

# Psalm Sundays

**Text**  
**Psalm 24**

**Topic**  
**A Messianic psalm that looks forward  
to the gates of Jerusalem being lifted up  
at the return of King Jesus to His Holy Hill**

**Title**  
***"King of the Hill"***

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Ticker tape. Thin strips of paper used for electronic printing of stock market quotes and sports scores. If you remember the movie *The Sting*, it was the machine that provided the results of the horse races they were betting on. Invented by Edison, it got its name from the ticking sound the machines produced. They went obsolete in the 1960's.

During the Statue of Liberty dedication in October 1886, office workers threw ticker tape out their windows and onto parade-goers below. Thus was born the New York tradition of the ticker tape parade.

**Psalm 24 was written for a celebratory procession in Israel.** It was written on the momentous occasion of King David returning the Ark of the Covenant

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to Jerusalem. According to the account in First Chronicles, David “gathered all Israel” (15:3). There were “singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy” (15:16). For his part, David “whirl[ed] and play[ed] music” (15:29).

The psalm was also prophetic. As we read it, you will see that it perfectly anticipated Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem in His first coming.

Here is something really cool that substantiates that claim. The Mishnah is a collection of Jewish oral traditions.

In it is a list of seven psalms, each of which would be recited in Temple worship on a certain day of the week. Each day had its own psalm. The psalm for the first day of the week, for Sunday, was (you guessed it) Psalm 24.

**That means this psalm was being sung when Jesus entered Jerusalem on what we now call Palm Sunday.**

For us futurists, Psalm 24 has not exhausted its prophetic fulfillment. It looks forward to the yet future Second Coming of Jesus to Jerusalem to establish the one thousand year Kingdom of Heaven on earth and rule as its King.

While looking forward, Psalm 25 starts by looking back - all the way back - to creation. It reminds us that before we can join in the roar of the crowd at Jesus’ Second Coming, we must be made right by believing Him for what He accomplished at His first coming.

I’ll organize my comments around two points: **#1 You Are Made Right For The King’s Return**, and **#2 You Are Heard Roaring At The King’s Return**.

**#1 - You Are Made Right For The King’s Return (v1-6)**

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Why look back to Genesis? What does that have to do with Jesus' comings? It has everything to do with it. Let's discover how as we look back with David.

Psa 24:1 A Psalm of David. The earth *is* the LORD's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein.

Psa 24:2 For He has founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the waters.

David was familiar with the Genesis account of special creation. "Then God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters."

Thus God made the firmament, and divided the waters which *were* under the firmament from the waters which *were* above the firmament; and it was so" (1:6-7).

As its Creator, God has claim to not just the earth, but to its "fullness." Nothing is beyond His rightful ownership. But all that - all of creation and its fullness - was only so God could create mankind. Those who "dwell" in the "world" God created for them are His.

When our minds are drawn back to Genesis, a huge question is answered: "Why is there so much suffering in the world?" Just look around. Something has gone terribly wrong. If you didn't know better, you might think God had abdicated or abandoned creation.

In fact, nonbelievers feel comfortable deriding God for the tragedies and traumas that characterize life on earth. Elton John sings,

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*If there's a God in Heaven  
What's He waiting for  
If He can't hear the children  
Then he must see the war  
But it seems to me  
That He leads His lambs  
To the slaughter house  
And not the promised land*

### **He's waiting for you, Elton John... and others.**

What does Genesis tell us? God put mankind in charge of creation, and they immediately disobeyed God. Their tempter, Satan, became the god of this world. Tragedy and trauma are the result of mankind's sin bringing death into God's perfect creation.

Adam and Eve represented all their descendants; all mankind. They had a choice; they had to have a choice, or else there is no such thing as free-will, or love. They chose badly.

To suggest a limited analogy - they chose to be ruled by Scar instead of Mufasa.

Far from abdicating or abandoning, God began to reveal a plan to redeem and restore His creation - especially mankind. That plan involves both comings of Jesus to set things right.

As the psalm begins, nonbelievers are assured, and believers are reassured, that God remains in charge. He hasn't abdicated what He created; He hasn't abandoned those He created.

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

Do you have a special place you like to go, maybe on vacation? And a particular place at that place? God has a special place; it's Jerusalem.

- 👤 In Psalm 87, we read, "His foundation *is* in the holy mountains. The LORD loves the gates of Zion More than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God! (v1-3).
- 👤 We read in Psalm 132, "For the LORD has chosen Zion; He has desired *it* for His dwelling place: "This *is* My resting place forever; Here I will dwell, for I have desired it (v13-14).

When the Lord returns, in His Second Coming, New Yorkers won't give Him a ticker tape parade. He's not coming there. Jerusalem has that singular honor.

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

Psa 24:4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully.

You must meet these prerequisites to be in God's presence:

- 👤 "Clean hands," behaviorally. The deeds of your life - what you've done and will do - must be without *any* stain of sin.
- 👤 "A pure heart" means you've *never* had any thoughts that were impure, or ungodly.
- 👤 As for idolatry, were told in the Bible that covetousness is idolatry. So this means you can *never* have coveted anything.

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🧠 "Sworn deceitfully" - your every word has been absolutely true and free from any deceit whatsoever.

**No one even gets one out of those four.** David failed in all those ways in the episode with Bathsheba and her husband, Uriah. The "man after God's own heart" did not himself have a "pure heart."

Nevertheless David and procession brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. The disciples, and a great procession, followed Jesus into the Temple. How could they?

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

On account of the "righteousness of God" that you receive from "His salvation," you "**receive** blessing from the Lord." If you believe Him for salvation, He gives you His righteousness. You are not perfect, but He can see you that way, and you can thereby be in His presence.

- 🧠 Under the terms of the Old Covenant, the High Priest could by the shedding of lambs blood go through the veil and enter the Holy of Holies to represent the Israelites. Coming out from Gods presence, the people "receive[d] blessing from the Lord."
- 🧠 In the New Covenant, at the death of Jesus, the Lamb of God, the veil leading in to the Holy of Holies was torn. Now all who believe in Jesus live in the very presence of God, and are, in fact, the Temple of God - indwelt by the Holy Spirit, enjoying "the blessing of the Lord."

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You do not meet the prerequisites on your own. They are not works you can perform in order to make yourself right with God. He declares you right, then sees you perfect as He goes about perfecting you day-by-day.

I like to think about this in terms of clothing; in terms of a dress code. Do you recall the *The Flip-Flop Flub*? It led to *The Flip-Flop Flub Flap*. In 2005, a fashion faux pas caused an uproar when several players on the Northwestern University championship women's lacrosse team wore flip-flops to a ceremony at the White House.

There is a strict dress code for being in the presence of Jesus. You must wear the white robe of the righteousness of God.

It cannot be purchased, or merited in any way. It can only be given to you, as a gift, by Jesus. It is given as a gift to "whosoever will believe on Him." Jesus takes upon Himself your sin; He gives you, in exchange, His righteousness.

This imputed righteousness is how a person may stand in the presence of God.

Psa 24:6 This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face. Selah

Abraham, Issac, Jacob. Then Jacob had the sons who became the patriarchs of Israel's twelve tribes. In this psalm, "Jacob" is short for Israel.

Remember, this psalm was written for, and sung at, the procession returning the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. Looking around, at what is described elsewhere as "all Israel," you could excitedly exclaim, "This is Jacob!"

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If you follow college football... You know the famous chant of Penn State. The stadium erupts with, "We are... Penn State."

The words of the psalm are like chanting, "We are... Jacob." At the first prophetic fulfillment of this psalm, the nation was initially excited; but not its leaders.

It could have been a generation of believers, but "Jacob" officially rejected Jesus.

A mystery was then revealed: Jesus would ascend to Heaven for a time while the Good News of imputed righteousness by grace through faith went out to the Gentile nations of the world. The resulting believers would be known collectively as the church, and our time on earth as the Church Age.

Another mystery was then revealed:

1Co 15:51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed -

1Co 15:52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

Th 4:16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

1Th 4:17a Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air...

1Co 15:53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.

1Th 4:17b ... And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

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The church will be resurrected and raptured prior to the Lord's Second Coming. In fact, *we will return with Him.*

What Adam and Eve did was not a minor flip-flop flub. Our nakedness, representing guiltless purity, was replaced by guilt and impurity, illustrated by our original parents sewing themselves garments. Since the Garden, mankind has mimicked Adam and Eve by sewing garments of religion, philosophy, and psychology.

It's interesting, is it not, that many religions have official garments. They are all fig leaves, hand sewn. They cannot make you right.

You must be declared righteous in exchange for your sin, and receive the robe of righteousness from Jesus.

## **#2 - You Are Heard Roaring At The King's Return (v7-10)**

Most of you probably know that the drawbridge of Sleeping Beauty's Castle is functional. It has only been raised twice, once in 1955 for the grand opening of Disneyland, and then in 1983 for the rededication of Fantasyland.

David wanted music and lyrics that would coincide with the opening of the gates. Think of this as a great crowd, performing a scripted, musical yell.

We need to read it all through to get the feel.

Psa 24:7 Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.

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

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Psa 24:9 Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.

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

I hate to ruin this with detail, but there are some things we need to have pointed out. The "gates" and "doors" being "lifted" means they were strong, heavy grates that could be lowered down grooves on each side of a gateway to block it.

Their "heads" were the top. So it's a poetic way of describing their opening from ground to top as the Ark of the Covenant approached.

The Ark, you'll recall from Exodus, was more than a representation of God's presence.

**His presence dwelt there.** "Everlasting doors" expressed their desire to always have God present among them; in their midst. God with them.

Jesus at one point in His ministry called Himself the door. In the lyrics of Psalm 24, He is the "everlasting door," never to be shut, by Whom all who believe enter in to eternal life.

"Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle."

King David was fresh off a victory against the Philistines when he brought the Ark back. He had no trouble giving the Lord credit for the win.

"Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory." Selah.

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Listen to what the Lord said to David about the battle with the Philistines:

2Sa 5:23 Therefore David inquired of the LORD, and He said, "You shall not go up; circle around behind them, and come upon them in front of the mulberry trees.

2Sa 5:24 And it shall be, when you hear the sound of marching in the tops of the mulberry trees, then you shall advance quickly. For then the LORD will go out before you to strike the camp of the Philistines."

Who marched on the tree tops? Sounds supernatural.

In His first coming, Jesus had battled Satan and demons - posting a 'W' every time. At the Cross, in what looked like a victory for evil, Jesus triumphed. His death as a Substitute defeated death and sin and Satan, once-and-for-all.

At His Second Coming, Jesus will... Well, let's read it:

Rev 19:11 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

Rev 19:12 His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.

Rev 19:13 He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

Rev 19:14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

Rev 19:15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

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Rev 19:16 And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Rev 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,

Rev 19:18 that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great."

Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

Rev 19:20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Rev 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

I'd say, "mighty in battle," is understatement.

One source said that "the Lord of Hosts appears 235 times as a name of God. "Hosts" can be translated *armies*. What kind of armies? Angelic.

At His first coming, Jesus let it be known that He could at any time call upon legions of angels. Angels figure prominently in the years leading up to His Second Coming.

"Selah." We've encountered it twice in this psalm. No one really knows what it means. For one thing, it's not translated; it is *transliterated*. It is simply

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sounded out from Hebrew into English so we can pronounce it. It is generally accepted that Selah is a musical notation of some sort, and that it is there to provide musical direction. Most likely, a pause.

It might be a pause for reflection. But in keeping with the action of the psalm, consider this.

Think of tens of thousands of Jewish voices singing these lines, then pausing in silence. Then singing again, louder; then pausing. Exhilarating. Now think of ten thousand times ten thousand believers singing them as Jesus returns to Jerusalem in the future.

*Ten thousand times ten thousand  
In sparkling raiment bright,  
The armies of the ransomed saints  
Throng up the steep of light:  
Tis finished, all is finished,  
Their fight with death and sin;  
Fling open wide the golden gates,  
And let the victors in.*

