

The Lord's Prayer

Jesus said, "Pray like this ... Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen" (Matthew 6:9 to 13).

'Lord, teach us to pray'. Jesus said, "When you pray, say, 'Our Father in heaven, may Your name be kept holy. May Your Kingdom come. May Your will be done on Earth, as it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we forgive everyone who is has sinned against us. Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one'" (Luke 11:1 to 4).

'Our Father, Who art in heaven'. If we study this prayer in segments, we can see it has a much deeper meaning than many people realise. The first two words, 'Our Father' (the Hebrew word is Avinu, or Abba) means much more than a flippant, 'Excuse me God'. The word 'our' is a corporate word, and it shows us He is the Father of all of us – the Father of all creation. He is our Head, our Ruler, our Master, our Maker, our King, our One and Only Personal Creator – The Father of all. There is no other God or creator. He is IT, the Top, The Authority of absolutely everything on earth, in heaven, in the universe – He is Boss! So, He is His creation's corporate, divine, holy Father, Who has His dwelling place in heaven. Both Jesus and Paul called God, Abba, a Hebrew pet name for 'Darling Daddy' but with the implication of complete authority (Mark 14:36; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6). Jesus said very strongly and decisively, we are not to ever call any person on earth 'Father' in the same context as it is written in the Lord's prayer. 'Do not call anyone on earth Father, for you have one Father Who is in heaven' (Matthew 23:9). The first words, 'Our Father, Lord of heaven', is a polite, reverent address to God, to begin our prayer.

'Hallowed be Thy name'. The Hebrew words are Kiddush HaShem. Our name often means our reputation. For example: 'John Smith's business has a good name'. That means John Smith's business has a good reputation. God's holy name and His Son's name, have a good reputation. God's reputation grew greater and greater throughout the scriptures, until through the name of the Son of God, we are saved. Therefore, God's name is critical for His plan of salvation, and we need to 'hallow' God's name. That is to sanctify it, honour it, respect it, glorify it and keep it holy. God's reputation is that of a merciful, self-sacrificing God, and through His sacrifice, His reputation has expanded world-wide to bring His plan of salvation to fruition. God's name is already holy, but our desire should be to know His Holiness. 'Hallowed be Your name', are simple, reverent words of worship to follow the initial address and we must always come to God with words of praise and worship.

'Thy Kingdom come'. The Hebrew word is Malkhut. 'The Lord will be King over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord and His name will be the only name' (Zechariah 14:9). One day, when our Messiah returns, He will be King over the whole earth. That is what the scriptures say. When we say this in prayer, we are praying exactly as the Lord wills. It is His will to rule the earth, and we are saying, "Lord, let Your Kingdom come and rule over us." Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). The minute we are born-again, we are born into the Kingdom of God, and our future is forever in the Kingdom, starting on earth and ending up in heaven. Once we go home to be with the Lord, we enter into His joy (Matthew 25:21 & 23).

'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven'. 'Thy Kingdom come' is synonymous with 'Thy will be done'. When we are born-again into the Kingdom of heaven, we will do His will on earth. God is the Boss and His will is done in heaven. There is never any disobedience in all of heaven. God speaks and the angels obey without question. Once we submit to the Lord's will and obey Him, His will is being done on earth, just as it is done in heaven. 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven' are words of submission. We are prepared to submit to His will in order to have our prayers answered.

'Give us this day our daily bread'. In Hebrew 'Lechem Hukenu'. In this context, bread means food needed for nourishment in general. 'Give me only my daily bread, otherwise I may have too much' (Proverbs 30:8 & 9). In other words: 'Feed me with only the food that is needful for me, lest I be too full and deny You'. When Jesus said 'our daily bread', He was possibly alluding to the manna – the bread from heaven – that had to be collected daily by the Israelites. Jesus was also reminding us it is God Who provides all our daily needs (Matthew 6:31 & 32; Luke 12:22 to 24). We could also say, 'Thank You Lord, for providing all my needs every day'.

'Forgive us our sins/debts/trespases/shortcomings, as we forgive those who sin against us'. Straight after the Lord's prayer, Jesus said in strong words we must forgive others before God will forgive us. 'If you forgive people their sins, leave them and let them go, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive you' (Matthew 6:14 & 15). Our forgiveness and the removal of our guilt, depends on our forgiveness of others. If we refuse to forgive others and hold onto that unforgiveness, on Judgement Day, we could well miss out on going to heaven. Jesus taught, "I forgave that great debt of yours, and should you not have had mercy as I had mercy on you? In wrath his master turned him over to the torturers." So also My heavenly Father will deal with every one of you, if you do not freely forgive your brother from your heart' (Matthew 18:21 to 35). If we want our prayers answered, we need to have a forgiving heart.

'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil'. The Hebrew word for evil is Ra. It seems strange for Jesus to say, "Lead us not into temptation," when the scriptures clearly state God never tempts anybody. 'Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted from God; for God ... Himself tempts no one, but every person is tempted when he is drawn away by his own evil desire' (James 1:13 & 14). So what was Jesus saying? Eve was tempted by the evil one, and only then she gave into her desire for the fruit (Genesis 3:1 to 5). Jesus is asking us to pray so we do not give into the temptations from the evil one, and so He would deliver us from those temptations, which lead to evil or sin.

'For Yours is the Kingdom, the power and the glory, forever, Amen.' This is self-explanatory. The Kingdom is God's, the power is God's, the glory is God's and it will be forever. The word Amen is a Hebrew word, which is related to other Hebrew words for faith, truth, trust, belief and phrases like, 'Let it be so' or 'I agree'. When Moses spoke to the children of Israel, they answered, "Amen", meaning they agreed with and affirmed Moses' words. "All the people shall say, Amen" (Deuteronomy 27:15 to 26). It is like our response to someone praying out loud. When we say 'Amen', we are implying, 'I agree with you; let it be so', or 'let it happen'. Jesus often began a discourse with the word 'Amen', but an incorrect translation from the Hebrew to Greek then to English, has the old King James Version saying 'verily, verily' which means 'truly, truly', or in Hebrew, 'Amen, Amen'. What Jesus was saying was, "In absolute truth, I say to you ... "

In summary, the Lord's prayer says, 'Dear Father in heaven, I praise Your holy name. I am looking forward to Your Kingdom coming to earth, and I am willing to do Your will on earth as it is done in heaven. Thank You Lord for providing my daily needs. Thank You Lord for forgiving me for all my wrong doing, just as I forgive all those who have wronged me. Please strengthen me and help me not to give into temptations from the evil one. The Kingdom, power and glory are all Yours, Father, and will be forever. I know that is the absolute truth'.

Amen and God bless you.

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