Sunday morning. The parallel meditative work on *Meditations on the Tarot* starts with Arcanum I, at the same time, proceeding to Arcanum II the next month, Arcanum III the following month, etc.

Literature referred to in the *Lord's Prayer Course* (works by Rudolf Steiner and Valentin Tomberg available from SteinerBooks):

<u>The Bible,</u>	Old and New Testaments
Rudolf Steiner,	<i>The Fifth Gospel (GA 148)</i>
Rudolf Steiner,	<i>The Gospel of St. Matthew (GA123)</i>
Rudolf Steiner,	<i>Guidance in Esoteric Training (GA 245)</i>
Rudolf Steiner,	<i>Knowledge of the Higher Worlds (GA 10)</i>
Valentin Tomberg,	<i>Anthroposophical Studies of the Old Testament*</i> = OTS in <u><i>Christ and Sophia</i></u>
Valentin Tomberg,	<i>Anthroposophical Studies of the New Testament*</i> = NTS in <u><i>Christ and Sophia</i></u>
Valentin Tomberg,	<i>Studies of the Apocalypse of St. John*</i> = ApS in <u><i>Christ and Sophia</i></u>

\*Now published by Steiner Books in one volume, *Christ & Sophia*, by Valentin Tomberg, available from the Sophia Foundation.

On account of the deeply esoteric nature of the *Lord's Prayer Course*, only a relatively small number of people are working with this material. Notwithstanding the small number of people involved, the fact that a group of people are working with this study material at this special time is of great significance. Thereby something of the new revelation and renewed activity of the Etheric Christ can stream in through this Christian esoteric work.

Lastly, a word about the format of this study material: it is hand-written and thus has a more intimate character than something typed. Further, the act of typing would destroy something of the pristine nature of the material. So, although more difficult to read than if it were typed, there is a good reason for the format. Moreover, this material needs to be protected, and its potency depends upon this. This is an additional reason why it is in hand-written form, and it is sent to you, upon your request, for your personal use. Please respect this.

Notes by the translator appear in brackets [    ].

In the Unity of Christ and Sophia,

Robert Powell

If you would like to receive further course material, at least **one month** before completing this part of the *Lord's Prayer Course* please contact the Sophia Foundation of North America, requesting the next section of the course. Be sure to state which section you are completing.

## LORD'S PRAYER

[For a general introduction see NTS 6]

Week 1 [meditate upon] Our Father who art in heaven  
[in connection with] Paradise story (Genesis 2 & 3)

Week 2  
Hallowed be thy name  
Nine beatitudes (Matthew 5: 3-12) [NTS 3, 4, 5]

Week 3  
Thy kingdom come  
Seven stages of the Passion: the way of the Cross  
[see NTS 9 & 10]

Week 4  
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven  
Concerning the last things (Matthew 24 & 25)

Week 5  
Give us this day our daily bread  
\* Third temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4: 1-4):  
Last supper (Matthew 26: 26) (Imagination)  
Last supper (John 13: 26-27) (Inspiration)

Week 6  
And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those  
who trespass against us  
\* Second temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4: 5-7):  
Seven miracles of the Gospel of St. John: [NTS 7, 8]

[Sunday = Day 1]	1. Transformation of water into wine	(John 2: 1-11)
[Monday = Day 2]	2. Healing of the nobleman's son	(John 4: 46-54)
[Tuesday = Day 3]	3. Healing of the paralysed man	(John 5: 2-18)
[Wednesday = Day 4]	4. Feeding of the five thousand	(John 6: 1-15)
[Thursday = Day 5]	5. Walking on the water	(John 6: 16-21)
[Friday = Day 6]	6. Healing of the man born blind	(John 9: 1-41)
[Saturday = Day 7]	7. Raising of Lazarus	(John 11: 1-44)

[\* The actual order of the temptations [see NTS 17].]

Week 7

And lead us not into temptation

\* First temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4: 8-11):

Transfiguration on Mt. Tabor (Matthew 17, Mark 9, Luke 9)

Healing of the possessed child (Luke 9: 37-43)

Week 8

But deliver us from evil

Seven words of the Cross:

[Day 1]

1. Father into thy hands I commend my spirit

[Day 2]

2. My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?

[Day 3]

3. I thirst

[Day 4]

4. Today you shall be with me in Paradise

[Day 5]

5. Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do

[Day 6]

6. Woman, behold your son; behold your mother

[Day 7]

7. It is fulfilled

Revelation 12 & 13

Week 9

Our Father who art in heaven

\* Read the Paradise story and work on the connection between the origin of disobedience and the necessity of toil (Genesis 3)

Week 10

Our Father who art in heaven

\* Read the Paradise story and work on the connection between the arising of shame and the necessity of suffering (Genesis 3)

Week 11

Our Father who art in heaven

\* Read the Paradise story and work on the connection between the arising of fear and the necessity of death (Genesis 3)

[\* Concerning the three primal curses of the Father, see DTS 10 and concerning the origin of shame and fear, see NTS 2 ]

Week 12

Our Father who art in heaven

Read the Paradise story (Genesis 3) and study the spiritualising of toil through the Holy Spirit by way of creative spiritual work and meditation

Week 13

Our Father who art in heaven

Read the Paradise story (Genesis 3) and study the transfiguration of the soul through suffering: through the Son, through the positive acceptance of Kamaloka

Week 14

Our Father who art in heaven

Read the Paradise story (Genesis 3) and study the transformation of the event of death through connection with the Father in the ideal of initiation

Week 15

Our Father who art in heaven

Read the Paradise story (Genesis 3) and work with the comprehensive Imagination of the Trinity:

Rainbow

[Holy Spirit]

Sun Cross

[Son]

Deep black night sky strewn with stars

[Father]

at the same time raising the soul to the Father accompanied by the words:

Our Father who art in heaven

[Having worked through the introductory part of the Lord's Prayer Course, if you would like to receive further course material, please confirm by writing to: Sophia Foundation of North America.]