

The LPG

Kingdom, Power, and Glory

February 21, 2021

Welcome to where we're learning how to better affirm, appreciate, and exalt our Father-Creator-Lord and King! **Do you speak praise to God in private?** How about in public? For those wired that way, it's an easy "Yes!" But for the rest, it can be a bit of a barrier to battle our way through. Because speaking or singing our praise is one of the last things our pride will tend to surrender.



But our Shepherd-Savior-Mentor and Judge, Jesus Christ arms us for the fight of our life with the **Lord's Prayer Guide**, which helps us grasp *His* nature and *our* relationship, so we can grow each day in the power and glory of the kingdom within. And so we begin by **adoring our Dad** with a childlike greeting; and **revering our Creator** with heartfelt worship; and then **discussing trusting our Hallowed Father God**; and nobly **kneeling to our King** to plan in advance our advance of His kingdom; while **pursuing the will of our Lord** in *our* daily decisions; by **asking and seeking our Bread of Life**; and **confessing our messing to our Judge** to wipe *our* slate clean, as *we're* **defeating evil like our Mentor** by forgiving those who messed up with *us*; and then **pledging to follow our Shepherd** concerning the temptations we'll face: evading the avoidables and resisting the inevitables; and **crying out to our Savior** to be delivered from the evil, inside and out.

That's the last *request*, but not the last *line*, in the LPG. It builds to, and ends with, a short burst of praise in a three-part shout-out of affirmation, appreciation, and exaltation.

For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory – Matthew 6:13 NKJ



Three declarations that get to the heart of our pride. **Affirmation:** Yours is the kingdom; there *is* a King, and it's not *me*, because You alone *are* absolute authority. **Appreciation:** Yours is ... the power; I'm so often so *weak*, and You alone have an infinite capacity to meet my *deepest* needs. And **exaltation:** Yours is ... the glory; I am *utterly* dependent on Your *perfect* love and truth and goodness.

Now, you're probably wondering why I chose that photo for today's icon. Well, in Judaism, and in Jesus' day, private prayers customarily concluded with what's known as a spontaneous **seal of praise**.¹ And *look* at her. I'm pretty sure she's praising God for her daily fish.

Even the Amidah,² the formal, exhaustive, thrice daily prayer that the LPG radically condenses, is open-ended to allow for a short, freeform burst of praise based on God's Word.

¹ From "The Prayers of Jesus" by Joachim Jeremias.

² The Amidah is covered in the sermon "Shut Up and Pray" (11-29-20).



Some Bibles don't include this line in the LPG. That's because it's not found in the earliest and most reliable manuscripts. So if it's not in yours, that's why. But just because it's not in every Bible doesn't mean it's unbiblical; because *actually* it is in *every* Bible. Just not in this spot.



Did you notice the *two* references to the kingdom? "Your kingdom *come*" and "Yours *is* the kingdom". Know why? The first refers to the kingdom that Jesus was ushering in that continues to expand heart by heart as He's believed and received as Savior and Lord. And the second refers to God's eternal sovereign authority over *everything*.

King David points this out in in the OT long before the LPG; but FYI: the more I internalize the LPG, the more I notice it everywhere in Scripture. It kind of acts like a *Bible* Guide as well.

As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him. ... The steadfast love of the Lord is from *everlasting* to *everlasting* [That's *forever* in *both* directions!] ... The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and [make no mistake from the appearance of what He momentarily allows in order to bring about His eternal plans and purpose] His kingdom rules over all. – Psalm 103:13-19 ESV

So, here's a question: **Can the Lord leave heaven?** I love this question. To answer *that*, you have to answer another question first: **Where is heaven?** You see, it's not so much a *place* as a presence. God's divine presence *defines* it. **Heaven is where God is, and hell is where He isn't.**

So, can God leave heaven? Hardly. It travels with Him like a cloud of glory. And the *kingdom* of heaven surrounds the *King* of heaven even on *earth* as it *is* in heaven; because His kingdom is the place of His rule and reign, which He chose to extend deep within in our heart.



Now, in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, on the hillside above the lake, He pretty much turns everything on its head with the beatitudes, when He basically said, "Blessed are the poor, the sad, the meek, and the hungry." And it's right after this – on the hillside – that His newly appointed apprentices ask Him to teach them to pray. (Lk 11:2)



This is way before they understand that our Father in heaven and our Savior on earth are One. And that His eternal kingdom was *at* that moment *coming* in a *new* way with power and glory. So, when Jesus gave 'em the LPG on that hillside above the lake, *where was heaven?* On that hillside above the lake! Because where was God? In the place above space *and* on that hillside above the lake, preparing His boys for the suffering to come in order for *God's* will to be done.



They're two years out from Jesus crying out, "It is finished," and conquering death, and rising in power, so that "Those who mourn ... **will be comforted,**" "The meek ... **will inherit the earth,**" "Those craving righteousness ... **will be filled,**" "The merciful ... **will be shown mercy,**" Etc. Future tense at that point. Rightly so. Two years out.

But He begins and ends saying, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for **theirs is the kingdom,**” and “Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for **theirs is the kingdom**”. Why is the *kingdom* the *only* one in *present* tense?



Because although the full glory of the Gospel was still two years out, the *kingdom* was in “presence” tense from the moment ...

The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among *us*. We have seen His *glory*, the *glory* of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. – John 1:14 NIV

Now salvation, and strength, and the *kingdom* of our God, and the *power* of His Christ have *come*, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. – Revelation 12:10 NKJ

“Yours is the kingdom” should prod a seal of **Kingdom Praise**, that *recognizes* His rule in this unruly world in *general*, and *declares* His royal reign in my loyal life in *particular*. **A seal of kingdom praise renews my commitment to carry out my created purpose**; and expresses the fact that I gladly relinquish my throne and surrender my inferior, unruly, rival kingdom. However, **surrender usually comes after a battle**. So don’t be discouraged if there’s some spiritual combat involved. Mature faith is mostly the result of the painful process of dethroning ourselves.



Our problem is, **we’re too quick to bow down to lesser powers**. Know why? They’re *visible*. They’re in our face. And because of that, we often make the fatal mistake of thinking they’re more frightening to face. So “and the power” should prompt a seal of Power Praise to remind us that:



Ever since the creation of the world His eternal *power* and divine nature, *invisible* though they are, have been understood **[even if we don’t realize it]** and seen **[in a way we can all comprehend]** through the things He has made. – Romans 1:20 NRS

[For instance] His *lightning* lights up the world; ... **[and by this illuminating display]** The heavens proclaim His righteousness, and all the peoples see His *glory*. – Psalm 97:4-6 NIV

[Because, as David declared to the Lord, this is how] You display Your *power* ... the skies resounded with *thunder* ... Your *lightning* lit up the world; – Psalm 77:14-18 NIV

[Therefore, we should] Give unto the Lord the *glory* due to His name ... The God of *glory thunders* ... The voice of the Lord is *powerful* ... The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars, yes, the Lord splinters the cedars ... The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness ... and strips the forests bare; and in His temple everyone says, “*Glory!*” – Psalm 29:1-9 NKJ

He took Peter, John and James with Him and went up onto a mountain to pray. As He was praying, the appearance of His face changed, **[Daniel saw it and said it looked like lightning [Dan 10:6]]** and His clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. – Luke 9:28-29 NIV

For the Son of Man in His day will be like the lightning, – Luke 17:24 NIV

Power Praise renews my courage to face my foes and opposing forces, by finding the words to profess that every other power pales by comparison to the mighty hand of God. After all:

He fills *His* hands with *lightning* and commands it to strike its mark. – Job 36:32 NIV
What can they do? Type something on Facebook? When we truly have a God-fearing heart, we fear little else. And when we lack that, we fear pretty much everything else.

Now, **Glory Praise** not only exalts God by focusing on His perfect love and beauty and truth and, well, glory, and **renews my excitement to shine**. There's a light in your heart just waiting to bolt out of your mouth. You need to hear *yourself* praise His majesty. Because ...

The Son **[your Savior]** is the *radiance* of God's *glory* and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful *Word*. – Hebrews 1:3 NIV

Which is why His power and glory can only be affirmed and appreciated and exalted by those inside His *Word*, inside His *kingdom*. Because ...

No one can see the kingdom of God unless *they* are born again. – John 3:3 NIV

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the *light* of the *gospel* of the *glory* of *Christ*, who is the image of God. – 2 Corinthians 4:4 NIV



It's like stained-glass windows. From the outside they appear dark and dingy and depressing (like quite a few Christians appear to those in the world around them). But, from the inside the radiance of their vibrant colors, illuminated by the sun, sparkle and shine! So, don't expect those without to perceive it. They can't. That's why they need a faithful witness on *the inside*.



So if you're on the inside, but you're not really wired for speaking your praise, it's time to start practicing. If you're not growing, what are you doing? Speaking out praise, whether privately or publically, produces freedom and liberation and emancipation from the chains of pride that restrain and restrict so deep inside. Break free. **If not now, when?**



You can practice during worship, if and when we're asked to speak our praise. Just *say* something. **Even if it's barely a whisper.** Right on! **Even if it's just one or two words.** Perfect! Who wants more? **Even if it's uncomfortable.** Especially! *That's* the battle! Step out, step up, and kick pride's behind! But holding your tongue without offering even one whispered word is so very *not* okay. If you're a *believer*. Because it literally only takes one sincerely whispered word to enter in.

Don't let fear or pride direct your worship. Who's in charge here anyway?

Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man *glory* in his wisdom, let not the mighty man *glory* in his might, nor let the rich man *glory* in his riches; but let him who *glories glory* in this, that he understands and knows *Me*, that I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," – Jeremiah 9:23-24 NKJ

The Lord absolutely loves seeing you see your own weakness and taking it on head on.

The Lord ... said to [Paul], “My grace *is* sufficient for you, for My *power* is made perfect in [your] weakness.” [So breathe a sigh of relief, learn to laugh at yourself, and be free] Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that *Christ’s power* [not my pride] may rest on me. [And send pride packin’!] – 2 Corinthians 12:9 NIV

Where’s heaven? Wherever God dwells. So, if you’ve received Jesus, don’t try to get into the right frame of mind or mood to praise, **just ponder what’s gotten into you**, and let’s seal this thing up!

To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us to be a *kingdom* and priests to serve His God and Father—to Him be *glory* and *power* for ever and ever! Amen. – Revelation 1:5-6 NIV

Forever and ever, amen? Let’s not get ahead of ourselves.

Let’s memorize together what we’ll personalize alone.

Our father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation,³ but deliver us from the evil.⁴ For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. – Matthew 6:9-13 NKJ

³ This line is from the KJV rather than the NKJ which reads: “Do not lead us into temptation”

⁴ This line is from the YLT rather than the NKJ which reads: “Deliver us from the evil one”