

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. **Thy kingdom** come. Thy will be done **in earth**, as it is in heaven."

These well known words are from the Lord's prayer, found in Matthew chapter 6 but what exactly is 'the kingdom of God' that Jesus is speaking of here?

The first time that this phrase appears in the Bible is in the first book of Chronicles. (*1 Chr 28:5 - Verse on screen*)

"And of all my sons, (for the LORD God has given me many sons,) he has chosen Solomon my son to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel"

Here, King David is passing on his rulership to his son, Solomon, but notice what it is that they both rule over - (*highlight these words*) "the kingdom of the LORD over Israel". So the kingdom of Israel as ruled over by David, Solomon and many others was known as the kingdom of God. But, this kingdom did not last forever and was eventually destroyed by the Babylonians so what was Jesus speaking of?

Well, in Luke chapter 1 we find some well known verses that are often read at Christmas time.

(*Luke 1:31-32 - Verse on screen*)

"And, behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a Son, and shall call his name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God will give Him **the throne of His father David.**"

So even though there were no kings on the throne of David at the time of Jesus' birth, it was promised that Jesus would one day sit upon that throne and rule over the kingdom of Israel.

Now, this did not happen during the life of Jesus, however, after his crucifixion and resurrection, we read this passage in the book of Acts, speaking of Jesus and his disciples (*Acts 1:3 - Verse on screen*)

"To whom He also presented himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to **the kingdom of God:**" And then a little later in the same chapter, after Jesus has been taken up into heaven, we read these words. (*Acts 1:11 - Verse on screen*)

"This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, **will so come** in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven"

And so it is at the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ that this kingdom will be set up and as we read in the book of Daniel it will last forever. (*Daniel 2:44 - Verse on screen*)

It is at this time that the dead will be raised to life as we read in the book of Corinthians. (*1 Corinthians 15:50-53 - Verse on screen*)

Psalms 72 gives a beautiful description of what this kingdom will be like, showing that it will not just be over Israel but will extend over the whole earth. (*Psalms 72:1-8 - Verse on screen*)

"Give the king Your judgments, O God,
And Your righteousness to the king's Son.
He will judge Your people with righteousness,
And Your poor with justice.

The mountains will bring peace to the people,
And the little hills, by righteousness.
He will bring justice to the poor of the people;
He will save the children of the needy,
And will break in pieces the oppressor.

They shall fear You
As long as the sun and moon endure,
Throughout all generations.
He shall come down like rain upon the grass before mowing,
Like showers that water the earth.
In His days the righteous shall flourish,
And abundance of peace,
Until the moon is no more.

He shall have dominion also from sea to sea,
And from the River to the ends of the earth.”