

Israel's Hymnal
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PSALM TWENTY-FOUR

[Pss 24:1] The earth is Jehovah's, and the fullness thereof; The world, and they that dwell therein.
 [Pss 24:2] For he hath founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the floods.
 [Pss 24:3] Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah? And who shall stand in his holy place?
 [Pss 24:4] He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; Who hath not lifted up his soul unto falsehood, And hath not sworn deceitfully.
 [Pss 24:5] He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah, And righteousness from the God of his salvation.
 [Pss 24:6] This is the generation of them that seek after him, That seek thy face, [even] Jacob. Selah
 [Pss 24:7] Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors: And the King of glory will come in.
 [Pss 24:8] Who is the King of glory? Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle.
 [Pss 24:9] Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors: And the King of glory will come in.
 [Pss 24:10] Who is this King of glory? Jehovah of hosts, He is the King of glory.

Some commentators conjecture that the occasion for the composition of Psalm 24 was David's bringing the Ark of the Covenant from Kiriath-jearim to Jerusalem. This may have been the historic occasion. The contents of the Psalm are in perfect alignment with such a supposition. Nevertheless, one may not be dogmatic on this point. On the other hand, some commentators think that two earlier Psalms were combined. According to this theory the first six verses were a hymn, which celebrated the bringing of the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem by David and verses 7 through 10 likewise celebrated some glorious victory. Later on, according to this theory, the two separate poems were combined into the present psalm. Since we cannot tell the occasion on which the psalm was written, and since it is not necessary that we know this in order to get the true picture, we shall proceed with the exposition.

I. Messiah, the King of Glory, reigning in Mount Zion

"The earth is Jehovah's, and the fullness thereof; The world, and they that dwell therein.
 For He hath founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the floods" (vss. 1,2).

The word, Jehovah, has four different connotations in the Old Testament. The context is to decide the meaning which it has in a given case. This literary phenomenon is based upon the confession of Israel found in Deuteronomy 6:4, which reads, when literally translated, as follows: "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our Gods is Jehovah a unity." Sometimes the term refers to the Holy Trinity. On other occasions it indicates

Jehovah the Father; in still other contexts it refers to Jehovah the Son; and in some instances it signifies the Holy Spirit. In Psalm 24 all the facts show that it is Jehovah the Son who is mentioned.

The earth and it's fullness belong to Jehovah the Son; the world and they who dwell therein are likewise His (vs. 1).

The world and all it contains belongs to Jehovah the Son for three reasons:

- (1) He created them;
- (2) He purchased them by shedding His blood on the cross of Calvary;
- (3) He will conquer the usurper, Satan who now is holding the world in his grasp.

That the earth belongs to Christ as the Creator is seen from many passages. For instance, see John 1:1-4. The world and the fullness thereof is Christ's by virtue of redemption, because He has "made peace through the blood of the cross; through Him, I say, whether things upon earth, or things in the heavens" (Col. 1:20). The world and the fullness thereof will be Christ's by right of conquest when He returns. Satan is the God of this world now; but when Jesus returns, He will deal a crushing blow upon the head of Satan and will take possession of the world as a triumphant victor. Upon the basis of all these facts, the psalmist declares that the earth belongs to Christ, and its fullness.

In verse 2 we are told that Christ, in His creating the earth, founded it upon the seas and established it upon the floods. This verse of course is referring to Christ's creating the earth. The discoveries of man have proved that this statement is true. There are great, subterranean reservoirs of water. In this verse these underground waters are called seas and floods. Doubtless an allusion to these is made in the statement in Genesis which tells us that "on the same day were all the fountains of the deep broken up" (Gen. 7:11). At the present day wells are sunk deep into the bowels of the earth. And waters gush forth in the form of artesian wells. Thus the Scriptures speak of these great subterranean reservoirs and rivers of water, which statements are now corroborated by mans discoveries. Scientific investigation has proved the accuracy of the Word of God. We are delighted with such confirmation. We are thoroughly convinced that the authors of the Scriptures were guided infallibly by the Spirit of God as they wrote the Sacred Writings for us.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah? And who shall stand in His Holy place?

He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; Who hath not lifted up His soul unto falsehood, And hath not sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah, And righteousness from the God of His Salvation" (vss. 3-5).

In verse 3 the question is asked regarding the person who will be permitted to ascend into the hill of Jehovah and to stand in His Holy Place. What is meant by "the hill of Jehovah"? The Temple mount is called the hill or mountain of Jehovah, "The mountain of the house" (Micah 3:12), and "the mountain of Jehovah's house" (Micah 4:1).

In the great millennial reign of our Lord this mountain of the house of Jehovah will be entirely different from what it is today. At the present time it is a small hill the top of which covers 35 acres. But in the

millennial reign this mountain of the height of Israel will be exceedingly high. From north to south it will be 25,000 reeds and from east to west the same distance. According to the best discoveries made by Biblical students, five hundred reeds make one mile. Hence this mountain will be 50 miles from north to south and 50 miles from east to west. According to the description of it found in Ezekiel chapters 47 and 48, it will be located a little south of the middle of the Holy Land. The rest of the land will be divided into twelve equal portions, seven of which will be north of this mountain of Jehovah, the oblation, and five portions south of it. The summit of this mountain will be divided into three sections, the northern portion of which will be fifty miles from east to west and twenty miles from north to south.

In the center of this northern section will be the Temple area, which will cover one square mile. This northern section of the mountain will be for the priests, who will minister at the sanctuary. The next section of this mountain will be fifty miles from east to west, and twenty from north to south. This portion will be allotted to the Levites who will assist the priests in all their ministrations. Finally, the section on the southern portion of the mountain will be fifty miles wide, from east to west, and ten miles deep, from north to south. In this central part of this southern section will be located the city of Jerusalem. It will be nine by nine miles. There will surround it a suburb one-half of a mile wide. Thus the city, with its suburbs, will cover an area of one hundred square miles. The great millennial city of Jerusalem will be the joy spot of the earth. (Ps. 48:1,2). It will be the city of the great King, King Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. It will be here that He will reside and will administer the government of the world.

The question is asked "who shall ascend into the hill of Jehovah? And who shall stand in his holy place?" The answer is found in verse 4, which declares that it will be those who have clean hands and a pure heart, who have not lifted up their souls unto falsehood, nor sworn deceitfully. These are the ones who will be permitted to visit the great millennial Jerusalem and to stand approved in God's sight. The characters who are here described are those who have lived a clean, moral life, and who recognize the sanctity and the sacredness of human life and conduct; and who are putting into practice the fundamental principles and ethics that are set forth in the Scriptures. The psalmist is not talking about people who have been regenerated, been born again. From the context we see that He is speaking simply of those who are living up to the light that they have, and who will welcome further or additional light. A fuller statement concerning the character of those who will be permitted to ascend the mountain of Jehovah is set forth in Psalm 15 which reads as follows:

"Jehovah, who shall sojourn in thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?
 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh truth in his heart;
 He that slandereth not with his tongue, Nor doeth evil to his friend, Nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor;
 In whose eyes a reprobate is despised, But who honoreth them that fear Jehovah; He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not;
 He that putteth not out his money to interest, Nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." (Ps. 15:1-5)

That the writers of Psalm 15 and Psalm 24 were speaking of good, moral people who are living up to the light that they have is evident from verse 5 of psalm 24; "He shall receive a blessing from Jehovah, and righteousness from the God of His salvation." In this verse we are told that people of the character which

is described in Psalm 24:4 will receive a blessing from Jehovah. This blessing will come in the form of righteousness from the God of their salvation. We learn that these people will receive this righteousness from Jehovah, the God of their salvation. In other words, here is the affirmation that the people of the character described in verse 4 will have righteousness of God imputed to them. In other words, here is the promise of salvation by faith. When they see the additional light they will step forward in it and receive Jehovah, the Son who will confer upon them his imputed righteousness.

According to the teaching of the Word of God men are saved by grace through faith. It is not by any righteousness that they themselves do. But it is by the righteousness of Christ who has purchased our redemption for us.

In verse 6 we have language to this effect:

"This is the generation of them that seek after Him, that seek thy face, *even Jacob.*" (vs. 6)

The psalmist in vision sees the faithful remnant of Israel in the end time seeking the face of King Messiah. At the present time they are not seeking His face. They are not at all interested in Him as a group, but when the time here foreseen arrives, they will be seeking Him. What will cause them to seek Him as here foretold? The answer is found in Hosea 5:15: "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offense and seek my face; in their affliction they will seek me earnestly." Israel's affliction is the period of the great Tribulation when God's judgments are poured out upon the nations. Israel has always sought for comfort and consolation in the Messianic hope when she was in distress. She will do that again. Thus the terrific judgments of the Tribulation will prove to be a blessing for all earnest, conscientious, sincere truth-seeking Jews as well as Gentiles.

According to Psalm 80:1-3 this faithful remnant will turn to King Messiah who will be Jehovah enthroned above the cherubim; and they will plead for Him to come and deliver them. They will make a confession with reference to the tragedy of Calvary. This confession which the penitent remnant of Israel will make is found in Isaiah 53:1-9. At the present time Israel cannot make this confession, because she does not understand that the prophecy of Isaiah 53:1-9 applies to King Messiah. Moreover, she has not been brought to her extremity by suffering. When however, she does reach that point and does make this confession, pleading for Him to return, He will do so. When He returns, He will bring all of her sufferings to a close.

In connection with Psalm 24:1-6 the student should study Isaiah 2:1-4, which foretells the time when King Messiah reigns upon the mountain of Jehovah's house, and when people from all over the world will stream in a constant flow to Jerusalem in order to be taught of Jehovah. At that time will the world for the first time enjoy peace. From the time that King Messiah thus mounts the throne, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. This will be indeed the era of peace!

II. An exhortation to Israel to accept King Messiah as her deliverer

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be lifted up, ye everlasting doors: And the King of Glory will come in.

Who is the King of Glory? Jehovah strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; Yea, lift them up, ye everlasting doors: And the King of Glory will come in. Who is this King of Glory? Jehovah of Hosts, He is the King of Glory" (vss. 7-10).

In verse 7 the Psalmist looks toward Jerusalem and personifying its gates, shouts, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; And be lifted up, ye everlasting doors: And the King of glory will come in." Here the gates and doors stand for the people who go in and out through them. Ancient Jerusalem is surrounded by a high wall in which are a number of gates. The psalmist, thinking of the people with their heads down, assumes that they are in distress and are downhearted. He therefore shouts to them that they should lift up their heads and be lifted up; for then the King of Glory will come in.

In this psalm the writer represents himself as a missionary to the sons and daughters of Israel, telling them that they should cease to be despondent, downhearted, and should lift up their heads so that the King of glory might come in. Isaiah used the same imagery in the following passage: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bring good tidings that publish peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publish salvation that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! 8 The voice of thy watchman! They lift up the voice, together do they sing, for they shall see eye to eye, when Jehovah returneth to Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for Jehovah hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem. 10 Jehovah hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God" (Isa. 52:7-10).

In this quotation Isaiah pictures Jerusalem with its walls and battlements. Upon them its watchmen are standing as sentinels. The messenger of glad tidings comes, approaching the city. Because he is the bearer of good news, the prophets speaks of the beauty of his feet. To the prophet he is beautiful because of the fact that he is bringing glad tidings of salvation to his people. As this messenger of the cross approaches the city, the watchmen lift up their voices--they lift them up together--when they have heard his message concerning the coming of this King of glory whom they will see eye to eye and face to face upon his returning to Zion. Then the prophet Isaiah exultantly turns and looks to the waste places around Jerusalem, calling upon them to "Break forth into joy, sing together" because the time will have come for God to comfort His people Israel.

"Who is the King of glory?" The answer is immediately given: "Jehovah, strong and mighty, Jehovah mighty in battle." This Jehovah is none other than Jehovah the Son, who came to earth in order to champion the cause of man. He fought the battle with Satan on the cross and won the victory, thus purchasing man's redemption. He left this earth, ascending to the Father's right hand where He remains to the present time. But He is coming back again! When He does He will not be as the meek and lowly Nazarene. On the contrary He will come as a mighty warrior; He will take the field of battle, go against His foes, and conquer the world.

We get a picture of Jehovah the Son as a warrior when he returns in the following passage:
 Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O mighty one,
 Thy glory and thy majesty.
 And in thy majesty ride on prosperously,
 Because of truth and meekness and righteousness:
 And thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.
 Thine arrows are sharp: The peoples fall under thee;

They are in the heart of the Kings enemies"
(Ps. 45:3-5).

The reader should turn to Isaiah 63:1-6 for another picture of King Messiah when he comes as the warrior to conquer all his foes. He should also turn to Revelation 19:11-21 and see Christ as Jehovah this mighty warrior who conquers the Antichrist and all his allied forces.

The call for Israel to repent, lifting up her head and to receive this King of glory, who is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, is repeated in verses 9 and 10 of Psalm 24. This repetition gives emphasis to the thought.

When Israel pleads for this King of glory to come back, he will do so. After he conquers all opposition, He will make Jerusalem His capital from which He will rule the world. On this point see Psalm 2. There Jehovah the Father declares, "yet I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion" (2:6). That Christ will reign in the literal Jerusalem here upon this earth is seen in Isaiah 2:1-4; 33:17-22, and Zephaniah 3:14-17.

When he thus returns and takes the government of the world into His hands, He will reign in righteousness and establish a regime of justice throughout the world.

"Mighty Victor, reign for ever;
Wear the crown so dearly won;
Never shall thy people, never
Cease to sing what thou hast done;
Thou hast fought thy people's foes;
Thou hast healed thy people's woes."

Earth's Golden Age is yet out in the future!