

The Lord's Prayer: For Thine Is the Kingdom  
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**1 Chronicles 29:10-13**

<sup>10</sup> Then David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly; David said: "Blessed are you, O LORD, the God of our ancestor Israel, forever and ever. <sup>11</sup> Yours, O LORD, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. <sup>12</sup> Riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might; and it is in your hand to make great and to give strength to all. <sup>13</sup> And now, our God, we give thanks to you and praise your glorious name.

**Matthew 6:9-13 Greek**

Οὕτως οὖν προσεύχεσθε ὑμεῖς: Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου, ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου, γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς. Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον: καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν: καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν, ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ ὅτι σοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς αἰῶνας.

For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. We've neared the end of our summer series on the Lord's Prayer and, today, we come to a line which you will not find in a New Revised Standard Version, or NRSV, pew Bible. This line, you see, was added on by followers some time after Jesus taught the prayer. The NRSV attempts to return as closely as possible to an exact translation of the earliest texts. The fact that it is an addition, though, doesn't make it unacceptable or suspect. As William J. Carl III advises, "The early Christians were good Jews, and they knew that all synagogue prayers ended with an ascription of praise to God... In other words, this little phrase, 'Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,' was simply a familiar liturgical response like those they had heard in the synagogue. The worshiping congregation was simply responding to the celebrant, as Christians around the world do every week in the liturgy when the leader says, ... 'The Lord be with you,' 'And also with you.'"<sup>1</sup>

We heard the extended version of this in our reading from 1 Chronicles. Leading up to our reading, David had proclaimed his personal offering for the building of the house of God and then asked "Who then will offer willingly, consecrating themselves today to the Lord?"<sup>2</sup> After many offerings were made by "the leaders of the ancestral houses," "the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of the thousands and of the hundreds, and the officers over the king's work,"<sup>3</sup> King David presents their

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<sup>1</sup> William J. Carl, III. *The Lord's Prayer for Today* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press; 2006) p. 87.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Chronicles 29:5

<sup>3</sup> 1 Chronicles 29:6

offering to God with praise, saying, “Yours, O Lord, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty;...yours is the kingdom...In your hand are the power and might.”<sup>4</sup> Sounds familiar, doesn’t it?

In the Greek, our line from the Lord’s Prayer sounds like this: ὅτι σου ἔστιν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα εἰς αἰῶνας. *Basileia* is kingdom, coming from *basileus* (king) in Greek, which then went to *basilikos* (royal) to *basilike* to the Latin *basilica*, meaning “royal palace.”<sup>5</sup> See, I told you God’s kingdom was present here on earth! There are many basilicas! *Dunamis* is “power” and is also the root of “dynamite.” And *doxa* is “glory,” as in doxology, where we give God glory by singing God’s praises.

When we say “**thine** is the kingdom,” we affirm that God is our ruler. Our world is ruled by God. Our world is not ruled by our jobs. Our world is not ruled by finances. Or our hobbies or even our families. When we pray “**thine** is the kingdom,” we are asking that God make it so in our lives, for we know how easy it can be for other things to rule us.

When we pray “and the power,” we are asking that we be reminded that all that we have comes from God. After ascribing all greatness, power, glory, victory and majesty to God, David adds this for emphasis: “for all things come from you, and of your own we have given you.”<sup>6</sup> I’ve said it here before how readily we believe that we can control our lives, and even the lives of those around us. We do have power – it’s part of being created in God’s image. But Power, capital P “power” is God’s alone. What we can do is nothing compared to what God can do. If you haven’t recently read Job, let me give you a refresher. Job faced many, many hardships, and extreme ones at that, and Job searches aloud for what he has done to deserve the challenges from God. The Lord answers Job in his challenges to God’s actions.

‘Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?  
Tell me, if you have understanding.  
Who determined its measurements—surely you know!  
Or who stretched the line upon it?  
On what were its bases sunk,  
or who laid its cornerstone  
when the morning stars sang together  
and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?  
‘Have you commanded the morning since your days began,  
and caused the dawn to know its place,  
so that it might take hold of the skirts of the earth,  
and the wicked be shaken out of it?’

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<sup>4</sup> 1 Chronicles 29:11-12

<sup>5</sup> Google search: etymology basilica.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Chronicles 29:14

It is changed like clay under the seal,  
 and it is dyed like a garment.  
 Light is withheld from the wicked,  
 and their uplifted arm is broken.  
 ‘Have you entered into the springs of the sea,  
 or walked in the recesses of the deep?  
 Have the gates of death been revealed to you,  
 or have you seen the gates of deep darkness?  
 Have you comprehended the expanse of the earth?  
 Declare, if you know all this.  
 ‘Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades,  
 or loose the cords of Orion?  
 Can you lead forth the Mazzaroth in their season,  
 or can you guide the Bear with its children?  
 Do you know the ordinances of the heavens?  
 Can you establish their rule on the earth?  
 Can you lift up your voice to the clouds,  
 so that a flood of waters may cover you?  
 Can you send forth lightnings, so that they may go  
 and say to you, “Here we are”?  
 Who has put wisdom in the inward parts,  
 or given understanding to the mind?  
 Who has the wisdom to number the clouds?  
 Or who can tilt the waterskins of the heavens,  
 when the dust runs into a mass  
 and the clods cling together?<sup>7</sup>

God’s answers span most of four chapters. This is just a sampling. Thine is the power, indeed.

When we pray “thine is the glory,” **thine**, we do so with humility, remembering all the times we’ve taken credit without giving any to God. We could learn a lot from the country singers and the football players who give thanks to God before anything else. Most of us aren’t winning awards or making big plays so we don’t have those natural prompts to give thank you speeches or explain how we were able to do what we did. It takes practice to get us in the habit of thinking of God above all else when we accomplish things. So, again, I remind us that Jesus gave us this prayer as a prayer to be said daily. We practice and we practice and we practice so we might one day think first of God.

And when we say “forever,” we are proclaiming that God is the greatest, by far, not just in the past or now but always. No one will ever outdo, out-reign, out-power, out-glory, God. And so our ascription of praise is not temporary but for always, and we join to all the voices which have come before us and we join with all the voices which will come after. So let us pray: God, you are our ruler – help us remember. God, you have the power – don’t let us forget. God, all glory belongs to you – may you be the first to come to mind in all we accomplish. All this we pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

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<sup>7</sup> Selections from Job 38.