

Children's Corner

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THY KINGDOM COME

We have learnt what it means when we pray, “Hallowed be Thy Name.” There we are praying that God’s Word may be kept among us in its Truth and purity. Also we asking that, through faith in Jesus, we may also lead a holy life according to His Word.

If God’s Name is hallowed by us, His Kingdom will come to us. Hence we are taught to pray also, “Thy Kingdom Come.”

What does this mean?

Imagine that you are on a ship, and it begins to sink. You put on a life vest and jump into the water. What is your wish when the rescue ship draws near?

1. You want to be saved yourself;
 2. You want others saved;
- You want the ship to reach the home harbour.

Thus, when you pray, “Thy Kingdom come”, you ask:

1. That you might get aboard the rescue ship of the Church;
 2. That others might likewise get aboard;
- That the ship might soon reach its harbour (eternal life in heaven).

The Bible refers to God’s three kingdoms. Christ rules over a Kingdom of Power, a Kingdom of Grace, and a Kingdom of Glory (*see diagram*).

The Kingdom of Power embraces all creation, all of this universe, all people, animals, planets, suns, stars, and galaxies.

The Kingdom of Grace is that kingdom in which Christ through His Word rules in the hearts of men; it is known also as the holy Christian Church.

The Kingdom of Glory is the heavenly kingdom of Christ which is to follow after this life.

Luther describes when the Kingdom of God comes to us. He says the Kingdom of God comes to us “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 hereafter in eternity.”

God establishes His Kingdom on earth even without our prayer. What should concern us is that we should be in this kingdom.

We are praying:
May the Lord make and keep me in the one true faith;
May the Christian Church grow on earth;
May Jesus come at last to take His Church to heaven.

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Kingdom of Power

Kingdom of Glory



Kingdom of Grace



The meaning of the prayer therefore is this: “Grant, oh Father, that we may be found in Your Kingdom of Grace here on earth and in the Kingdom of Glory hereafter.”

God’s kingdom is very different from the kingdoms of this world. “My kingdom is not of this world,” Jesus said. Imagine if you wanted to join another earthly country, like Great Britain, or Germany, or the United States. You could accomplish that by going to live within its borders and obtaining citizenship.

That kingdom would not come to us, but we should have to go to that kingdom.

But God brings His kingdom to us.

That is done when the Holy Ghost leads us to believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to lead a Godly life in true faith. Children of God lead a Godly life here, and they live with God hereafter in the Kingdom of Glory. So may we never try to resist the Holy Ghost by knowingly living in sin.

In this prayer we do not only think of ourselves. We are also to think about

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have never heard about Jesus. May we all pray that God would send preachers of the Gospel into all the world (mission work).

The Kingdom of Glory will be fully established when Christ returns in glory at the end of time. Then He will manifest His Kingdom of Glory. In this petition we finally are praying for the coming of that day.

God has given us the promise, “Fear not, little flock, for it is Your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” Luke 12:32.

Oh, dear children, your gracious King is calling all of you to join His Kingdom. Don’t doubt His gracious favour, but eagerly seek Him. And remember: His kingdom is not of this world; it is a spiritual kingdom.

In His Word your King comes to you on this earth. Through that same Word He leads you to eternal glory. Seek Him in His Word where He also is to be found; believe His Word and trust His promises. When His time is right, He graciously promises to take you from this earth to your eternal home of glory.

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“Hosanna in the highest!”
That ancient song we sing,
For Christ is our Redeemer,
The Lord of heaven our King.
Oh, may we ever praise Him
With heart and life and voice
And in His blissful presence
Eternally rejoice.



GOLDEN TEXT:

PSALM 26:8

Lord, I have loved the habitation of
Thy house, and the place where
Thine honour dwelleth.

Dear Children.— Do you remember how sad the prophet Jeremiah felt when he saw the people of Judah being led away into the Babylonian Captivity? Then you will also recollect that he wrote a letter to those Jews who repented of their sins and returned to the God of their fathers.

In this letter the prophet assured them of God's grace and forgiveness. He advised them to settle down in the country to which they had been carried, to buy houses and fields. To work and prove themselves faithful citizens. And then he predicted that after seventy years the lord would bring them back again into their own land. Well, today we shall hear how that prediction was fulfilled.

THE RETURN FROM CAPTIVITY

EZRA 1-6

The Proclamation of Cyrus.— .In the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus that he made this proclamation throughout all his kingdom: "The Lord God of heaven hath charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem. Who is there among you of His people? Let him go up to Jerusalem and build the house of the Lord God of Israel. And whosoever remaineth in any place where he sojourneth, let him help with silver, and gold, and goods, and with beasts of burden, besides the free-will offerings for the house of God that is in Jerusalem."

The Return.— We may imagine what joy this announcement must have caused in the hearts of the God-fearing people. At once the chief fathers of Judah and

Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites got ready to go up to Jerusalem. Willingly also those who, for some reason or other, found it impossible to go with them, nevertheless, assisted them with gifts of money and precious things for the undertaking. Also Cyrus, the king, brought forth the sacred vessels which, years ago, Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple and brought to Babylon, and gave them back to the Jews. The whole number of those who set out under Zerubbabel, whom the king had appointed governor were 42,360 persons, besides their servants and their maids who numbered 7,337. This was in the year 536 B.C.

The Foundation of the Temple Laid .—
When this company reached Jerusalem, a

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sorry sight met their eyes: the ruins of the city and the temple. But with a cheerful heart they all set to work to clear away the rubbish, especially on the spot where the temple was to be built. Then they hired masons and carpenters to lay the foundations. They also engaged labourers in Tyre and Zidon to fell cedar trees on Mt. Lebanon and to float the trunks down by sea to Joppa. And the people willingly offered of their possessions so that these workmen could be paid. They gave after their ability unto the treasure of the work. When the temple space was cleared of all rubbish, Jeshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the governor, came and rebuilt the altar of the God of Israel and offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, and from that time the morning and evening sacrifices were offered regularly. When the time came, they also celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles as of old.

And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the Jews who had in the meantime settled down in houses in and around Jerusalem, came together to celebrate the event. And when the priest sounded the

trumpets and the Levites their cymbals, all the people shouted with a loud voice and praised the Lord for His goodness and mercy. But many of the priests and Levites and of the fathers who had seen the first house (the temple of Solomon), when they saw the foundation of this house and realised that it could never come up to the beauty of the former temple, could not refrain from weeping with a loud voice, so that one could scarcely distinguish between the shouts of joy and the noise of weeping.

The Building Hindered.— Now when the Samaritans in the north heard that the children of the captivity had returned and were rebuilding the temple and the city of Jerusalem, they came to Zerubbabel and to the chief of the fathers, and said, “Let us build with you: for we seek your God as ye do.” This was not honest, for the Samaritans were a mixed race and served heathen idols and had no real intention to discontinue their practices. So the God-fearing Jews answered: “Ye having nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God; but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord, as king Cyrus, the king of Persia, hath commanded us.” From that time on those Samaritans became their bitter enemies and began to hinder the Jews in every possible way. And this opposition lasted during all the days of Cyrus even into the reign of Darius, 520 B.C.

The Temple Finished.— This continual opposition disheartened the people so that they finally withdrew from building altogether. The Lord, however, raised up two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, who prophesied to the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God Israel and roused the people from their indifference. Once more they rallied under Zerubbabel and Jeshua and began to build the house of the Lord, and finished it in the sixth year of Darius, the king (515 B.C.) And then the children of Israel came together and celebrated the dedication of this house of God with great joy.

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Dear Children. — We too, are called by God to build the glorious kingdom of His dear Son here on earth, and to make known the wonders of His grace. When we try to do this work we meet with hindrances and opposition from the devil, the world, and our own sinful flesh. We, too, often grow weary and indifferent. May God ever rouse us from such weakness and help us realise our first and foremost task in this sin-sick world. Let us also learn that in this work we must not join with those who are not one with us in faith and obedience to God's Word and command.

Zion stands with hills surrounded,
Zion kept by power divine;
All her foes shall be confounded,
Though the world in arms combine.
Happy Zion,
What a favoured lot is thine!

(Taken from "Our Sunday School Paper" Nov 22, 1936. Used by permission.)

QUESTIONS

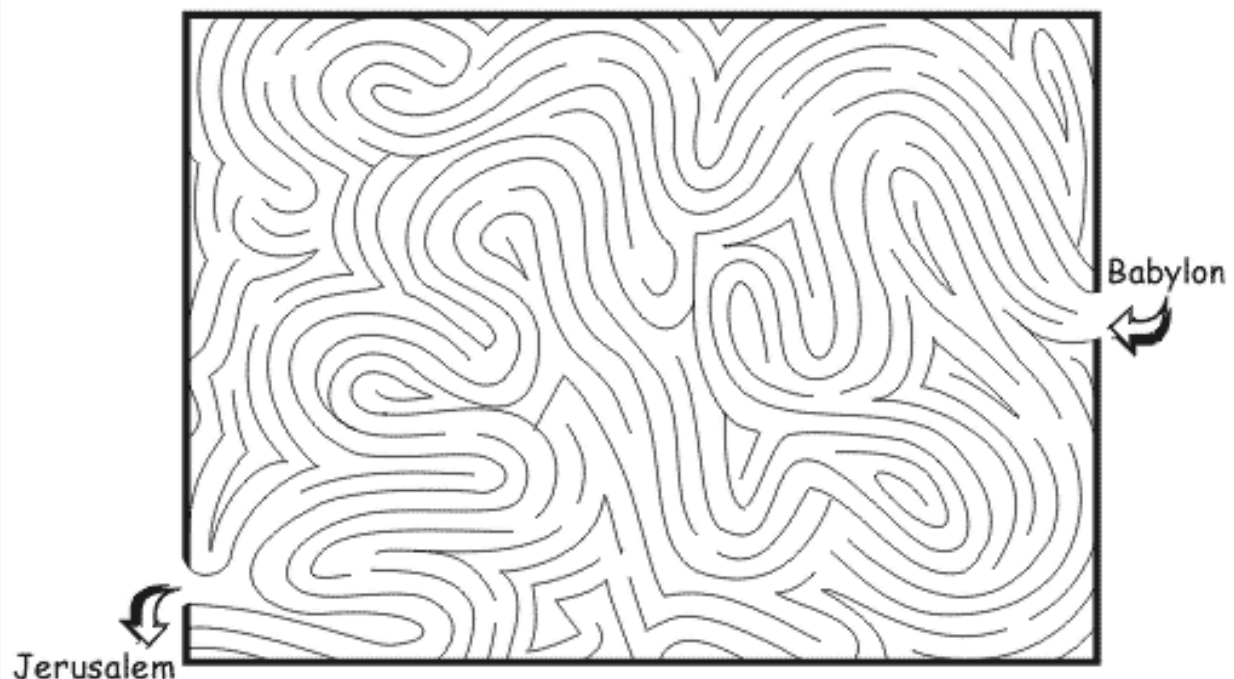
1. Which prophet predicted the return of the Jews from the Babylonian Captivity?
2. What even did Jeremiah foretell?
3. Which king issued a proclamation for the Jews to return?

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4. What should they rebuild at Jerusalem?
5. How were the Jews who were not able to return to assist in this undertaking?
6. What effect did this proclamation have?
7. Who took the lead?
8. What did Cyrus give back to them?
9. Whom did he appoint as governor?
10. How many Jews returned to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel?
11. What was the number of their servants and maids?
12. In what year did they return?
13. What did they find on their arrival?
14. What did they at once set out to do?
15. Whom did they hire to lay the foundations of the temple?
16. Whom did they engage to supply the timber?
17. How were these workmen paid?
18. In what manner did they contribute?
19. Who rebuilt the altar?
20. What was from that time regularly offered at that altar?
21. Which festival did they also celebrate?
22. What did they celebrate when the foundations were to be laid?
23. What did the priests and the Levites do on that occasion?
24. How did the people show their joy?
25. What, however, did the older people do?
26. Why did they weep?
27. Who came and offered to help in the building of the temple?
28. Was this offer honest?
29. What answer did the Jews give them?
30. What was the result of this refusal?

31. How long did this opposition last?
32. What was the effect of this continued opposition?
33. Who, however, again roused the people to renewed activity?
34. When was the temple finished and dedicated?
35. What are we too called to build here on earth?
36. What opposition do we have to meet in our work?
37. With whom should we not join in doing our work?

Over 42,000 Israelites made the trip to returned to Jerusalem.
Lead the Israelites from Babylon back to Jerusalem in the maze puzzle below.

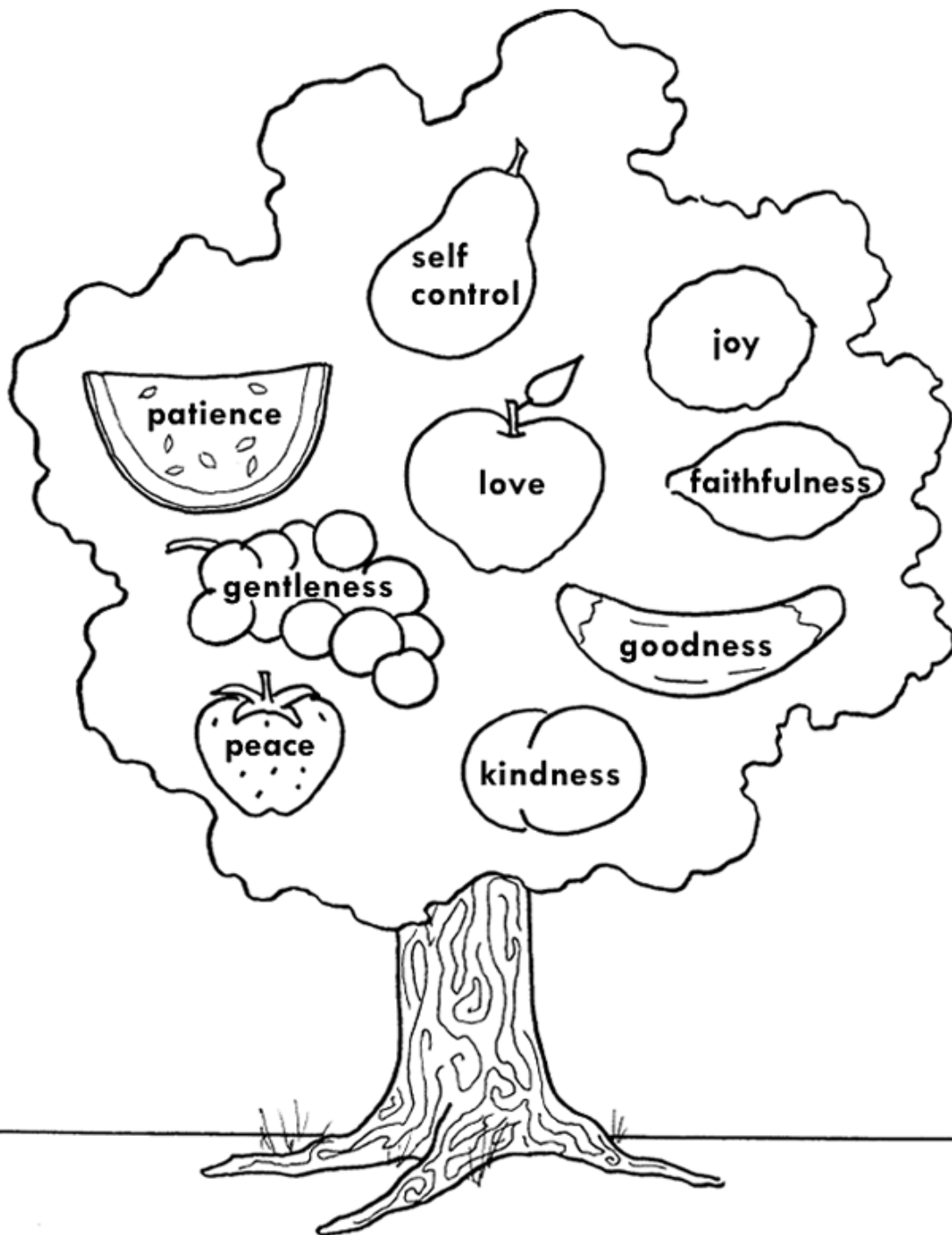


Two years and two months after they returned to Jerusalem they laid the foundation for the new temple. They were very happy and had a great celebration. Some shouted with joy and others wept with joy that God had brought them back to Jerusalem and the temple of the LORD would be rebuilt.

Read Ezra 3:11 and fill in the blanks to the song that they sang to the LORD in thanksgiving.

" He is _____ : for His _____ endureth
for _____ toward _____."

COLOURING



The Fruit of the Spirit Galatians 5:22-26

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