

Fit for a King

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We come to yet another breathtaking Psalm tonight as we study Psalm 24 together. I don't believe that there is anything that has so impressed the glory of God on my heart than preaching sequentially through these Psalms over the past several months. It's just remarkable the way the psalmist bring themes to mind and bring aspects of the glory and the nature of God to bear upon our thinking in a way that can't help but impress you and to transform you as you take these things to heart and Psalm 24 is certainly no different in that respect.

To appreciate Psalm 24, it will help you to realize that it's kind of part of a trilogy of Psalms in Psalms 22, 23 and 24. As you study these out, you see that there are different aspects of the role and the nature and the ministry of Christ on our behalf. In Psalm 22, we saw a picture of Christ on the cross, a prophetic look at the crucifixion that ultimately led to the praise of nations. So you look at Psalm 22 and you look back before the cross and you see this prophetic picture of the coming crucifixion. In Psalm 23, you see the Lord as a shepherd and you get an appreciation of his ministry and his care for us in this life. Now in Psalm 24, we are going to see Christ triumphant in glory. You see him at the cross, you see him with the shepherd's crook in his hand and in Psalm 24 you see him with the crown of glory and it's a spectacular picture to be sure.

Many suggest that this Psalm arises from the time when David brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem in 2 Samuel 6 and there are a lot of good commentators that believe that that is true. It's kind of hard to pick that out of this text and so I'm not going to spend any time discussing that. This Psalm seems to transcend that scene in the Old Testament. This Psalm pictures the Lord himself. If you look at verse 8 for example, it pictures Yahweh himself, not a mere symbol of his presence, "Who is the King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle." Verse 10, "Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts." This is a song about Yahweh. This is a song about God in his glory. It's a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ in his future glory.

Just kind of as we get a little bit familiar with the Psalm, I want to kind of prepare your heart for something here tonight. This is designed, this Psalm is clearly designed to elicit a response of faith from you. It is designed to elicit a heart commitment from you and that is very evident from the way that it is structured and I'll show you that in a second. But it's just very critical for us to understand that this Psalm is calling for us to respond in

heart and not simply receive new information or to acquire more intellectual data. This is designed to shape our hearts and shape the way that we respond to the God of our salvation.

Notice that there is a Q and A, a question and answer theme in the way that this Psalm is structured. In verse 3, it asks the question, "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?" Then it gives an answer in verse 4, "He who has clean hands and a pure heart." In verse 8 it says, "Who is the King of glory?" Then it answers, "The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle." It's possible that this Psalm was used in a worship setting, in a liturgical sense sort of like a responsive reading or a responsive question and answer where one would ask the question and then perhaps a choir or a priest would give the answer in response so there was a back-and-forth. For us tonight, it's enough for us to see as the text is asking these questions, you are designed to answer this with yourself, within your own heart. This is designed to establish you in faith as it unfolds and so that's what we want to do tonight. We want to bring ourselves under the authority of God's word tonight. We want to respond to it as people of faith and to absorb all of the impact that this Psalm has for us tonight and that's what we intend to do.

There are 2 aspects of Christ that we want to see tonight out of this Psalm. The first one in verses 1 to 6 is his rule, his sovereignty, his majesty as the owner of the universe. That's what we see in the first 6 verses. Then in the last 4 verses, verses 7 through 10, we're going to see his return as that which provokes a response of faith as well. So we're going to see the rule of Christ and the return of Christ coming to bear on our thinking here this evening.

Psalm 24. This Psalm opens with an assertion, a magnificent assertion of the universal sovereignty of Yahweh. Look at verses 1 and 2 with me and just recognize the majesty of what it is saying.

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

So right from the start at this Psalm without any sort of introduction or anything like this, it immediately casts you into the presence of the greatness and the sovereignty of God. In fact, in the original language, the Lord is the opening word of the entire Psalm. It opens as though it reads, "The Lord's is the earth." So there is this focus, this preeminent focus on the Lord and a half dozen times in these 10 verses, that covenant name for God, Yahweh, in all cap LORD for you in your English text, is used and so this is a focus on the Lord. You see it in verse 1. You see it in verse 3, "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?" Then you see it multiple times in the later verses as well, verse 5, verse 8 two times and in verse 10, "The LORD. The LORD. The LORD. Yahweh, strong and mighty, as the covenant keeping God of his people." That is the focus of this Psalm as we open it up tonight and it declares him, that he rules over the physical creation and the men as well that are on it.

Look at verse 2. Why is it that we can say, why is it that the Lord declares that the earth belongs to him? Why is it that we say that the world and not only the world but every man, woman and child that live on it have an obligation to recognize the authority of Yahweh? How is it that he can say that all of this belongs to him? Well, verse 2 explains it. It is his by right of creation. Verse 2, notice the "For" there sort of like "because." The earth is the Lord's because,

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

It is a creative, poetic description, I should say, of God's creative activity and it gives us a sense of the universal reign of God. There is nothing that we see, there is no place that you can go anywhere on this globe, that is not a direct product of the handiwork of God that he owns by right of creation and by an assertion of sovereign dominion. So this presents a very high view of God. It expresses a claim of him of authority over all things by right of creation and we immediately see that there is no limit to his sovereignty. He created it all. He rules over all of it. He sustains it all and he is ultimately head over all things and nothing escapes his authority and rule.

Now, in the words and the language that we've been using in recent weeks in different messages from here from this pulpit, this should remind us of the fact that we are called to fear the Lord. The greatness, the unparalleled majesty, the power, the authority and the rule of this God immediately brings us into a realm that we are in a realm of something different. This is a qualitatively different realm than what we are used to as we interact with humans on a day-to-day basis. There is this immediate arresting of our attention that the psalmist is speaking about a great God, a powerful God, a ruling God and that should have an immediate impact on us. There should be this sense of awe and majesty as we continue reading on in the Psalm as we see it being expressed in such great and lofty terms. As you contemplate it, as you just take the time to think a little bit about what is being said, it does produce an impact on you and the psalmist walks you through that.

Before we get to that, let me just say that one of the things that is striking me as we go through the Psalms together is the fact that, you know, you get used to reading these Psalms kind of quickly and in a little bit of a hurry maybe as you're going through a devotion or going through your reading plan and you read Psalm 24 in a couple of, 3 minutes at the most and the full impact of what it is saying, you know, you kind of skim over the top of it and maybe it doesn't hit you like it should. And for those of us that have been conditioned and there is reason for this, there is reason why we do this, but when we are deeply discouraged or we've got a problem weighing on us, we turn to a Psalm and we're looking for a quick relief, a quick antidote for whatever it is that is weighing on our heart, I just want to acquaint you with the thought that when we treat the Psalms like that, it's quite likely that we're missing the message of them entirely, that we're not really getting what it wants, what the psalmist is communicating to us if we're not careful and we don't just slow down and let God's word speak to us and sink deeply into us. God's word here in these Psalms is like a sustained rain that sinks in over time as opposed to a rush that falls down on your soul and then there is just a lot of runoff and nothing that goes very deep.

Well, this is a Psalm that is intended to go very, very deep into your heart and the assertion of God's sovereign rule, this majestic claim to his authority over all of creation is designed to have an impact on you and the psalmist provokes that impact by the question that he asks in verse 3. The question is this: what man is fit for such a King? Which one of us has the qualities and the characteristics that are necessary to enter into the presence of absolute, uncreated sovereignty? Which one of us is fit to walk into the presence of such a great God? Have you ever tried to create something simply by your spoken word? Have you ever spoken a world into existence? Have you ever spoken a meal into existence? Have you ever spoken by your mere words anything and created something out of nothing? Well no, you haven't, neither have I. God did. God created the whole earth, the whole world, created those who dwell in it and established the human race by his own creative activity. Who has that kind of power? What does it say about what he must be like? The unsearchable riches of his knowledge and his wisdom and his power that he is able to do such a thing? Well see, if God is like that, then what this is supposed to do on us is it's supposed to make us stop and reflect for a moment and rather than simply rushing into his presence, we're supposed to slow down and ask a question such as you see in Psalm 24:3. Psalm 24:3 says,

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

He asks this almost rhetorical question, "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place?" Now, some commentators have looked at this and they have thought that the theme is so different that there would be a question about human character in light of the creative activity of God and then it moves on to speak about the entry of the King of glory and they have wondered if maybe subsequent compilers stitched together a few sections that originally weren't written together. Well, that's nonsense. That's not what happened here at all. It says that it's a Psalm of David and David wrote it from beginning to end and there is a reason why it's done this way. There is a certain brevity about the Psalm but yet there is an internal flow to it that is very evident to believing eyes that read.

The question is asked, "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD?" because it's a proper reflection from man to ask himself in light of the greatness of God that has just been declared to him. If God is this great, if he is this powerful, if he is sovereign over all, then who are we to approach him is the question and it's a genuine, sincere, urgent question for us to ask and answer. You know, how is it that I enter into his presence? How can I approach this God who is so much greater than I am? How can I approach this one who is qualitatively different? How can the sinful creature enter into the presence of uncreated, sinless glory? Well, there is no immediately easy answer to that, is there?

It says, "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place?" It pictures the pursuit of a vantage point where this God could be seen and viewed; where this God could be fellowshiped with. Who is it that is able to do such a thing? Well, as you move into verse 4 David gives the answer; he answers his own

question as he asked this. Who is it? What are the characteristics of a man who would fellowship with a God like this? Verse 4,

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

Here's a picture of character that is required. This echoes, really, what we studied several months ago in Psalm 15 where a similar question is asked and answered. Here's the thing that you need to see tonight and understand, beloved, you young people, some of us, perhaps adult that have just been bouncing along on the surface: God has nonnegotiable moral requirements that are necessary before one can enter into his presence. Look at verse 4 again: clean hands and a pure heart; he has not lifted up his soul to falsehood; he has not sworn deceitfully. There is a double positive and a double negative here that is found here in verse 4. Notice he must have clean hands; he must have a pure heart. Then on the negative side he has not lifted up his soul to falsehood; he has not sworn deceitfully. So it's a twofold description that he lays forth before us.

The overarching theme here, the unifying thread to what is said there in verse 4 is this: it requires righteousness to meet this King of glory. You must have a righteousness, a qualitative righteousness in order to enter into his presence. Stated differently, stated from a different angle: this Creator God is not to be approached in a casual manner. He is not to be approached in a thoughtless, flippant manner. In other words, stated another way: worship is serious. Worship is important. Thinking rightly about God is crucial to approaching him and there is an element of self-examination that must take place. No one can walk off the street, so to speak, and into the presence of God. No one can do that. You can't walk out of sin and into the immediate presence of God. It does not work that way. The phrase "to have clean hands" is an expression of conduct. You know, the work of your hands. You do things with your hands and what your hands do must be clean and pure, he is saying. A pure heart describes a man who is sanctified. Who loves truth in his inner being. That he is single-minded in his devotion to this Yahweh, to this God. Enough so that he parts from idols and he parts from falsehood in order to pursue him, in order to ascend to his hill. You leave behind. We come back to these themes over and over again, don't we? You leave things behind. You leave falsehood behind. You leave false worship behind. There is a pursuit of righteousness from your inner man that is necessary in order to enter into the presence of this holy God. We don't casually do this.

Now look, sometimes I feel like a broken record but when the theme comes up naturally in the text, it needs to be said, and I appreciate the fact that the people in this room understand what I'm about to say but I want to reinforce it and keep it in your mind repeatedly lest you ever stray from that which you have embraced in coming to Truth Community Church. Do you see how churches that seek to be entertaining and funny and flippant and casual are setting an entirely false view of God before those that enter into their doors? You don't casually walk into the presence of God. When you set an environment like that, you're teaching people all the wrong things. You're teaching them that they can just casually consider God and walk in without any sense of self reflection, any sense of sobriety, any sense of seriousness about it and that's just antithetical to what

this text is teaching us. You should not assume that you can enter into the presence of God and that's what these churches teach by their methods. By the way that they conduct themselves, they teach people to assume that there is no self-reflection necessary and it's quite to the contrary. This Psalm teaches us that self-reflection is necessary, self-examination is necessary, and the man who would want to approach God must ask himself these questions and consider what God requires for acceptable worship in his presence. Who can ascend? It assumes that not everyone can.

What is this saying? Look at it there again, verse 4: clean hands, pure heart, hasn't lifted his soul up to falsehood or sworn deceitfully. Well, let's kind of synthesize this and say it this way: God requires an inner sincerity from those who would meet him, from those who would walk with him, from those who would want to fellowship with him, to know him, to be with him throughout all of eternity. He requires an inner sincerity that produces a life that is conformed to his word and conformed to his law. No falsehood. There is a rejection of that which is untrue. There is a rejection of that which is sinful. There is a separation from the world that is around you. There is a separation from the sin that is in your own heart that rejects that and says, "No, I must be washed. I must be cleansed from this." We don't walk into the presence of God carrying the dirt of the world with us. He is too great. He is too holy. He is too majestic to be sullied by our indifference and our lives and our sin. There is an inner sincerity that he requires.

Now watch this, where is that inner sincerity supposed to come from? Where is that inner purity of heart supposed to be found? Scripture says that there is no man who does not sin, 1 Kings 8:46. Ecclesiastes 9:3 says, "The hearts of men are full of evil and insanity." So all of a sudden your Scripture sets these 2 things side-by-side and you start to realize there is an impossibility to this requirement, an impossibility that God requires this inner sincerity, this purity of man, this purity of heart, and yet Scripture also condemns us in our sinfulness and your own conscience testifies to the fact that your own hands have not been always pure; your own mind has not always been free from falsehood; your own lips have not been free from deceit.

How is this ever to be resolved? You see, beloved, what this Psalm is doing, it's teaching us about who can be fit for a King. Who can be fit to enter into the presence of a King like this. And it says that the King requires certain things. He requires a cleanness of hands and a purity of heart and a separation from sin and you and I look at that and we reflect on our lives and we say, "Oh, woe is me! I'm undone! I don't stand a chance!" so to speak. Using this colloquially, "I don't have a prayer in my own merit to enter into the presence of this God. This is not good!"

Well, as you go on in verse 5, you see that there is a divine provision that is made. When you approach this sovereign God sincerely, when you approach him humbly, he makes provision for your spiritual need. When you approach him not holding onto your sin. When you approach him in a repentant spirit that rejects the world, that rejects self, that denies yourself and you come to him with empty hands and yet a willing heart, verses 5 and 6, what does it say?

5 He shall receive a blessing from the LORD And righteousness from the God of his salvation. 6 This is the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face - even Jacob. Selah.

So here's the answer to the question, here's the answer to the dilemma. It's very humbling. This is another point of Scripture demolishing the pride of man and demolishing our pride as we consider ourselves before a holy and sovereign God.

Notice what it says there in verse 5. Twice it says and this is what happens when you read the text carefully, this is about a blessing from the Lord. It is sourced in the Lord, not in the man himself. He receives righteousness from the God of his salvation. This is an Old Testament text speaking to the New Testament doctrine of justification by faith, saying that God provides an alien righteousness to a man who is otherwise not qualified to enter into his presence. God gives a righteousness to a man who comes to him in sincere, humble, trusting faith that that man otherwise could not provide on his own. It's from the Lord. It's righteousness from the Lord. It's a gift from him. It's something that he provides in order for this man to approach him in the manner that he finds acceptable. There is only one man who has ever met this standard in his own self, the Lord Jesus Christ. Only the Lord Jesus Christ was a man of perfectly pure hands. Only the Lord Jesus Christ was a man of a perfectly pure heart who never lifted up his soul to falsehood, who never swore deceitfully. The rest of us fall short of what this requires and so we need a gift from God. We need a salvation from him where he gives us a gift of righteousness that we otherwise could not have on our own. Charles Spurgeon said this, he said, "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." In other words, it's not that we come to God bringing this satisfactory righteousness in our own merit and in our own efforts and say, "Here it is. Now I can be in your presence." Quite to the contrary. What this Psalm is teaching us is that we come with a humility and a sincerity that says, "I need to receive righteousness from you. I need a blessing from you in order to meet the standards that you yourself require." There is a total humility that this brings us to.

You see, only Christ meets this standard and, beloved, only the righteousness of Christ could answer to the standard which a holy God has set. The rest of us don't measure up. Our lives are not adequate to meet what God requires. If we're going to be fit for a King, we need the King to give us the robes that are necessary to be in his presence. If we're going to be fit for a King, we must acknowledge his standard rather than trying to set our own. We must realize that we come at his gracious initiative rather than with a sense of entitlement that's based on what we ourselves have done. No one, no one has a sense of entitlement before a holy Creator. No one has a right to demand anything from him and say, "You owe me this." It's not like that. That is not the mind of God. That is not spiritual life. So here in the New Testament times, we receive this gift when we come sincerely to Christ for salvation from sin. God graciously says, "I will count the righteousness of Christ to you. I will impute it to you. I will receive you in your sinful self based on the righteousness and the shed blood of my own Son." That is the way in which we approach this holy God.

So you see, first of all, the presence of God should not be taken lightly. Secondly, you should see as we unfold this and as we consider what this text is saying how precious the Lord Jesus Christ is. We would otherwise be separated from God. We would otherwise be lost. We would otherwise be on the receiving end of his judging power against us, on the receiving end of his wrath against us for our sins, for our indifference, for our spiritual mediocrity, for our outright rebellion, for all of our inner lusts and our deceitful lips and our sinful conduct. We would be ruined, wouldn't we? We would be so lost without Christ. We would have no hope of entering into the presence of this holy God. We wouldn't have the legs to climb his holy hill. We wouldn't have feet to stand in his holy place. We would be separated from his immense goodness. We would be separated, unable to receive the fullness, to receive the blessing that he reserves for those that belong to him. We would be lost. We would be like the orphan duckling wandering about outside my pond these days with no one to appeal to, with no one to help you and just squeaking along, "Where's my mama? I'm lost. There is no one to protect me." That would be us with nowhere to go, with nowhere to turn to, with no wings to fly. Yet here we are in the presence of Christ. Here we are on the receiving end of undeserved grace, of grace that God himself initiated. That Christ himself paid the price for. We love because he first loved us. If there is going to be clean hands and a pure heart coming from us, it's going to be because God first initiated it in us. And we find here in Psalm 24 that the response to his rule is a response of a humble, sincere faith that has received a gift from him and then responds with a life that is in keeping with that gift.

Notice at the end of verse 6, it says, "This is the generation of those who seek Him." You see, it says it is the seeking. There is this sincere searching after him. Who seek his face. Who seek to know him. Who seek his countenance. Who seek to know him, as it were, face to face. This is what marks those who truly know him, these clean hands and this pure heart and this undivided spirit that has no guile in it but just sincerely, truthfully and humbly seeks after him.

Notice the "Selah" there at the end of the verse. We're supposed to stop and reflect on this, not to just rush through it. Not to hurry through but to realize that there is an accountability that exists from being a man or being a woman created in the image of God. We're to reflect on the fact that we are, as it were, guests in the realm of God's creation. That we are under his sovereign rule and that there is a responsibility, an accountability and there is a duty that flows from that. That having received life from him, living in the realm of his creation, drawing his air for our breath, eating that which he supplies to us, enjoying the blessings that he sovereignly bestows and gives in his common grace to all of us, there is great responsibility that comes. We are to respond to him with a sense of worship and gratitude and a glad rendering of ourselves to him.

So we're supposed to think about that and ask ourselves, "Am I fit for a King like that? Am I responding to him in that manner? Is that the mark of my life?" You should be asking yourself, "Have I been justified by faith in Christ? Is faith in Christ producing a sanctified life as I grow in him in my life now?" If you say the answer to that is no, there is good news. Christ offers himself to you here this evening. Christ invites you to come to

him. Christ says, "I will give all of this to you as a gift." Leave the world behind and come to Christ and all of this can belong to you and you can be fit for a King like that.

Now, his rule, his reign, his sovereignty is an aspect of his glory. The glory of God requires a response. God's glory as the one who is Creator and ruling over the world, who owns it all, I mean, imagine that. What's it like to own everything? Well, God does and it's just that the glory of that impresses us with how great he must be and we respond in the manner that this first part of the Psalm has laid out for us here. But the Psalm goes on and there is a second aspect of his glory that requires a different kind of a response from you and that aspect of his glory is his coming return. We saw his rule in verses 1 through 6 and now we see his return in verses 7 to 8. The greatness of Yahweh calls for a splendid response of worship. Look at verse 7. David says,

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

It's a picture of the ancient gates of Jerusalem and the King entering through the gates of Jerusalem here. David personifies the gates. He speaks to them as if they were living beings, that they should respond. When the King approaches them, they should lift up and magnify and give room to the greatness of Yahweh as he approaches, the greatness of Christ as he enters the gates. Even the gates of Jerusalem must respond in worship to the greatness of Yahweh. They must open wide to acknowledge him as he enters.

What is David doing here? Is he really speaking to literal gates? This is a way of speaking to worshipers, to people. He's calling upon, watch this, he is calling upon us as God's people to joyfully anticipate the Lord's coming. In another Q and A technique here in this section of the Psalm, David highlights the glory of Yahweh. Look at verse 8.

8 Who is the King of glory? [Answer.] The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle.

And for emphasis, he repeats it,

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

It's anticipating an entry by Yahweh. It's anticipating a presence, an arrival in which he is gloriously on display.

Now, some have said, "Well, this is a picture of the believer's response, the inward response of the believer's heart to Yahweh," and I get the picture of that but that's not what this Psalm is talking about. Some have said, "Well, this is a picture of Christ's entry into heaven and this pictures the grand entrance that he will have in heaven in glory at his ascension." Okay, well, I'm sure that was glorious but do you know what? That's not what this is talking about here. This Psalm, go back to verses 1 and 2, especially just to verse 1, I guess: the context of this Psalm is that which happens on earth. The context of this

Psalm is men on earth and not just the people of God, it's an assertion of God's sovereignty over all men everywhere in the world. Look at it, verse 1, "The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it." And it goes on and as the Psalm unfolds, it's a call upon all men to respond to God in a proper way but as it speaks about the entry of God and the glory of God here in the latter part, the latter part must somehow be referring to a glorious, triumphant entry on earth which all men are witness to in order to answer to the beginning of the Psalm, otherwise this Psalm makes no sense, otherwise it's incomplete. It speaks about the universal reign of God over all men on the earth and then supposedly it turns into an invisible acknowledgment of his glory to that which is limited to his people. I don't believe that's what this Psalm is teaching. No, no, what this Psalm is picturing is the coming return of Christ, the still future return of Christ to us today. When Christ returns to earth and conquers nations and his glory is on full display. In the words of Habakkuk 2:14, "The glory of God fills all the earth."

Well, that glory will be known in a visible manifestation of Christ as he rules from Jerusalem and there will be a verbal acknowledgment from all men everywhere. Philippians 2, "Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." This isn't something hidden. This is something that is going to be manifest and the glory of God in the person of Christ will be on display for all to see and required to acknowledge.

"The LORD of hosts," that phrase there in verse 10, "The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory," in the original it's just striking. It is, "Yahweh, He is the King of glory." It just strikes. It reverberates. It resounds as you read it. Yahweh. In answering the question: who is the King of glory? Yahweh. He is the King of glory. Now that he has become manifest, he has been incarnate on earth, we say, "Our Lord Jesus Christ, he is the King of glory." And that phrase "the LORD of hosts" pictures him as a commander of armies returning from battle, his great victory calls for a great entrance and the acknowledgment of those who know him. One writer said, "The great King has at his command innumerable heavenly hosts, reflecting the glory and splendor of undisputed Lordship. He is the divine warrior, the commander of all power on heaven and earth."

You know, I think it's hard for us to really understand the fullness of the splendor of what this will be like. In our democratic society, we're not really used to the concept of a King, of a sovereign representing a full kingdom as David did for Israel and so we don't immediately have that same parallel to extrapolate from, but we can understand and grasp something about the fact by the aid of the Holy Spirit, that this Scripture is asserting a universal sovereignty and authority of God that no one is able to withstand. That his enemies will be crushed under his feet. His victory will be complete. It will be absolute when he returns, Revelation 19:11-16. That's still coming. That still future to us, this return of Christ in glory when all of this wickedness and unrighteousness is crushed and put away. When all of those that have defied him and mocked his name and persecuted his people. When all of them are silenced and he has asserted himself over all and there is no remaining vestige of opposition, then we'll see that glory on display and it will be unchallenged. It will be unparalleled. It will be over all the earth. This King of glory.

Now, watch this: notice at the very end of verse 10 there, that word "Selah" which the exact meaning of that has been lost over the centuries but most commentators take it as a time for reflection, a time for understanding, of examination, of quiet thought and response. Oh beloved, what a great place for that word to appear right here. Selah. Think about what has just been said about the glory of Christ because this glory of Christ, this anticipation of his triumphant return, orients our entire perspective on life. You see, just as his sovereignty in the first 6 verses called for a response of worship, so also the anticipation of his glorious return calls for a further response of worship as well. We are to reflect upon that we as his people will worship in his presence. We will acclaim him as King. We will recognize and own him as ours and most gloriously of it all, he will recognize and name us as his as well. It's not just that he'll be our King, we will be his people in his glory and we will worship him. Not in self-attained righteousness of our own in our own merit but in the overflow of the righteousness which he himself shared with us in our salvation.

And beloved, as you think about this, as you reflect upon it, there is something really important that you need to see just briefly from the New Testament about this. The return of Christ, his coming kingdom, his intervention into world history to set it aside and to reestablish his own rule, that's no incidental theme in Scripture. This is to be part of your daily meditation and part of your daily contemplation in life. His return, I'll show you this in a minute, but the return of Christ, seeing him face to face, the completely temporal passing nature of this world, is supposed to be at the forefront of your thinking and spiritual life. It is to be a defining mark of a Christian.

Look over at the Gospel of Matthew 6 for example. This concept of the return of Christ means that we do not own this world as our home. We understand that we are aliens passing through. We are pilgrims on our way to a different destination. In the words of Philippians 3, we understand that our citizenship is in heaven from which we eagerly await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform the humble body of our current state into conformity with the body of his glory. This is all over the New Testament but in Matthew 6, when Jesus is teaching us to pray, he says in verse 9, "Pray, then, in this way: 'Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.'" Verse 10, there it is, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread." This is somehow supposed to be the ongoing spirit of your prayer life, these different elements in the Lord's prayer. Well, one of them is an anticipation and asking for the coming of Christ, the coming of his kingdom, and whatever you think the details of that means, it's a recognition that, "This world is not my home. I want something different. I want the glory and the reign of Christ on display, Lord, and I ask you for that again today."

What does that do as you pray that way over time? As you do what the Lord says in praying and stop praying for Aunt Emma's toe to get better and you start praying according to the lofty themes of Scripture that Christ calls us to contemplate? Well beloved, what happens is when you reflect on this like we're supposed to, "Selah. Lord, your kingdom come. Our citizenship is in heaven." You start to think these things over

and they are just repeated in your mind again and again and again. What happens is that it conditions your heart to expect him. Not only to expect him but to want him. To prefer his coming to your present existence. There should be in each one of you that name the name of Christ an immediate preference for the immediate return of Christ over anything that you have in this life now. There should be nothing in this world that you would be unwilling to surrender if it meant that Christ would come today, that he would come at 8:05. It's 8 o'clock right now. I'm just asking for 5 minutes to finish the message before he comes. Wouldn't that just be an awesome exclamation point to a message like this, to a text like this? That we would just go immediately into the presence of Christ? Man, I would go for that right now. But, you see, what happens is that part of what Psalm 24 is calling you to, this joyful repeated call for the entry of the King of glory and you respond, "Oh yes, Yahweh is that King of glory! He's the one who will enter! The Lord Jesus Christ!" It's conditioning you to want that, to anticipate it, to look forward to it. That part of your spiritual life, a defining mark of your Christian existence should be this burning, ongoing, unquenchable desire to see Christ and to have him return and the sooner the better.

Who is this Lord of glory? Yahweh. He is the King of glory. You see, and in Psalm 24, the earth is the Lord's and all it contains, go into creation and you get down to verse 10 and what he has done is he has gone from creation to consummation in 10 verses. He has created the world and here is the consummation when he returns to own it again. His return will be the climax of creation. It will be the fulfillment of the purpose of history and all of the fascination that our world has with political events and political leaders will be exposed for the utter futility and worthlessness that it is. God have mercy on the Christians that are already so consumed with the coming presidential election. God have mercy on us that that would consume our thoughts more than the glorious return of Christ.

And how does Scripture end? What is the note that Scripture ends on? Almost the final words of the entire Bible, Revelation 22:20, has this simple prayer. You know what it is, don't you? "Come, Lord Jesus. Come." Psalm 24, "Who is this King of glory? Open gates that He may enter in." "Along the way and as we go through this life, Lord, your kingdom come. Your kingdom come." And we get to the end of Scripture and we see that the final breath, as it were, of God in the Scriptures, the final prayer breathed out in the inspired Holy Writ, "O Lord Jesus, come." That's the heart of Scripture. That's the heart of a true believer.

So I just ask you, not in a confrontational way but in a pastoral sympathetic way seeking to have you become more like Christ and more like Scripture would have you to be: is the return of Christ an ever present desire in your heart? Do you pray along that way, "Lord, come quickly. Come, Lord Jesus. I want you back and the sooner the better"? You see, that supposed to be a preeminent affection and priority in your heart. It teaches you not to love this world. Christian, are you confident of his final victory even when circumstances seem to contradict it? Have you responded in faith to this great King? Are you anticipating his return? We ask ourselves after this text: are you fit for a King? He has shown you what he wants, our hearts now need to respond.

Let's pray.

Father, we are just so enamored with your glory, with the wonder of your being, with the glory of who you are. Our Creator and the Creator of everything that we see around us, we honor you in that and we thank you for a gift of salvation which fits us for your presence and we go beyond that and look to the future and anticipate the return of Christ. Well might we say with David, "Lift up the gates." Have Christ enter in. Have him come and display his glory because we want him on display more than anything else. There is nothing in this sinful, wretched, rebellious world that holds our affections and priorities, O God. Simply the thought of seeing Christ in glory and his righteous rule established, that is what we desire. That is what we pray for. That is what we breathe as our last. Come, Lord Jesus. Amen.