

# *Plundering Satan's House*

*Bible Reading:*  
*Matthew 12: 22-29*

*Catechism Reading:*  
*Q/A 123*

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That's my truck!

No, it's mine!

I had it first.

Give it to me!!

And before we know it the kids are both wailing and carrying on.

A dispute over possessions.

It doesn't change much as we get older. Only the stakes get higher, sometimes deadly.

Who's territory is it?

Who will have control?

Disputes like this have led to most of history's wars, including the two great world wars of the last century. An invading army seeks to take control of what is not rightfully theirs, and a battle to regain control begins.

There is one battle for control that has been going on behind the scenes of human history. A struggle not for control of one island or continent, but for control of all creation. It is a struggle between the Divine forces of Sovereign Creator God and the imposter, whose aim it has been since the dawn of history to wrestle control of the cosmos away from its maker, Satan.

It is a titanic struggle between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.

And it is that struggle which propels us to pray "*Your Kingdom come.*"

I want to meditate with you on the meaning and implications of this petition -

"*Your Kingdom come.*"

Question one, I suppose, properly is - "*What is the Kingdom of God whose coming we pray for?*"

For now let this suffice -

The kingdom of God is God controlling, ruling, and being served by all that is properly His and that happening in the places and ways that are pleasing to Him, and which bring honor to Him.

It is God's reign over his servants.

God's rule in His territory, his realm.

We see the Kingdom of God displayed in fullness in the Garden of Eden, when all of creation responded to, honoured, and obeyed God.

People managed creation's resources and began to develop them as caretakers mandated to do so by the King and Creator.

They lived in harmony with each other in the way God prescribed.

But then there's that other kingdom - the other regime with whom we have to reckon.

It is a rebel regime; one that has invaded the territory and seeks to destroy, everything of God's holy regime; of God's holy Kingdom.

It is the kingdom, the regime, of darkness, led and controlled by the one whom Luther labelled "*the prince of darkness grim.*" - Satan.

This regime invaded and established a beachhead with the seduction of our first human parents, and quickly spread its evil tentacles to inflict death, disease, destruction, and rebellion against God throughout every corner of creation.

Now these two forces stand locked in battle -

the devil seeking to hang on, and God seeking to drive him out,  
to destroy him

to restore His Kingdom to its original and total beauty.

It is this conflict which forms the core of Scripture's story.

And it is this conflict which leads us to pray,

"Our Father in heaven..... Your kingdom come!"

Rule us.

Keep your church strong and add to it.

Destroy the devil's work.

Destroy every evil force which revolts against you and every conspiracy against your Word.

..... **Your Kingdom come!!**

We pray that Satan, who has had the run of creation since the Fall, and who has held many people and countries and forces under his seductive sway, would be tied up and destroyed.

We pray that he, an evil strong man who has illegally set up house in God's good Kingdom and begun an illegitimate Kingdom, would be seized and tied up so that God would ransack his house and regain full control of His domain.

We pray for God's power to be exerted in the battle.

*Your Kingdom Come!*

It will.

It **is coming!**

There are echos of that coming in Scripture.

Revelation 12 prophecies of the coming day when the Accuser is hurled down, when he is overcome by the blood of the Lamb,  
when he himself knows that his time is short.

Luke 10 speaks of demons submitting to the followers of King Jesus; it speaks of Jesus saying, "*I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.*"

In other words –

the accuser **has** been hurled down!

Get that?

The final outcome of the battle between the kingdoms, between the regimes, has **already** been decided.

God cannot

and will not

lose.

Victory is assured.

Satan and his hoards will be defeated!

The great counterattack and drive to push Satan into the Sea of Fire is under way, led by the General of God's army, Jesus.

Oscar Cullman in his book *Christ and Time* draws the analogy between this spiritual power struggle and WWII.

June 6, 1944 was D-Day - as allied forces invaded Hitler's stronghold in Europe. For all intents and purposes the final result of the war was decided on that day.

YET

The bloodiest fighting and the most intense suffering for the people of Europe was yet to come before V-Day – May 8, 1945 when the Axis forces finally surrendered unconditionally.

D-Day for the Kingdom of God came when Jesus invaded earth - it is the time of the first Easter;

overcoming Satan in the 40 day desert temptation  
his healing and miracle and teaching ministry  
his suffering, death and resurrection.

He has since sent holy power through the Spirit to equip, protect, and guide the soldiers of His kingdom -

- believers
- you and me

in the ongoing and very bloody battle to capture the entire house of creation.

But V-Day still lies in the future, the day when the skies will be peeled back and the heavenly dimension of reality will enter our dimension;

the trumpet shall sound and the hosts of heaven will descend and Christ shall return and the final end will be declared.

Rest assured of this one thing -

Satan **will** be totally crushed and all his armies with him.

*Thy Kingdom come!!*

That is the prayer of spiritual warfare.

Have you ever wondered why the Scriptures spend so much time in their description of Jesus' ministry detailing His confrontation with demons?

It is because they, the troops of the Evil one, know their hold on creation is mortally threatened with the arrival of General Jesus on the scene.

And they lash out in one last desperate attempt to hang on.

Have a look at the beginning of Mark's gospel to see that -

Jesus is baptised.

by v.13 he is being tempted

by v.21 he is driving out evil spirits.

The enemy that has invaded God's good creation is facing the counter-attack by Jesus that will eventually destroy him;

Satan knows this and is desperate.

That same desperation which was at work in bible times is at work today.

We are slowly beginning to wake up to that fact here in North America.

Our missionary personnel overseas have seen it in overt ways for many years.

We have been blinded to it here.

But we are finally beginning to realize that there is more,

much more,

to reality than what we can quantify scientifically.

The struggle between good and evil extends into another dimension

far beyond what is outwardly displayed on the evening news.

We at Calvin Church had better be crystal clear on the fact that as much as there is a real, live Holy Spirit of God who moves over the face of the earth doing the will of our Heavenly Father, and guiding His host of angelic servants

so,

equally real

is the demonic spirit that stands against the Father with a total, deadly hatred, and that leads his host of dark spirits to distort and destroy God's good creation and those who live in it.

Which brings us to the question of our place in that warfare, and the status of the war today.

We must remember that while Satan's power has been curbed, and while his end is certain, he has **not** been rendered completely powerless.

Even with Jesus present he was able to break through the guard of the disciples, using Peter to tempt Jesus not to go to the cross (Mt 16:23).

He used Judas to betray Jesus to the Pharisees (Lk 22:23).

Today, as well, the devil prowls around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

The lion's roar indicates his claim to territory and prey.

This lion is dangerous.

We must sit up and be vigilant.

We need to be alert and aggressive in our fight against him, pushing him and his standards and his deceptions and brokenness and hurt out of God's creation Kingdom.

We are to carry on the invasion work begun by Jesus.

We are to be involved in the assault on the "strong man's" house.

And as we do, we can count on one thing -

When we sit back quietly and rest and do nothing we will not feel much opposition from Satan.

In fact, he will try to pamper us; to make us feel comfortable and lazy so that we become even less of a threat to him.

But if we go on the offensive, if we become spiritually dangerous, we will have to endure demonic assault.

We will undergo his vicious counter-attacks.

The strong man, Satan, gets very angry when his house is plundered.

We so who do the plundering had better be very sure that we are covered with the protection of the One who is stronger than the strong man -

- Jesus Christ the Lord.

Which brings us right back to prayer and its importance.

To pray *Thy kingdom come* is to pray the power of God and the presence of God down into the boardrooms of our large corporations.

It is to pray that God's powerful Spirit will work in the field of labor relations.

It is to pray for the powerful work of Jesus to be present in politics.

It is to pray that the restoring work of Jesus would be carried into every corner of creation that has been corrupted and distorted by evil.

It is to pray that strength and wisdom and direction and motivation be given to Christians

- to Kingdom workers -

as they wrestle against the powers of darkness.

That first.

Secondly,

to pray *thy kingdom come* is to pray that the powerful Spirit of God would rule more and more in the hearts of people ----

---- beginning with those of us doing the praying.

beginning with me.

It is to pray that every area of my life that is hurting and distorted be restored and strengthened by Jesus.

It is to pray that we as a gathering of Kingdom soldiers function in a strong, supportive way -

- a way that encourages us for Kingdom warfare in our respective spheres of life, rather than giving us an arena for destructive conflicts over petty issues.

It is to pray that we as a church grow more and more into a community where soldiers of Jesus who have been wounded can find rest and healing, rather than shooting them in the foot by demanding that they live up to impossible standards, or gossiping about them, or ignoring them, or condemning them.

Understanding *Your Kingdom come* in this way makes sense of Luther's statement -  
*"I'm so busy today, I'd better spend three hours in prayer."*

The longer and further that we drive a car, the more we stop for gas.  
The more we use a cordless appliance, the more we have to recharge it.  
The more that a Christian Community becomes involved in assaulting the house of the Strong Man,  
the more it takes up the banner and cause of the stronger man,  
the more it will need to be connected to the ONLY source of life and hope through the vital line  
of prayer.

Dear friends, all around us  
as we speak  
a battle is raging in the spirit world.

It is a struggle not for control of one island or continent, but for the control of all creation;  
it is a struggle between the Strong Man and the Stronger One.;

This battle is spilling over into physical creation, and we are involved.

So we leave here and enter the conflict,  
raising the standard of Jesus high overhead,  
as Christ the royal master leads against the foe.

We leave here under the protecting arm of Jesus,  
knowing that the gates of hell can never *'gainst that Church prevail.*  
*We have Christ's own promise, and that cannot fail!*

So - onward, Christian soldiers, let us march as to war.  
With the cross of Jesus, going on before.