

The Lord's Prayer

A Metaphysical Interpretation

Henry Harrison Brown's 1915 book "Lord's Prayer" offers a revolutionary New Thought interpretation of the Lord's Prayers, reframing this ancient religious text through the lens of modern spirituality and metaphysics. Brown challenges traditional interpretations, arguing that the prayer serves as a powerful affirmation of unity, love, and personal power rather than a supplication to an external deity. His work invites readers to recognize the divinity within themselves and align their will with universal principles to achieve conscious unity with the divine.

Brown emphasizes the freedom each individual has to form their own conception of the Divine and to follow their highest ideals. The act of "hallowing" becomes a personal process of recognizing and honoring the divine presence in one's life, rather than adhering to externally imposed religious formulations. This interpretation aligns with New Thought's emphasis on individual spiritual autonomy and the direct relationship between the human and the divine.



by OL booksummary

The Divine Within: Our Father

Brown's interpretation of "Our Father Who Art in Heaven" represents a fundamental shift from traditional religious understanding. Rather than viewing God as a distant, external deity, Brown presents the "Father" as the Universal Life force inherent within each individual. He traces this concept to ancient Aryan literature, noting that "The title of Heaven-Father for Universal Power is the oldest title in literature."

For Brown, "Heaven" is not a physical location but a state of spiritual consciousness attainable in the present moment. This interpretation aligns with New Thought philosophy, which emphasizes an immanent God experienced within oneself and reflected in the external world. By addressing God as "Father," Brown suggests a profound connection between humanity and the divine, emphasizing our inherent spiritual nature.

The phrase "Our Father" also signifies the unity of humanity as children of God, highlighting our shared spiritual connection and the potential for collective realization of divine qualities. This understanding fosters a sense of belonging, interconnectedness, and shared responsibility for one another, moving beyond religious divisions to embrace a universal spirituality.

Universal Power

Brown sees God as the power behind all phenomena, present everywhere and accessible to all regardless of cultural or religious background.

State of Consciousness

"Heaven" represents an inner state of peace, harmony, and spiritual awareness rather than a physical location in the afterlife.

Divine Connection

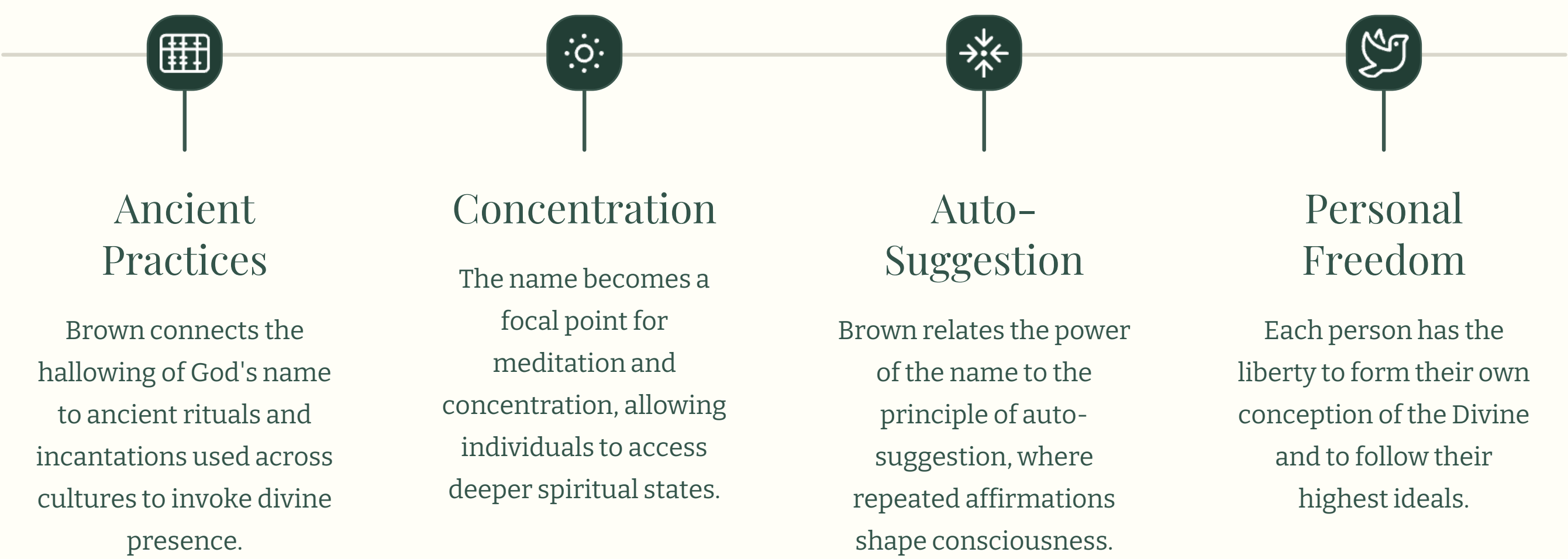
The "Father" relationship implies an inherent connection between humanity and the divine, suggesting we share in God's nature and power.

The Power of Names

Hallowed Be Thy Name

Brown's analysis of "Hallowed be thy name" reveals a profound understanding of the power of suggestion and spiritual receptivity. He interprets this phrase not as mere reverence for a specific name of God, but as an acknowledgment of the transformative power that comes from invoking the divine presence within ourselves. He connects this phrase to practices across different cultures that use names or mantras to invoke higher states of consciousness—they all leverage the power of auto-suggestion and concentration to access deeper spiritual realities.

Rather than emphasizing reverence for a specific name of God, Brown interprets this as a call to follow one's highest ideals. He highlights the freedom each individual has to form their own conception of the Divine and to pursue what they consider good, beautiful, and true.



Through this interpretation, Brown transforms a traditional religious practice into a powerful tool for personal transformation and spiritual growth, emphasizing the individual's capacity to connect directly with the divine through focused attention and reverence.

The Kingdom Within: Thy Kingdom Come

Brown interprets "Thy kingdom come" as a call for establishing a better world through individual effort and the pursuit of goodness. He sees the kingdom of God as residing within each person and emphasizes the role of individual desire in shaping reality.

"When I pray 'May thy kingdom come!' I am talking to the King I am, as 'Conscious Law,' for the 'Kingdom of God is within' and the King of that kingdom is the Conscious Human soul." (p. 61)

This understanding frames the "kingdom of God" as an inner state of peace, harmony, and love that can manifest in our lives and in the world. It's an active prayer for personal transformation and collective evolution towards a more just and compassionate society.



Inner Recognition
Acknowledging the divine potential within



Personal Growth
Cultivating spiritual awareness



Outer Manifestation
Creating heaven on earth through conscious living

Traditional View

Historically, "Thy kingdom come" was understood as a prayer for God's intervention to establish a divine kingdom at the end of time, often associated with judgment and the afterlife.

This interpretation emphasized human passivity and divine action, with believers waiting for God to transform the world according to divine plan.

Brown's Interpretation

Brown reframes this as an affirmation of the divine potential within each person, emphasizing that the "Kingdom of God is within" and accessible in the present moment.

This view empowers individuals to actively participate in manifesting the divine kingdom through their thoughts, choices, and actions, creating heaven on earth through conscious living.

Divine Alignment

Thy Will Be Done

Brown challenges the traditional notion of submitting to an arbitrary divine will. He argues that aligning our will with the "divine will" is about recognizing and embracing our inherent potential as expressions of the divine.

"The good I develop in myself helps the world. The good I will not express is my loss." (p. 61)

In this interpretation, "God's will" represents the impersonal Law of Cause and Effect. Accepting this Law and recognizing its role in shaping our reality brings about peace and understanding. This perspective emphasizes individual growth and the pursuit of good rather than blind submission to external authority.



Unity with Divine Purpose

Conscious alignment with universal principles

Expression of Inner Goodness

Manifesting the inherent drive toward good

Harmony with Natural Law

Working with, not against, universal forces

Self-Awareness

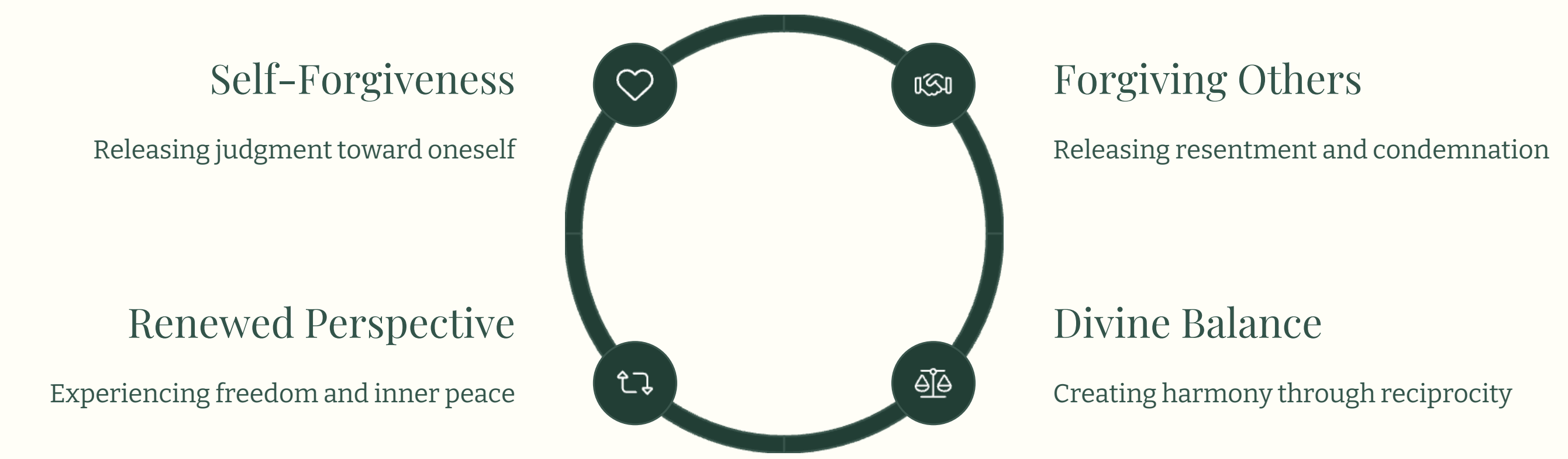
Recognizing one's true nature as divine



The Law of Reciprocity: Forgiveness

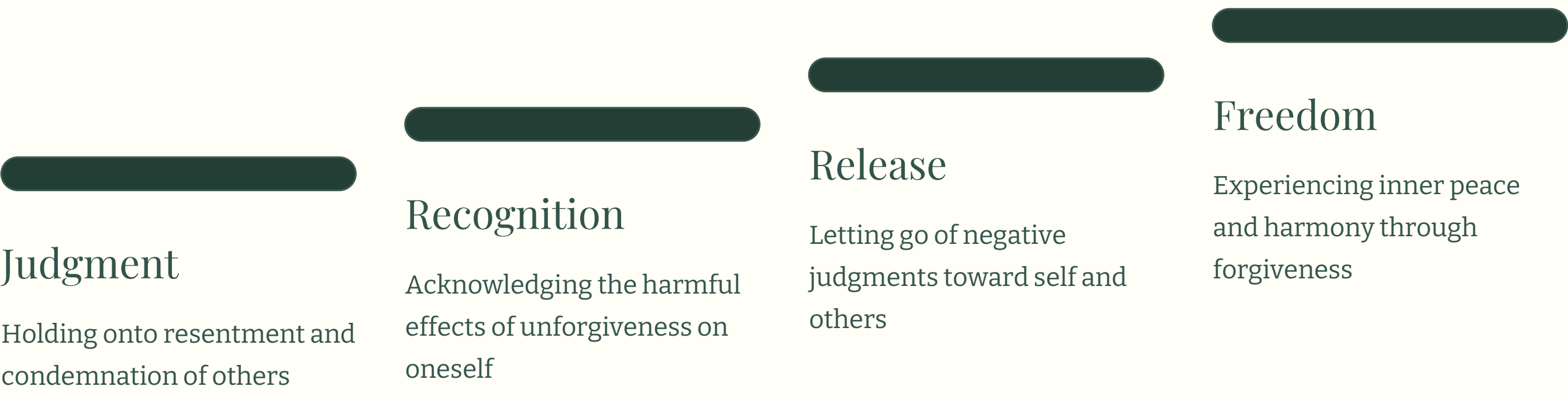
Brown's interpretation of "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors" underscores the Law of Justice and the principle of reciprocity. He cautions against praying for forgiveness while harboring judgment toward others, as this creates a contradictory inner state.

"With this consciousness of condemnation of others can I pray, 'Forgive my trespasses as I forgive those that trespass against me?'" (p. 112)



True forgiveness involves releasing judgment and resentment towards oneself and others, creating a balance that allows for divine grace to flow freely in our lives.

Brown writes, "Absolve thyself to thyself!...The moment I cleanse myself from thought of evil toward my brother, I have cleansed my mind of all evil thoughts born in my condemnation of myself." This powerful insight suggests that the act of forgiving others is inseparable from self-forgiveness, as both processes involve releasing negative judgments and embracing a more compassionate perspective.



Growth Through Challenge

Temptation and Evil

Brown critiques the idea of praying for the removal of temptation, arguing that it weakens character and hinders self-development. He proposes reinterpreting temptation as an opportunity for growth and self-mastery.

"No; we cannot pray to have temptation removed. Many a time in the past have I changed the petition to 'Strengthen me to overcome when tempted.'" (p. 123)

"Manhood consists of self-control. Any education that causes the individual to lay blame on external causes, and not upon his own lack of will and wisdom, is vicious." (p. 130)

This perspective aligns with New Thought's emphasis on personal responsibility and the belief that challenges are opportunities for spiritual evolution. By embracing difficulties rather than avoiding them, we develop resilience and wisdom.



Brown's interpretation transforms a prayer that might seem to encourage passivity into an affirmation of human potential and resilience. By reframing temptation as an opportunity rather than a threat, he invites individuals to approach life's challenges with courage, confidence, and a commitment to personal growth. This understanding empowers individuals to take responsibility for their choices and to view difficulties as stepping stones to greater self-mastery and spiritual development.


Unity with the Divine

Power, Kingdom, and Glory

Brown sees the final ascription of the Lord's Prayer as an affirmation of the unity between God and humanity. He asserts that individuals partake in the divine attributes of power, kingdom, and glory.


"That which I in the Real am is this same Being whose is 'The Power, the Kingdom and the Glory.' I share all He is. I do not possess, but I AM all this. And I am because He is." (p. 147)

Brown also challenges conventional notions of linear time, asserting that the true reality lies in the eternal Now: "Now is not measurable; it is the FOREVER. NOW IS. Now is not a portion of Time: it is not a measure. It is a recognition of the fact-I AM LIFE!" (p.155)




The Kingdom

Recognizing our inherent dominion and authority as expressions of the divine, we claim our rightful place in the universe and take responsibility for co-creating our reality.




The Power

Acknowledging the divine power flowing through us, we tap into unlimited creative potential and the ability to manifest our highest aspirations.



The Glory

Embracing our divine nature, we radiate the light and beauty of our true essence, contributing to the illumination of the world around us.



Forever

Living in the eternal now, we transcend the limitations of linear time and experience the infinite nature of our being, recognizing that "I AM LIFE!"

This interpretation encourages readers to recognize their inherent connection to the infinite and to live from a place of spiritual empowerment and unity with the divine source of all life.