

Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: The Master Musician's Melodies

Bereans Sunday School
Placerita Baptist Church
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Messianic Trilogy: Part Three Psalm 24 — The Return of the King

1.0 Introducing Psalm 24

- Psalm 24 is the last of the trilogy of Psalms 22–24. See the chart on page 1 of the notes for Psalm 23.
- Although 2 Samuel 6's account of David transferring the Ark of the Covenant from Kiriath-jearim to Jerusalem is a popular candidate for Psalm 24's historical setting, this psalm seems to transcend that scene.
- For each day of the week a particular psalm was sung in the post-exilic Temple during the morning worship. They were assigned as follows:

■ <i>Sunday:</i>	Psalm 24	■ <i>Thursday:</i>	Psalm 81
■ <i>Monday:</i>	Psalm 48	■ <i>Friday:</i>	Psalm 93
■ <i>Tuesday:</i>	Psalm 82	■ <i>Sabbath:</i>	Psalm 92
■ <i>Wednesday:</i>	Psalm 94		
- Therefore, on Palm Sunday when Jesus entered Jerusalem (Matthew 21:1-11), the people were shouting "Hosanna!" (Mark 11:9) and "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD" (Luke 19:38) while the priests in the Temple were reciting Psalm 24, "Lift up your heads, O gates, and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in!" When the city was saying, "Who is this?" (Matthew 21:10), the priests in the Temple were chanting, "Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory" (Psalm 24:10).
- Patrick Walker reported that a preacher named John Welwood had preached in the south of Scotland from Psalm 24:1. The owner of the piece of ground on which he was preaching, had come to put a stop to the service on his land. Welwood had already begun before the landowner arrived. He had sung in Psalm 24, "The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof." He prefaced his sermon with these words: "Tho' the earth be the LORD's and the fullness thereof, yet the poor fools of the world will not allow a bit of earth to preach His gospel upon." The landowner was so struck by this comment that he sat down and listened to Welwood's preaching. Then he returned home, "set up the worship of God in his family, and very shortly

thereafter joined himself in a society meeting, where my informer was present, and thereafter became a sufferer himself but not unto death.” — W. Graham Scroggie, *The Psalms* (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1973), 152.

2.0 Reading Psalm 24 (NAU)

24:1 A Psalm of David.

The earth is the LORD's, and all it contains,
The world, and those who dwell in it.

24:2 For He has founded it upon the seas
And established it upon the rivers.

24:3 **Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?
And who may stand in His holy place?**

24:4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart,
Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood
And has not sworn deceitfully.

24:5 He shall receive a blessing from the LORD
And righteousness from the God of his salvation.

24:6 This is the generation of those who seek Him,
Who seek Your face — *even* Jacob.

Selah.

24:7 Lift up your heads, O gates,
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
That the King of glory may come in!

24:8 **Who is the King of glory?**
The LORD strong and mighty,
The LORD mighty in battle.

24:9 Lift up your heads, O gates,
And lift *them* up, O ancient doors,
That the King of glory may come in!

24:10 **Who is this King of glory?**
The LORD of hosts,
He is the King of glory.

Selah.

3.0 Understanding Psalm 24

3.1 Outline

- I. Lord of All the Earth (vv. 1-2)
- II. Holy God (vv. 3-6)
- III. King of Glory (vv. 7-10)





3.2 Notes

- **v. 1** “The earth is the LORD’s”
 - The first word in the text is “the LORD’s.”
 - Interestingly, Psalms 3, 6–8, 11, 15, and 21-24 all begin with a title for deity. Psalm 23 has an equal focus on the LORD.
 - The identical phrase is found in Exodus 9:29 and is quoted from Psalm 24 in 1 Corinthians 10:26.

- **v. 3** “Who may ascend ... ?”
 - See notes on Psalm 15.
 - Note the universal backdrop of verses 1-2. This applies to all people.
 - Are you prepared for the Lord’s coming?
 - Romans 13:11-14
 - Philippians 4:4-6
 - 1 Peter 4:7-11

- **v. 4** “a pure heart”
 - “The pure heart thinks and wills only fealty to the LORD” — James Luther Mays, *Psalms*, Interpretation (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1994), 121.
 - See Matthew 5:8 – “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”
 - “Dirt in the heart throws dust in the eyes.” — C. H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, 3 vols. (reprinted; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, n.d.), 1:376.
 - See Psalm 73:1 and 2 Timothy 2:22.

- **v. 4** “lifted up his soul to falsehood”
 - To “lift up one’s soul” is “to offer one’s deepest commitment of the whole self to—in this case—‘emptiness.’” — Gerald H. Wilson, *Psalms Volume 1*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2002), 451.
 - NIV translates the line as “who does not lift up his soul to an idol.”
 - “Falsehood” or “emptiness” is a reference to idols in passages like Jeremiah 18:15; Psalms 31:6; 119:37; and Jonah 2:8.

- **v. 5** “He shall receive a blessing”
 - “Receive” is the same Hebrew verb as “lifted up” (v. 4) and “lift up” (vv. 7, 9).
 - This is a wordplay contrasting the act of idolatry with preparation for the advent of the LORD.

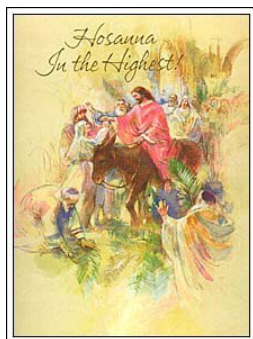
- **v. 5** “And righteousness”
 - In this context “righteousness” is similar in meaning to “justification.”

- James Montgomery Boice (*Psalms*, 3 vols. [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 1994], 218) suggests that verses 4-5 are best understood as presenting a logical progression in reverse order:
 1. Justification from God our Savior (v. 5b).
 2. Blessing from the Lord (v. 5a).
 3. A sanctified life (v. 4).

 - **vv. 6, 10** “Selah”
 - See notes on Psalm 3.
 - “Selah” divides Psalm 24 into its three stanzas.

 - **v. 6** “Who seek Your face — *even Jacob*”
 - The text is difficult due to its concise language (a characteristic of Hebrew poetry).
 - Some (like NIV, ESV, NRSV) add “God of” (the reading of the Septuagint).
 - It is better, however, to retain the Hebrew text as it is by employing one of the following translations with the idea that those who seek God in the psalmist’s generation are Jacob (= Israel):
 - NKJV: “This *is* Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face.”
 - NJPS: “Such is the circle of those who turn to Him, Jacob, who seek Your presence.”
 - NAU: “This is the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face—*even Jacob.*”

 - **v. 7** “Lift up your heads ... And be lifted up”
 - This is a metaphorical depiction of the joyful and hope-filled preparation for the LORD’s advent.
 - Where will this take place?
 - The believer’s heart?
 - Jerusalem — at David’s transfer of the ark from Kiriath-jearim?
 - Jerusalem — at His triumphal entry on Palm Sunday?
 - Heaven — at the ascension of Christ?
 - Heaven — at the second ascension of Christ with all His saints?
 - Jerusalem — at His coming again to establish His earthly kingdom.
 - ◆ See Zechariah 9:9-10.
 - ◆ Compare Mark 11:10 and Luke 19:38.
 - ◆ See Ezekiel 10:19; 11:1.
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- **vv. 8-10** “the King of glory”
 - This is the only occurrence of this divine title in the Scriptures.
 - Psalm 29:3 has “the God of glory.” See Acts 7:2.
 - 1 Corinthians 2:8



- v. 10 “The LORD of hosts”
 - “The title refers to the hosts who surround the LORD’s heavenly throne and who praise and consult him and carry out his decisions as sovereign of the world (e.g., 29:1-2; 82:1; 89:6-7).” — James Luther Mays, *Psalms, Interpretation* (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1994), 123.

4.0 Singing Psalm 24

- 1 The earth and the fullness with which it is stored,
The world and its dwellers belong to the Lord;
For He on the seas its foundations has laid,
And firm on the waters its pillars has stayed.
- 2 What man shall the hill of Jehovah ascend,
And who in the place of His presence attend?
The man of pure heart and of hands without stain,
Who swears not to falsehood nor loves what is vain.
- 3 That man ever blest of Jehovah shall live,
The God of salvation shall righteousness give;
For this is the people, yea, this is the race,
The Israel true that is seeking His face.

— Author unknown; Welsh melody (“Maldwyn”), ca. 1600



Tune: “O God Our Help in Ages Past”

- 1 The earth for ever is the Lord’s,
With Adam’s num’rous race;
He raised its arches o’er the floods,
And built it on the seas.
- 2 But who among the sons of men
May visit thine abode?
He that has hands from mischief clean,
Whose heart is right with God.
- 3 This is the man may rise and take
The blessings of His grace;
This is the lot of those that seek
The God of Jacob’s face.
- 4 Now let our souls’ immortal powers
To meet the Lord prepare,
Lift up their everlasting doors,
The King of glory’s near.
- 5 The King of glory! who can tell
The wonders of His might?
He rules the nations; but to dwell
With saints is His delight.

— Isaac Watts

5.0 Praying Psalm 24

- The earth is Yours, Lord, and so am I. [v. 1]
- You are the God of my salvation. [v. 5]
- Thank You for saving me. [v. 5]
- Father, help me to control my tongue and to speak the truth. [v. 4]
- O God, keep my heart pure and my hands clean. [v. 4]
- Come, Lord Jesus! You're the King of Glory! [vv. 7-10]
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Eastern (Golden) Gate to the Temple Mount

6.0 Applying Psalm 24

- Everything we are and everything we have belongs to the Lord—He's the Lord of all the earth.
- In order to serve God and please Him, we need to be clean and pure in heart, word, and deed.