

Father, Thy Kingdom Come

Key Scripture:

*“But SEEK (aim at and strive after) **FIRST OF ALL His Kingdom** and **His righteousness** (His way of doing and being right), and then **All These Things Taken Together Will Be Given You** besides.”
Matt 6:33 (AMP)*

Today's Portion for the Journey

The world is fascinated with royalty. More viewers turned out to watch the royal wedding of Princess Diana and Prince Charles than any other televised event in world history. Libraries are filled with books and fairy tales about kings, queens, princesses and princes. We are fascinated with faraway kingdoms and tales of Cinderella, Snow White, Camelot, King Arthur, and knights in shining armor. Tabloids are filled with the latest stories related to royal princes and their wives. Whether real or fiction our view of royalty has an element that fascinates the imagination. These fantasy kingdoms pose a real danger to our ability to believe in a real king and a real kingdom in which we are the King's sons and daughters. We have a real King, who came to dwell in our hearts and establish His Kingdom in our lives? God's Kingdom is not a fairytale. We need to pray for the reality of His Kingdom to penetrate our hearts and a deep yearning for His Kingdom to come!

“His Kingdom Come” calls us to “Seek FIRST OF ALL His Kingdom and His righteousness...” The word for “seek” (Strong's #2211) is “zateo” meaning to seek in order to find, seek by meditating, reasoning, to enquire into, strive for, to crave or demand something from someone. This word speaks of an intensity with which we are to seek the Kingdom of God. “From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence and violent men take it by force.” Matt. 11:12. In Luke 16:16, Jesus said, “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John; since that time the gospel of the Kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it.” The word for “forcing” is Strong's #971. This verse could be interpreted, “everyone is entering the Kingdom of God violently.” This is the same word that was used in Matt. 11:12. The Greek word for violence used in these passages is “biazo” and it means specifically “to enter by force, to be treated violently, to suffer violence, press through with the idea of vital activity, “biazo” does not signify unlawful assaults, but earnest deliberations, not by injurious violence but like seizure of earthly prizes. Holy, industrious violence based on intense desire and endeavor combined with persevering zeal which refuses denial. It is determination to master all difficulties, to break through all impediments and surmount every obstacle. [Notes taken from Arthur W Pink's book on “The Sermon on the Mount”]

Jesus further instructed His disciples to “strive to enter through the narrow door, for many, I tell you will seek to enter and will not be able to.” Entering is a battle. The word for strive used in this passage is Strong's #75, “agonizomai” and the word notes a real obstruction to be overcome. One will agonize, struggle, wrestle to enter, as in a battle. As in a natural childbirth, intense agonizing afflicting and groaning should accompany one's entrance into the Kingdom. Joy and gladness are the result of our entry, not the way we enter. Col. 4:12 uses the same word “agonizomai” and in this passage it is translated “laboring earnestly” in the context of prayer for our salvation. The word is also used in Col. 1:29 where Paul said, “For this purpose [to present every man complete in Christ.] It meant to contend

for victory in the public games to agonize and wrestle in a task of persevering in the midst of temptation, and opposition, to take pains, as in a contest where one is strains every nerve to the uttermost toward the goal. Agonizomai means to be in extreme pain or to suffer great anguish, to make a great convulsive effort in toil or painful labor.

As we cry out to God, “Thy Kingdom Come” we have a greater sense of the intensity in our prayer! As we have meditated upon the Lord’s Prayer, we have noted that each piece of this prayer is highly significant, not only in content, but also in the progression of the order we are to meditate and pray through each portion. First, we must be firmly established in our relationship with our Father. Our focus and identity need to be from the eternal perspective of our citizenship in heaven. An apprehension of the Father’s beauty and perfection, love and desire for relationship with us through understanding His names enables us truly to hallow His name. When we know Him and reverence and love Him we can then pray for His Kingdom to come with sincerity of heart. The further significance of this progression is that we put His plans and purposes for His Kingdom ahead of our earthly and temporal needs. The future and hope of our lives does not culminate in this earth but in God’s eternal plans and purposes for His children as the Bride of Christ. “The phrases “hallowed be your name,” “your kingdom come,” and Your will be done on earth” are related to each other in meaning. All of them express the desire that God’s reputation will grow on earth that people will accept God’s reign over their lives and desire to do His will.”¹

Jesus set the example for us of saying that He must be about the Father’s business! He said that He *must* preach the Kingdom, ... “for I was sent for this purpose.” The word “must” in the Greek is “dei” which means unavoidable, urgent, compulsory, necessity, necessary in the nature of things. That which is established by the decree of God, especially as His purpose for the salvation of man. To preach is used twice in Luke 4:43,44. The first word is “euaggelizo” (#2097) which means literally “to preach the Good News.” In vs. 44, the word for preach is “kerusso” (#2784) which means to be a herald, to proclaim or announce.

- In the New Testament this Gospel of the Kingdom was first announced by John the Baptist, calling people to repent, “for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand (or has arrived.)” Matt. 3:1-2
- Immediately when Jesus began His ministry, He began to preach the Kingdom of God by calling people to “repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Mark 1:14; Matt. 4:17, 23; 9:35
- The disciples and early church proclaimed and taught the Kingdom of God. Mark 10:7
- He commissioned us to take the Gospel to all nations and equipped us with His Holy Spirit to complete the task. Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Matt. 24:14; Matt. 10:7-8

Jesus came so that we can know the Father and comprehend the reality and operation of His Kingdom. Everywhere He went, He taught about the Kingdom of God and demonstrated God’s character and ways. Most of Jesus’ parables revealed aspects about His Father’s Kingdom. (Luke 12:15-21). These teachings provided us with a contrast between God’s ways in His Kingdom and the ways of this world. Isaiah 11:6-9 an earth of great peace and safety for all. There will be no more hurt or destruction “for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” God’s Kingdom will come fully to earth when His alone is worshipped by all the nations. Zech. 14:9 When the earth is full of the knowledge of God, we will see an end to sin and suffering! His Kingdom will be a place of healing and restoration. Rev. 22:2; John 17:26; Matt.5

¹ Walking in the Dust of Rabbi Jesus,” Lois Tverberg Zondervan, 2012.

The New Testament uses the word "Kingdom" 137 times and 100 of them were recorded during Jesus' ministry on earth. In Matthew, the word Kingdom is used fifty times. Thirty-three times the word refers to the Kingdom of Heaven, 7x "the Kingdom," 5x "Kingdom of God," 4x "Father's Kingdom," 2x "Kingdom of Son of Man." He called us to "seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." Matt. 6:33; Luke 4:43

Understanding God's Kingdom is one of the keys to knowing His will. James Mulholland, in his book, "Praying Like Jesus," noted, "To seek God's will without understanding His Kingdom is like setting out on a journey without a map. Once we glimpse the Kingdom of God, finding our path becomes simpler." When we pray, "Thy Kingdom Come," we are asking God to allow His Kingdom to be established first in us, and through us to establish His Kingdom on earth. This is a prayer that looks at the present, but also the future when the Kingdoms of earth will be united fully with the Kingdom of Heaven.

- **Where is the Kingdom of God?** The Kingdom of God is also referred to as the Kingdom of Heaven. The two names are used interchangeably. God's Kingdom is in heaven, but it is also on earth and in our hearts. Heaven is an actual physical place, while kingdom defines wherever God rules. We often think of heaven in a narrow way, as the place those who have died go if they are saved or the place we will go when we die. Jesus made it clear that the Kingdom of Heaven is a real place that was the dwelling place of the Father. A place from which He had been sent and would be returning. This earth is not yet submitted to God's rule so His Kingdom is not fully established here yet, but it will be when Jesus returns. Ps. 103:19
- **He also told us that the Kingdom of God was near.** When John announced the Kingdom was at hand or drawing near, he was announcing the rule and power of God would soon overthrow the reign of oppression, darkness and evil. The Kingdom was near because the King was here. The Kingdom of God is wherever God reigns and rules. His Kingdom is firmly established in heaven and is established "within us" in individuals where He is Lord. The Kingdom belongs to all who repent and allow the Lord to establish His rule in our hearts. Luke 17:21; Matt. 3:2; 4:17; Luke 10:7; Luke 21:31
- **What is God's Kingdom?** God's kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. The Greek word for "Kingdom" used in the New Testament is "basileia" (Strong's #932) means, "A rule, royal power, kingship, dominion, (lit. or fig.) reign. This word for kingdom is not to be confused with an actual territory but rather the right or authority to rule. Vine's describes basileia as primarily an abstract noun denoting sovereignty, royal power, dominion, and denoting a territory or people over whom a king rules." It is the sphere of God's rule--the sphere where His rule is acknowledged: Ps. 22:28; 145:13; Dan. 4:25-26; Rom. 13:1,2
- **God's Kingdom is a manifestation of the character of its King.** He is the King of the Heavens and the earth. He is Sovereign Ruler. King of Kings and Lord of Lords! We can come to understand His Kingdom as we know Him and His ways. Gen. 1:1; Isa.6:1-7; Exodus 24:10; Ezek. 1:1-28; Dan. 7:9; Rev. 1:14-17; Ex. 34:5; 1 Ki. 19:11-12; Dan. 10:5-19
- **God's Kingdom will have no end.** Jesus as the Son of the Most High was appointed by God to rule over this Kingdom forever. This was the message the Angel of the LORD revealed to Mary when he told her that she would bear the infant "Messiah." Luke 1:26-33

- **Who may enter into His Kingdom? Our names must be written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The Kingdom of Heaven is for the righteous** and those who are of pure heart. "Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord, will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven will enter." Matt. 7:21; Rev. 21:27
 - a. **How may we enter the Kingdom? The first call of the Kingdom is to repentance.** None of us has a right to His Kingdom. Sinners cannot enter the Kingdom of God. We are all sinners who are on a "default setting" to hell. All of mankind stands condemned and totally lost without a Savior. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Rom. 3:9-19; Rom. 3:23-26; Rom. 5:12; Mark 10:18; Ps. 14:1-3; Gal. 5:19-21; John 8:34-35; John 9:39-41
 - b. **Jesus is the only way into the Kingdom.** There is no birth into the Kingdom apart from God's call to salvation, renouncing sin and turning from sin toward Christ the Savior: Acts 3:19; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Matt. 1:21 (Amp); Mark 16:15; John 3:36; 1 Cor. 3:11; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 2:3; 1 John 5:11-12; Rev. 7:9-17; Isa. 28:16; Rom. 9:33; Eph. 2:20; Gal. 5:1; 1 John 1:9; John 8:12
 - c. **Jesus came that all might be saved.** The way for salvation is open to all men. John 3:16; Isa. 45:17-22; 1 Tim. 2:4; Luke 4:18; Luke 19:10; Col. 1:19-20; 23; Ps. 86:5; Ps. 145:18; Matt. 9:13; Rom. 10:12; Acts 2:21; 1 Cor. 15:22; Rev. 3:22
 - d. **While the way of salvation is open to all men, but sadly not all men will receive the gift of salvation.** John 3:19; Heb. 2:3; Heb. 12:25; Rev. 20:15; Phil 1:28; Rev. 22:14-15; Luke 13:25-28; Matt. 22:14; Matt. 20: ; Matt. 7:13,14; Luke 13:22-30; Isa. 66:23-24; Matt. 24:20-31; Matt. 25:1-13; Ps. 9:17; Prov. 15:11; Rom. 1:18-32; Isa. 39:9-15; John 15:22-25; Matt. 11:20-24; John 1:9-11; 2 Thes. 2:12; Rom. 2:8
 - e. **God delays the return of His Son until everyone who has the opportunity to be saved, will be saved.** Matt. 9:35; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Rom. 10:18; Rom. 15:18-21; Rev. 14:6-12; Matt. 24:14
- **Life in the Kingdom always relates to walking in God's will.** On earth, God's Kingdom is a spiritual reality only when we submit to His Lordship. We enter the Kingdom through Jesus, and we grow as we walk in childlike responsiveness as a disciple of Jesus and yielding to the teaching of His Word. Citizens of God's Kingdom depend on a willingness to accept the Holy Spirit's correction and guidance. Asking for God's Kingdom to come is paramount to asking for Him to become Sovereign ruler in our personal lives now, as well as in the age to come. If we paraphrase this prayer, it would be to request, "Come and establish Your Sovereignty in my heart, and the hearts, minds and lives of men on earth, and eventually throughout the earth itself." To pray this personally is to provoke a major confrontation between our flesh and ego and His Divine will. When we pray this prayer, we are willing to totally relinquish our lives, our rule, and our affairs into His hands. Eph. 4:30
- **God's Kingdom is perfected in heaven now.** It is a divine dimension, everlasting, eternal, spiritual and very real. It will not be truly complete until earth is in total submission to God's will and in unity with the King of Kings and LORD of Lords. This is the time when we will be reunited with Jesus, the summing up of all things! Acts 20:25; Acts 28:23,30,31; Col. 1:27-28

- **The Kingdom is said to be a "mystery" now.** (Mark 4:11) It does not fall within the natural powers of observation. (Luke 17:20) It was very difficult for Jesus' disciples to understand the Kingdom, even when they sat at His own feet. The Jews were looking for their Messiah to set up a political kingdom in this world and missed the day of His visitation. Not even John the Baptist, who proclaimed the coming of His Kingdom, fully understood the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God is revealed to us by His Spirit, it can never be comprehended or found through our knowledge of the kingdoms of this world. It must be spiritually discerned. John 3:3; 1 Cor. 2:9-16; Deut. 29:29; 2 Cor. 12:2-4
- **Signs and wonders accompanied the preaching of the Kingdom.** In heaven there is no darkness, evil, pain, disease, suffering, sorrow or death. Healing the sick, raising from the dead and casting out demons was a sign of the Kingdom and a revelation of His will on earth as it is in heaven. Matt. 4:23; 9:35
- **Heaven and Earth will become one in God's Kingdom when Christ returns.** This will be a time when all things are subdued to Himself. God's redemptive plan culminates not at the return of Christ, nor in the millennial kingdom, but on the New Earth. All things on earth and in the heavenlies will be put under His feet and all kingdoms will bow before Him and His rule will be established on earth as it is in heaven. At this time His glory will fill the earth as it does in heaven. 2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1-5; Dan. 7:13-27; Isa. 65:17-25; 66:22-23; Acts 3:21; Luke 2:36-38; Matt. 19:27-28 [renewal = paligenesia: a combining of two words, which put together mean, "new genesis" or "coming back from death to life."] Rom. 8:18-23; 1 Cor. 15:22-25; Ps. 19:1-2; Num. 14:21; Isa. 40:5; Ps. 85:9; Ezek. 43:2; Ps. 102:15-16; Isa. 11:9-10; Haggai 2:6-7 Some teach that at this time the old heavens and earth will be destroyed; others teach that the heavens and earth will be made changed or made new: Ps. 102:26; Isa. 51:6; Matt. 24:35; [pass away also means come forth, move forward, arrive] Joel 1:15; 2:1,31; 3:14
- **The World is opposed to the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Earth is the scene of a universal rebellion against God. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world.** If my Kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now my Kingdom is not from here." (John 18:36) This world, called the cosmos, or world system is alienated from God, opposed to God and lies in the power of the evil one. Satan is referred to as the god of this age. He fights knowing his time is short. We are warned, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in Him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the boastful pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of the Father abides forever." 1 John 2:15-17; 1 John 5:19; Luke 4:5,6; Rev. 11:15-18; Rev. 12:9; 11:15; Dan. 7:13-14; Rom. 16:20; 1 John 3:8; Matt. 12:22-29; John 16:11

There is a book that was written about God's Kingdom, entitled, "The Upside Down Kingdom." When one thinks of it, God's ways are diametrically opposed to man's ways and His Kingdom is amazingly different from the ways of the world.

| The Kingdom of God | The kingdoms of this world |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Kingdom of Light and Truth | Kingdom of Darkness and Deception |

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| The Holy Spirit guides and teaches | The evil one deceives, kills and destroys |
| Kingdom of Order and Stability | Kingdom of Chaos, disorder |
| Eternal, no more death | Temporary, passing away, ends in death |
| Hearts are united with God and His ways | Hearts are set against God and His ways |
| Victory and joy triumph | Defeat and failure are inevitable |
| No more tears, sorrow or suffering | Weeping and wailing, gnashing of teeth |
| Joy forever more | Separated from God, endless sorrow |
| Under the rule of God | Under the rule of the devil |
| Leaders are servants | Leaders expect to be served |
| Compare to seed, yeast, hidden treasure, pearl of great price | Compared to a prison, chains |
| Father of Love and Redemption, Creation | Father of Lies, Stealing, Killing, Destroying |
| First is last and last will be first | First is always best |
| Sinners are forgiven, self-righteous are rebuked | Good works are prized above forgiveness |
| Poor are rich and Rich are Poor (Luke 6:20) | Seeking to gain the whole world |
| The blind see, the deaf hear | Blind and deaf to spiritual reality |
| The lost are found and restored | The lost are attacked and made captive |
| True sense of peace and safety | False peace and fear/terror reign in hearts |
| No war or conflict, peace reigns | Wars, rumors of war, devastation, loss of life, violence |
| Lions eat grass, wolves lie down with lambs; people and animals have perfect trust and safety together | Lion devours; animals fear man & may be deadly |
| Life is valued & a great price paid for our lives | Lives of men and women sold cheaply, humans are made into mere merchandize |
| The "least of these" welcomed, protected, great in heaven | The "least of these" are despised, devalued, ridiculed |
| Sinners, tax collectors, harlots invited to enter the Kingdom | Many religious leaders, chief priests and elders of the synagogue are not be holy enough to enter |
| Material possessions are unnecessary | The world consists of possessions, accumulating goods, taking ease, eating, drinking and being entertained |
| Performance is not as importance as obedience | Performance is everything, ends justify the means |
| Submission and obedience are desired | Rebellion and dominance are rewarded |

Digging Deeper in the Word

Pray Thy Kingdom Come: The kingdoms of this world are failing. They were doomed from the day Eve succumbed to Satan’s lies and this world fell under his dominion. All creation groans. As we see nations and world governments failing, we need to hold fast to the truth these world systems must inevitably fail. Our citizenship is in God’s Kingdom, which is eternally established. Jesus makes it clear that God’s Kingdom comes through prayer when He makes this the first petition of “the Lord’s Prayer.” How critical it is that we pray for God’s Kingdom 1) to become firmly established in the hearts of believers; 2) to be established on earth as it is in heaven! 1 Cor. 15:24

Daniel set his face to pray for the deliverance of Israel when He understood the time was at hand. When we know God’s heart through His Word, we see the establishment of His Kingdom is one of the chief purposes of His divine will on earth! As our hearts become united with His, the establishment of His Kingdom should have great priority in our hearts, both in our prayers and the calling of our life. Dan. 9:2

***“Thy Kingdom Come”
Is a prayer that has the power to change the whole world!!***

The Greek word for “come” used in this phrase “Thy Kingdom Come!” is ‘erchomai’ (#2064) means to come, to appear, to advance to a particular state or condition, to fall forward, focus is on its arrival. It means to arrive at a particular place, end, result or conclusion.

The early Church longed for the return of Christ and the establishment of God’s Kingdom. The early Church was devoted to praying for God’s Kingdom to come. Under severe persecution, early Christians longed for the return of Christ. “Maranatha,” meaning “the LORD is coming” or “Come, O LORD,” became a common greeting of oppressed believers. Maranatha reminds us to keep our eyes on the eternal things of the Holy Spirit. The early Church prayed “Let Him cause His kingdom to reign, His redemption to flourish, and let the Messiah speedily come and deliver His people.” (John 8:42 (AMP); Heb. 10:9; Matt. 10:34; Luke 12:35-40; Luke 21:28; Rev. 22:12; Matt. 25:1-13; Luke 12:35-40)

A.B. Simpson, in his book², “The Life of Prayer” stated, “There is no blessing so great as that which comes when our hearts are lifted out of self and become one with Christ in intercession for others and for His cause. There is no joy so pure as that of taking the burden of our Master’s cause on our hearts and bearing it with Him in ceaseless prayer – doing it as though its success wholly depended on the lifting up of our hands and the exercise of our faith....There is no ministry that will bring more power and blessing upon the world and from which we ourselves will reap larger harvests of eternal fruit than the habit of believing, definite and persistent prayer for the progress of Christ’s Kingdom, for the needs of His Church and work, for His ministers and servants, and especially the evangelization of the world. Oh, let us awaken from our spiritual selfishness and learn the meaning of the petition “Thy Kingdom Come!”

1. Pray for the Lord to bring in His Kingdom and ask that He begin in our own heart first, that we submit our wills entirely to the will of God.
2. Pray that God will stir up the hearts of believers to remember and hasten His Kingdom coming through obedience to pray repent of our sins, preach and the Gospel of the Kingdom. 2 Peter 1-14
3. Pray for God’s will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.
4. Pray for the final fulfillment of all things by the return of Christ. 1 Cor. 15:24

²The Kneeling Christian” includes “The Life of Prayer” by A.B. Simpson, 2007, Bridge-Logos, p. 169

Lord, we pray for the everlasting Kingdom, Your Kingdom of Glory in Heaven to be established in our hearts. May Your glory be established on earth as it is in heaven. Let Your Bride prepare herself for Your coming. Make her to be spotless and pure, without blemish or wrinkle. Let the message of the Kingdom be preached in every nation and every ear hear the message of Your love and salvation. Complete the work You have begun and Come, Lord Jesus, Come quickly.

“Now may the God of Peace Himself sanctify you entirely, and may your Spirit, soul, and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who call you, and He also will bring it to pass.” 1 Thes. 5:23-24

What is God Speaking to Your Heart? Do you long for the return of our King and the establishment of His Kingdom? How has the study of His Kingdom changed your desire to pray “Thy Kingdom Come?” Does this message give you a greater desire to share the Gospel of the Kingdom?

Responding to God