

## Psalm 24 ▪ Seeing God as King

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Celebrating and receiving the King's rule and righteousness in Christ, is the way we live in true freedom

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Intro: I hope it does not come across as un-American to preach a message which includes the title “King” in it, on Independence Day.

In American political structure we are far removed from Israel: so “King” is a really foreign concept.

- We will not understand the Psalms well unless we see them with royal lenses.

One Intro to the Psalms says:

“The supreme kingship of Yahweh is the most pervasive concept in the Psalter.” (NIV Study Bible, *Psalms*)

- The Psalm has the tune of *celebration*—it’s happy, not a minor Key (especially final verses). A display of Hebrew fireworks would be fitting.

—We will break down the Psalm by 1) Looking at the Sovereign. 2) Looking at the subjects.

### THE SOVEREIGN (1-2; 7-10)

- Sovereign is a royal word (supreme ruler). When we say we believe in God’s sovereign rule, we affirm he is the rightful king—*supreme ruler over all his creation*.
- That is what the first two verses affirm.

### The Sovereign-Creator (1-2)

- First, the earth is the Lord’s. That’s a massive statement to make in the environment of the Ancient Near East.
- People were in one sense very religious; but they would say gods ruled over certain jurisdictions.

In the same way that local law enforcement rules over a specific jurisdiction.

A Richland County Deputy is not going to respond to a traffic accident in Newberry County.

- The Lord (Yahweh) is Creator.
- It states that the earth is the Lord's and the "fullness thereof".
- We see the good order of creation. Day 2—Water; Day 3—Dry Land

So we see not only is God the Creator; he Creates with order—*he brings chaos to order*.

It's a vision of God as the God who created and controls *all things*.

Two takeaways:

1) The Sovereign-Creator is the God of control. We all know (or maybe are) control freaks who really lack control. God the King has all parts of his creation under his good control—including all the miniscule details of your life; and he does not control just one part of the world, or one group of people, but all.

2) No one is truly independent of God. You may try to live as if you are, but you are not. You belong to God. You are under his dominion.

### **The Sovereign King of Glory (7-10)**

- The picture here is the King, David, returning from battle, entering the city of Jerusalem.
- Most see the background to this Psalm is 2 Sam. 6, when King David leads in recapturing the Ark of the Covenant and brings it back into Jerusalem.
- Yet its highly intentional—instead of people's eyes being drawn to the earthly King; instead of everyone shouting "How great is David our Defender", David deflects the praise so it goes to the true King of Glory.
- The question: Who is he? Who is this King?

He is pictured as a strong warrior (v 8 & 10)

- In Jewish liturgy, this Psalm was sung every Sunday (there was a Psalm for each day of the week). It's highly likely this was sung in Jerusalem on the very day Jesus entered the Holy City the last week of his earthly life (which is an amazing mark of God's providence).

Places in the NT speak of Jesus in terms of his glory.

—Jn 1:14 "Glory of the only Son"

2 Cor 4:6 "glory of God in the face of Jesus"

Apply: The starting point for the glory of God is the Lord Jesus. We can't begin to talk, or even think of what the glory of God means unless we know that Jesus is the King of Glory.

And this Psalm points us to him.

"This psalm is concerning the kingdom of Jesus Christ." (Matthew Henry)

How do we know if we are part of his kingdom?

## THE SUBJECTS (3-6)

- The verses in the middle—ask a fundamental question: Who can enter the King's presence? Is it a priest? Who has the privilege to come into glory? Who is worthy to enter the Lord's presence?
- First, it's vital to see that *to be a subject, you come to the King on his terms—you don't set your own*.
- This section calls for self-examination.

The way we examine ourselves is by looking at the terms the King has set.

(v3) The Hebrew word for stand—can be used in the sense of worship.

### Exodus 33:10 ESV

And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, each at his tent door.

Or it can be used in a legal sense.

### Psalm 1:5 ESV

Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;

- › In other words, do you have the right to be here?

Back in the day when I was still living with my parents as a teenager, it was the pre-cell phone era. One day a pizza delivery guy got lost in our neighborhood and needed directions. He saw me on our street and asked if he could use our phone to call and get better directions. No problem to me.

After he was done, he thanked me and said I could call the Pizza Shop and order a free Pizza.

What teenage boy turns down a free pizza? So I did, and they told me: Joe the Pizza delivery guy has no right to offer me free pizza. I argued a bit, called back again, but at the end of the day, I did not get my free pie.

The Pizza delivery guy had no right.

*So the question is: what right do we have before God?*

- › The overriding question: What right does anyone have to enter the Lord's presence? What right do you have; do I have?

Kings Terms:

### Holiness (v3)

- The question is: Who can come into the King's presence—*who does God grant permission to draw near?*

### *Holy Place*

- God's presence demands absolute holiness.
- E.G. we think of the vision in Is 6—the immediate thing the prophet realizes is how *holy* the Lord's presence is.
- Or the Mt. Sinai shaking and trembling at the Lord's awesome presence.

### Purity (v4)

- Again, in response to the question: who can be in God's presence?
- He who has clean hands and pure heart

—Hands represent *actions*.

—Heart represents the *thoughts and motives*.

- The idea is a life fully devoted to the Lord: physical (hands, lips); the spiritual (heart; soul).

Apply: A lot of us are good at compartmentalizing our life. *That's just a smoother way to say we can be good hypocrites.*

--We may have clean hands; but what's in our heart?

--What does our soul crave?

--What passes through our lips that's really telling that our hearts are not fully devoted to the Lord?

**\*\***In my observation many American Christians are really weak in these areas—a life of total holiness....*holistic holiness*.

› *The King of Glory demands holiness and purity*

### Grace (v5)

- First, v5 offers Blessing and salvation

—Blessings: God's positive involvement in our everyday life, making it fruitful. (John Goldingay; *Psalms*)

- The one who is holy and pure earns a reward—blessing from the Lord, and righteousness.
- Note that it's a He in v4&5—a *singular male individual*.

\*So the picture is a singular subject who lives in complete faithfulness; every action, thought, motive – is always pure.

› Sounds like the man 1 Peter describes; sounds like the Lord Jesus!

### **1 Peter 2:22 ESV**

He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.

- In other words, only the Lord Jesus Christ is able to ascend and stand based on the absolute qualifications.

Gospel: The most obvious thing in vs 5 is that righteousness is a *gift*. It's something to be *received*.

- But who paid for that gift? \*We know that every gift comes at a cost...including the gift of freedom to live in the USA (Independence Day).

The One who lived every day without blame...the Lord Jesus.

The One who alone is worthy to climb Mt. Zion—due to the cleanness of his hands, and purity of his heart and lips.

\*\*The only way we can ascend and stand is by clinging to Jesus by faith; resting in the gift of righteousness he provides.

So how do we apply this to our lives?

Interestingly, Charles Spurgeon and John Calvin had two different takeaways on this.

--Spurgeon pressed people to Christ and his righteousness:

"They do not ascend the hill of the Lord as givers, but as receivers, and they do not wear their own merits, but a righteousness which they have received." (Spurgeon)

--Calvin pressed people to personal holiness.

Which one is right?

Both....we can't separate the two. Both happen when we truly see God as King!

Sum/Apply: Subjects of the king know they will never stand without Christ; subjects know it's imperative to press on in lives of personal holiness: Clean hands. Pure heart. Honest speech.

Resting in Jesus's righteousness is not a ticket to set back and be careless about personal holiness; rather true faith creates a passion for integrity, purity, actions and attitudes that God is pleased with.

(v6)

- V6 is one to dwell on; that's not just my opinion, it's tied to the *Selah*.

*\*\*When you see that in a Psalm, it means we need to slow down and dwell.*

- The themes of v4-5 are implied in v6.

In other words,

Such (purity, blessing, and righteousness) will *characterize* the generation of those who seek him.

—Generation: A generation often shares similar characteristics.

E.G. Mt 12:39— Jesus speaks of an evil and adulterous generation.

If you say: Boomer, Millennials, or Gen Z—certain common characteristics will come to mind that we won't need to get into.

\*Was not until I came to TRB that I was told by a few church members, I don't qualify as millennial.

The real royal subjects are the ones characterized by seeking God's face.

Conclusion:

I find it interesting that Paul quotes this in 1 Cor 10:26.

in the context of food sacrificed to idols; the application comes a few verses later.

### **1 Corinthians 10:31 ESV**

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Friends, do you want to know the acid test of seeing God as King? How do we know if we have royal eyes?

How do people live in true freedom?

How do we know that God is real to us?

It's when we are marked by this:

Whatever we do, we do it all to the glory of God.