

## Ascension Day & Thy Kingdom Come



### **Lord, will you at this time give the Kingdom back to Israel?**

Jesus had risen from the dead and it had been beyond words to spend time with Him again - hearing Him explain what had happened. You are comfortable in His presence, perhaps too comfortable, and then one day as you are walking on the hills together...

When the apostles met together with Jesus, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time give the Kingdom back to Israel?”

Jesus said to them, “The times and occasions are set by my Father's own authority, and it is not for you to know when they will be. But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

No, Jesus isn't going to sort out everything. He has promised power to His followers for them to continue what He started.

Pause for a moment. This is not the time to rush to work out what and how and when...

...instead, you are told to wait for the fulfilment of a promise first.

As we await the Spirit together, pause and reflect on where you are in your Christian journey. Are you full of excitement and ready for a new start, or are you feeling jaded and that the best times have already been?

Wait. Wait for the Spirit.

We are going to use the Lord's Prayer to help us to wait and focus on Jesus.

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### **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name...**

The Lord's Prayer invites us to speak directly to God as Father. We are invited - encouraged, even - to be part of His family.

The pictures of fathers and sons may seem a bit cliché, and your experience of being a father (parent) or son (child) may not be as rosy. But, God is the perfect Father.

Sit or kneel before the perfect Father and revel in His love for you. How does that feel?

How does this perfect loving Father speak to you or affirm something in you?

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**Your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as in heaven**

Before you stands the throne of God, a royal robe, a crown and the world.

Firstly, acknowledge God as king of the whole world; the world you read of in the news headlines, the world you come into contact with day by day, and the world immediately around you that you touch and influence.

Work your way slowly in your mind and imagination through each part of the world that you care for, or concerns you, or that perhaps experience or circumstance has given a special place in your heart.

As you think of each one, hold it before God the Father and pray

*Your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as in heaven*

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### **Give us today our daily bread**

You are invited to the meal...

Sit at the table, take your time and eat a piece of bread stick.

Bread is a basic foodstuff the world over - and this is what we invited to ask God for.

Yet, we have received so much more!

Reflect on those good things God has placed in your life - and be thankful...

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**Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those who sin against us**

Take a small square of paper and a pencil.

On one side it says

forgive us our sins

so take a moment to think of those things you wish to say sorry for, and make a note of them on the paper.

The ThyKingdomCome prayer thoughts for today says...

*A true sorry has given up the fight of trying to prove you're right. To justify or explain. It's a coming clean. Come clean before God now. Everything. And ask him to help you to really mean it too.*

Turn the paper over, it says

as we forgive those

What grudges or failings do you hold against someone else? They are hurting you just as much, and need to be got rid of as well! Make a note on the paper.

Screw the paper up and put it in the bin. Let both sides go!

Rest in the peace of forgiving and being forgiven before you move on.

At the end of the service we will burn all these together.

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**And lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil**

We all know those people, places and situations where we know we fail. Time and time again, despite the promises and regret afterwards.

What are some of those for you? Where do you find yourself the weakest? What makes you keep coming back to God on your knees asking for forgiveness and the strength to overcome next time?

Ahead of you is a simple labyrinth in pebbles.

Slowly follow the arrows around the labyrinth and think about how God might direct your path, or change your direction suddenly to keep you away from those things which harm you and your relationship with Him.

Pause and pray the words written on the floor.

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**For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever, Amen!**

We are before the throne of God again. Not with the world and all its problems, but this is us and God.

Jesus was commended in that...

He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death—  
his death on the cross.

For this reason God raised him to the highest place above  
and gave him the name that is greater than any other name.

And so, in honour of the name of Jesus  
all beings in heaven, on earth, and in the world below[c]  
will fall on their knees,

and all will openly proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

(Philippians 2:9-11)

In humility, take the crown and place it on your head. What words would you use to acknowledge Jesus as the King of your life? Say them quietly as you take the crown and place it before the throne of God.

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### **This Jesus, who was taken from you into heaven...**

We have stood beside the disciples as they watched Jesus ascend to heaven, and we have walked the Lord's Prayer together. We now prepare to return to the world that God created and loved so much.

We rejoin the disciples as they gaze heavenwards...

They still had their eyes fixed on the sky as he went away, when two men dressed in white suddenly stood beside them and said, "Galileans, why are you standing there looking up at the sky? This Jesus, who was taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw him go to heaven."

Stand and look up to the clouds.

This Jesus...will return.

We join the disciples as they wait for the promised Holy Spirit to be empowered to preach the Good News and announce the Kingdom of God.

As you wait, imagine those parts of your lives which are crying out for the coming of the Kingdom and the return of the King to transform them. Allow God to grow the seed of His hope in your feelings towards those things.