

## Blown to Kingdom Come

Psalm 8 • Matthew 6:5–21

**Matt. 6:5** "And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. <sup>6</sup> But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. <sup>7</sup> And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. <sup>8</sup> Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

**Matt. 6:9** "This, then, is how you should pray:

"Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,

**Matt. 6:10** your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.

**Matt. 6:11** Give us today our daily bread.

**Matt. 6:12** Forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.

**Matt. 6:13** And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from the evil one.'

<sup>14</sup> For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. <sup>15</sup> But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

**Matt. 6:16** "When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. <sup>17</sup> But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, <sup>18</sup> so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

**Matt. 6:19** "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Rev. Bob Leroe, a Congregational pastor in Massachusetts tells this story:

Astronaut James Erwin is one of but a few people to walk on the moon. As he stood upon the lunar landscape and looked up at the earth, he prayed for the first time in his life. He thought about the strife among nations, poverty, hunger, and rampant evil; and he thought to himself: "What is more important than man walking on the moon, is that God should walk on earth."

This is what we mean when we pray, "Thy Kingdom come." We are praying that the King of the Universe would come and put things right.

"Thy Kingdom come" is a prayer for revolution. It's what the Jews prayed for in Jesus' day—perhaps it's true for some even today—that God would step onto the world stage, take the enemies of Israel and knock their heads together. For the people in Jesus' day, that meant first of all, sweeping out the Romans—who occupied Palestine, and who imposed a corrupt tax system on the province. Next, God would clean house of all the corrupt shepherds of Israel who sought power for their own sake, and ignored the cries of their people. In Jesus' day, the corrupt shepherds included political figures like Herod Antipas, decadent and diminished son of Herod the Great—as well as the religious elite of whom Jesus would say, "They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them...they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them 'Rabbi.'" (Matthew 23:4, 6–7) Jesus said, "Do not be like the hypocrites..." (Matthew 6:5) because Jesus knew the Kingdom of heaven was going to be different.

"Thy Kingdom come" is a prophetic word and a battle cry. When we pray it, we reveal how far short our world falls from what God has in mind. In the wealthiest country in the world, we have people who go to bed hungry at night. In a nation that spends more on military might than most of the world combined, still we do not have security. In a nation where we spent \$1.189 billion dollars on Valentine's Day presents for our pets, we cannot find enough money to pay our school teachers. "Thy Kingdom come" reveals all the ways we are caught up in this broken system and contribute to the kingdom of this world, but it also calls us forward to become part of the solution. The world must change—***we*** must change—and we will see it done. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done."

"Thy Kingdom come" is a prayer of surrender. It's the cry of a mom who's at the end of her rope, looking for hope only God can give. It's the cry of a man who has reached the bottom of his addiction and knows it will finish him if he doesn't change. It's the cry of Jesus in a garden, who sees nothing but pain and a brutal death. "Father, not my will but yours be done." Whatever God brings, it will be better than this. Whatever God wants, that is what we will do. Our lives will change. We are ready. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done."

"Thy Kingdom come" Jesus taught us to pray, that God's rule might be felt in our world and in our lives. The kingdom of this world appreciates fancy words and a good show—a longer prayer with longer words means God must hear you better. Jesus says,

"I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full." And all they will get is what the kingdom of this world can provide—social status, prestige, the applause of people. The Kingdom of Heaven is found in the pure, honest prayer of a person who runs out of words, and can only place the deepest, aching needs of their lives before "your Father who knows what you need before you ask." Because when we pray in an attitude of surrender, then the Kingdom comes into the world through our lives. When we pray like that, we have the applause of our Father, and the Kingdom comes in power to transform us.

"Thy Kingdom come" is a prayer of bold hope too. It's the prayer you as a fellowship have been praying for years and months now. As your fellowship prayed this prayer, you came to understand that God was leading you out of bondage to a building, to travel a wilderness of worship, love, learning, laughter and serving. You have set aside the world's guidance to seek God's direction, and it has brought you to this critical moment, fraught with hope. Just as God guided the Israelites day by day, just as the Spirit led the early church day in and day out, so God longs for a deeper, more intimate relationship with each of you and all of you. God has helped you make some heavy lifts, and now a bright future with Him is laid before you. Especially in moments like these, we pray, "Thy Kingdom come. Thy Will be done."

The problem with most of our ideas of God is that they are so small. The Jews prayed the Kingdom would bring revolution, when the revolution was that their lives had to change. We pray knowing the world could be different—*should* be different—and know that we are part of the problem. In Jesus, we find all *our* ideas are blown to Kingdom come. It's when we stop trying to make the kingdom in our image, and surrender ourselves to be made in the ***image of the Kingdom*** that we find peace...and the Kingdom comes...in us. When we truly, deeply pray just that simple prayer, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done" then we begin to live as Jesus still teaches us...and God walks the earth as God's Kingdom comes and God's will is done.