

The Lord's Prayer: The Second Petition

Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean? The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself; but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also.

How is this done? When our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life here in time and yonder in eternity.

1. When we pray for God's kingdom (or rule, or reign) to come, for what are we praying? In Luther's *Mighty Fortress (LSB 656)*, sta. 4, what is it?
2. What has God promised? From where is His kingdom, and what is it about? (John 18:33–38; Matthew 4:17; 13:1–52; 16:19)
3. The disciples, it seems, misunderstood this. Jesus spoke about His kingdom and their roles in it (Luke 22:24-30). What did they think, at first, that meant? (Luke 22:49-51; Acts 1:6) What role were they to have instead, in His "kingdom that is without end"? (Acts 1:7–8) How does the kingdom really come among them? (Acts 2:1, 14–46) Among us?

From Luther's Large Catechism (III: Lord's Prayer)

⁵³ For the coming of God's Kingdom to us occurs in two ways; first, here in time through the Word and faith; and secondly, in eternity forever through revelation. Now we pray for both these things, that it may come to those who are not yet in it, and, by daily increase, to us who have received the same, and hereafter in eternal life.

⁵⁴ All this is nothing else than saying: Dear Father, we pray, give us first Thy Word, that the Gospel be preached properly throughout the world; and secondly, that it be received in faith, and work and live in us...

⁵⁵⁻⁵⁶ From this you perceive that we pray here not for a crust of bread or a temporal, perishable good, but for an eternal inestimable treasure and everything that God Himself possesses; which is far too great for any human heart to think of desiring if He had not Himself commanded us to pray for the same. But because He is God, He also claims the honor of giving much more and more abundantly than any one can comprehend—like an eternal, unfailling fountain, which, the more it pours forth and overflows, the more it continues to give...

⁵⁸ All this is the fault of the shameful unbelief which does not look to God for as much good as will satisfy the stomach, much less expects without doubt such eternal treasures of God. Therefore we must strengthen ourselves against it, and let this be our first prayer; then, indeed, we shall have all else in abundance, as Christ teaches (Matt[hew] 6:33): Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. For how could He allow us to suffer want and to be straitened in temporal things when He promises that which is eternal and imperishable?