

Psalm 24: The Lord's Temple



Psalm 24 (23) (Mode 1. 5....65 / 3.....23)

This psalm is part of a liturgical celebration of victory, or of the enthronement of Yahweh in the New Year festival.

There are echoes in it of Moses setting up the tabernacle (Exodus 40:20,34), David transferring the ark (2Samuel 6:13-15), and the return from exile (Ezekiel 43:4).

The Lord, the Creator of the universe, has chosen Zion for his dwelling. The city must be worthy of God's presence and its inhabitants must be committed to the truth, living good lives from pure hearts.

The earth is yours, Lord, and all its creatures,
the world and all its peoples.

It is you who set the land on the seas,
and anchored it in the deep.

According to the understanding of the day, under the land are subterraneous waters that are connected to the ocean which surrounds the earth. This subterranean water wells up to the surface of the earth as springs and rivers. Compare the following:

‘Give thanks to the Lord who spread out the earth on the waters, for his kindness endures forever’(Psalm 136:6).

On the Lord as creator compare:

‘I have put my words in your mouth, and hidden you in the shadow of my hand, stretching out the heavens and laying the foundations of the earth, and saying to Zion, “You are my people”’(Isaiah 51:16).

‘Thus says the Lord, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth and formed the human spirit within’(Zechariah 12:1).

On the Lord as creator compare:

‘Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements – surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? On what were its bases sunk, or who laid its cornerstone when the morning stars sang together and all the heavenly beings shouted for joy?’(Job 38:4-7).

‘The earth and its fullness are the Lord’s.’

(1Corinthians 10:26).

Who is fit to climb God's mountain,
and stand in the Lord's holy place?

Those who act with integrity,
from hearts that are pure,
whose longing is for the real God,
who do not live a lie.

Entering the temple should be an expression of
our longing to be in communion with God.

These will receive blessing from the Lord,
and justice from the God who saves.

Such is the company of those who seek you, Lord;
who seek your face, O God of Jacob.

You gates, reach to heaven, open high and wide.
Make way for the king of glory.

‘David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing; and when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling. David danced before the Lord with all his might; David was girded with a linen ephod. So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet’(2Samuel 6:12-15).

Who is the king of glory?

The Lord of power and might, the conqueror of chaos.

You gates, reach to heaven, open high and wide.

Make way for the king of glory.

Who is the king of glory?

God, the Lord of armies, is your glorious king.

‘We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus, a forerunner on our behalf, has entered, having become a high priest forever’(Hebrews 6:19-20).