

Our Father

God is my Father and also your Father. He is ours. I can't ask Him to do something for me that would be bad for you, because He is **our** Father.

When I pray to Him, I need to remember that God loves everyone, not just me.

Jesus knew God as his Father, and he told us that God is our Father, too. He said, *“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.”*

We are God's little flock of sheep, and we need Jesus to be our shepherd.

The first time the word “Father” is written in the Bible is in Genesis 2:24. It says, *“a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife.”* That means when people grow up and get married, they have to be closer to their wife or husband than to their mom and dad.

But no matter how old we are or whether or not we are married, God is the one Father we always have. Whatever happens in our lives, He won't leave us or turn his back on us, if we belong to Him.

“He himself has said, ‘I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.’” - Hebrews 13:5

who is in heaven

Why did Jesus say that we should pray, “Our Father who is in Heaven?” Because we all have a father on earth, but we do not pray to him. We pray to our Heavenly Father.

Sometimes God may use our father on earth to answer our prayers. For example, if we are hungry and need food, God may help our father or mother get money and buy food for us.

Some people may not have a father or mother who helps them. Maybe they have died or do not live anywhere near. A great man of God, David, went through a time in his life when his parents were against him. He said “*My father and mother have forsaken me, but the Lord will take me up.*” (Psalm 27:10)

No matter what happens to our parents, God will be with us all of our lives, and afterward, take us to heaven, if we belong to him.

We cannot see God because He is in Heaven. From the Bible we know that heaven is above the earth. It is where rain comes from, and where the stars, sun and moon are.

We can see the heavens, but we cannot see God because He is a Spirit. He showed us exactly what He is like by sending his son Jesus to earth. When we learn about Jesus, we are learning about God. Jesus said, “*Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.*” (John 14:9)

When the time drew near for Jesus to die, he said to his friends, “*I am going to prepare a place for you, and I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*” He knew that after he died he would be in heaven with his Father. When we die we will be with Jesus and God in heaven, if we belong to God.

How do we show that we belong to God?

Hallowed be your name

The word “hallowed” means “setting apart.” Another word for “hallowed” is “holy.”

God wants us to set apart certain things and treat them respectfully. His name is one of those things. Here are some verses in the Bible that tell us what God thinks about his name:

In Psalm 138, verse 2, David says, *“I will praise your name for your love and your faithfulness for you have exalted above all things your name and your word.”* What does “exalted above all things” mean?

One of the 10 commandments is: *“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.”* (Exodus 20:7) What does “will not hold anyone guiltless” mean?

Psalm 4:3 says, *“The Lord has set apart the godly for himself; The Lord will hear when I call to him.”*

That means: When we are careful about using the Lord’s name, it shows we respect and love God. ***That shows we belong to Him.***

Therefore God will hear when we call to him. That’s a wonderful promise!!

Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

The earth is a place of great beauty and we can love each other and love God while we live on this earth. However, there is also great and terrible suffering on the earth. People hate and kill each other. Disasters like earthquakes destroy homes and cities. But in Heaven there are no tornadoes, tears or hatred. Wouldn't it be wonderful if it were like that on earth?

The Bible says of those in heaven, *“They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. . . Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

What does “They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” mean?

Even though our time on earth will never be perfect and we will at times be sad and we will cry, we can still pray everyday for God's kingdom to come and for his will to be done. This is what God wants us to do.

Jesus is our best example of someone who prayed for God's will to be done. He did not want to suffer and die on the cross, but he knew that God had a plan, so he prayed, *“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”* (Luke 22:42)

After he prayed, an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. God will help us do the hard things he gives us to do.

PRACTICE WRITING THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who is 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

Some people are very rich. They think they will never need to worry about where their next meal is coming from. "I'll buy it," they think. Perhaps they have forgotten that everything depends on God. Some people don't have a lot of money. They worry about how they will get their next meal. They, too, may forget that everything depends on God.

When God is very angry with a nation, he may send a famine. *What is famine?*

A man of God, Elijah, told the nation of Israel (God's people), that there would be no rain for three years because of their sins. Of course, during those three years all the crops died.

People were extremely hungry and some died. But God took care of Elijah. He told him to go live near a brook and that ravens would bring him food.

Elijah obeyed God. Every morning and evening the ravens brought him bread and meat. Finally, the famine ended, but not before God got everyone's attention. He proved to them that they needed to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." They shouldn't think they could eat and live without worshipping God.

Do you ever eat without thanking God? Sometimes we may forget, but the truth is that our food is from God. Farmers may grow it, groceries may sell it, parents may buy it, but God is in control of whether we eat or not. The Bible says that animals and fishes "*all look to God to give them their food at the proper time.*" (Psalm 104:27)

Let's be smart like the animals and look to God for our food!

Jesus said, "*Do not worry about what you will eat or drink. Look at the birds of the air,*" he said. "*They do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.*"

"*Seek first God's kingdom... and all these things will be given to you as well.*" (Matthew 6:25--33)

That does not mean that adults don't need to work. In fact, the Bible says, "*If a man will not work, he shall not eat.*" (2 Thessalonians 3:10) We should never use our own laziness as an excuse to lean on God's grace.

And forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors

What is a debt? It is something we owe to someone else. If the bank gives me a loan, then I have a debt to repay to the bank.

If God has given me my life, and he has, and if I break his laws, then I owe him an apology. God is the rightful owner of every person on the earth, and we must all answer to him for our deeds and words.

If I tell a lie and say something hateful about another person, then I should apologize to that person, but I must also apologize to God, because I not only hurt that person, I also hurt God who is the father of that person. If someone hurts you, then your mom or dad feels that hurt too. Likewise, God feels the hurt that his children feel. Yet, we are not just saying when we pray, “God, I’m sorry I hurt you,” but we must say, “God, I’m sorry I broke your law and did the wrong thing.” Also, if someone says something mean about me, and if they apologize, then I must forgive them, because I must “forgive my debtors” even as I have been forgiven.

The Bible says, *“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”* - I John 1:8

It is best to say, “Yes, I am a sinner.” That means we do things God does not allow or approve of. But if we confess our sins to God and if we are truly sorry for the wrong we did, God will forgive us.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

What is unrighteousness? It is things like: jealousy, fits of anger and hatred.

The Bible tells a story of a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. One man owed him 10,000 “talents” which would be about a million dollars. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his family be sold to pay the debt. But the servant fell on his knees and begged him to be merciful. So the king cancelled (forgave) the debt. Then that servant went out and found a fellow servant who owed him a few dollars. “Pay me back what you owe me!” he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him to be gracious, but he refused and had the man thrown in prison until he could pay his debt. The other servants told the king what had happened. So the king called that servant and said, “You wicked servant, I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?” Then he turned him over to the jailers, and that is how God will treat you unless you forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart. - Matthew 18

PRACTICE WRITING THE LORD'S PRAYER

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our debts

as we also have

forgiven our debtors

Number the lines of The Lord's Prayer in the correct order.

- For yours is the kingdom
- on earth as it is in heaven.
- Amen.
- And forgive us our debts as we
- Your kingdom come, your will be done
- Give us this day our daily bread
- but deliver us from evil.
- also have forgiven our debtors.
- Our Father who is in heaven
- And do not lead us into temptation
- and the power and the glory forever.
- Hallowed be your name.

And do not lead us into temptation but deliver us from evil

Would God lead his own children into temptation? This is hard to understand.

We know that God does not tempt anyone. In James 1:13-15 it is written, *“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”*

God does not tempt us to sin. When we feel tempted, it is because of our sinful human nature.

Yet, God does test us. What is the difference between being tested by God and experiencing temptation?

Let’s look at a Bible story in Second Chronicles 32. Hezekiah, a good king of Israel, trusted God and helped the Israelites to worship God and put away their idols. In most things, he did right. Therefore, when he was very ill and about to die, God healed him and allowed him to live another 15 years. As a sign that He was doing this to show His favor, the prophet Isaiah told King Hezekiah that the sun would go backwards by 10 steps.

After King Hezekiah was well, the king of Babylon sent a committee or embassy to visit him to congratulate him on his recovery from the terrible illness and to inquire about “the wonder done in the land.” Perhaps they were referring to how the Israelites had won a battle against a MUCH larger army, or maybe they had noticed the regression of the sun by 10 degrees, since there was much knowledge about the heavens in the Mideastern countries. (Remember the Orient kings who came to see Jesus, by following a star?)

Rather than explaining to them about how great God is and how God had won the battle and had given the sign of the sun stepping backward to Hezekiah to assure him about his healing, guess what Hezekiah did? He showed these Babylonians all the treasures in his house to prove what a great king he was!! The Bible tells us, *“But when envoys were sent by the rulers of Babylon to ask him about the miraculous sign that had occurred in the land, God left him to test him and to know everything that was in his heart.”*

God allowed Hezekiah to sin by leaving him to his own sinful nature. This test of his faith proved he was not such a great man. He was a braggart -- someone who boasts to others about his achievements and possessions--the opposite of being humble. There is more to this story and you can read it in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles.

When we pray, *“Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil,”* we are confessing to God that we know we are sinful and cannot pass the tests that come into our lives without His help.

We must work each day to stay close to the Lord by praying, reading the Bible and being with Christian friends. It’s also important to go to church every Sunday.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen

If we look at nature, we see God's power and glory.

This is pointed out in Romans 1:20: *"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities-- his eternal power and divine nature-- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."*

That means that anyone in the whole world who does not see that a powerful God made the world, is not very smart. They are thinking like a stupid person. It is obvious from the glorious flowers, oceans, creatures and all that God has made, that He is a wonderful God.

Christians are more able to know how wonderful God is, because we have a personal relationship with Him through our belief in his Son, Jesus. Also, we are filled with His Holy Spirit when we are born again, so that we can read and understand His Word, the Bible.

In Isaiah 44:6 and 7, we read: *"This is what the Lord says-- Israel's King and Redeemer, the Lord Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it. Let him declare and lay out before me what has happened since I established my ancient people, and what is yet to come-- yes, let him foretell what will come."*

Can anyone else foretell what will happen in the future? No one but the Lord!

In First Chronicles, we read: *"Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all."*

In Revelation 5:13, it is written, *"Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: 'To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!'"*

The Bible tells us that every knee will bow to God. Though this will not happen until the day of judgment, in the end, EVERYONE will bow to God and say that all power and glory belong to him. Why not say it today?!

PRACTICE WRITING THE LORD'S PRAYER

And do not lead us into temptation

but deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom and

the power and the glory forever. Amen

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Our _____ who is in heaven

Hallowed be your _____.

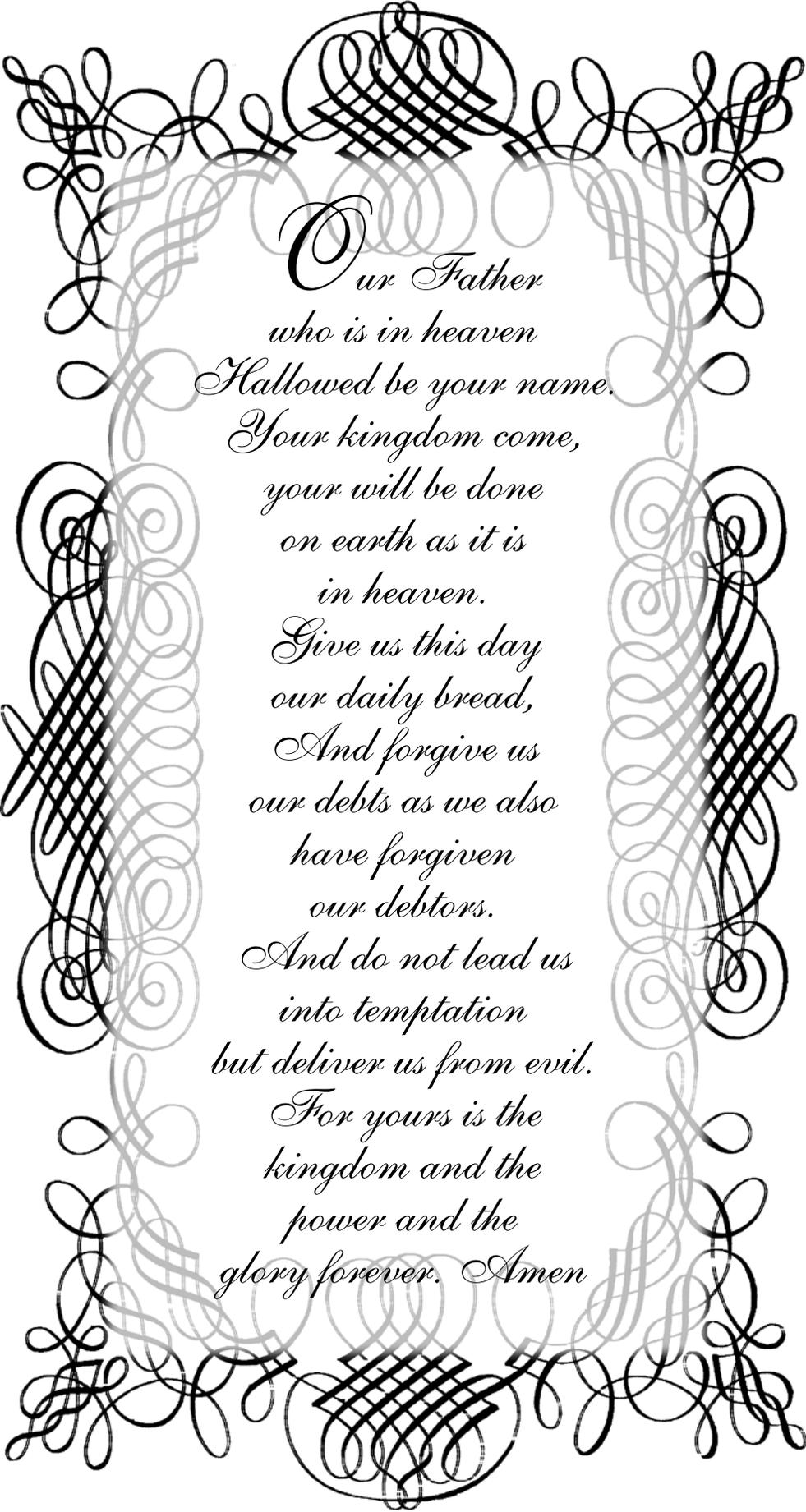
Your kingdom come, your _____ be
done on _____ as it is in heaven.

Give us this _____ our daily bread,

And _____ us our debts as we
also have forgiven our _____.

And do not _____ us into temptation
but _____ us from evil.

For yours is the _____ and
the power and the glory forever. Amen



*O*ur Father
who is in heaven
Hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is
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