

PSALM 24

THE ASCENSION SONG

This Psalm is a prophecy concerning the Kingdom of Christ, which shall spread and extend itself throughout the whole world by the Gospel. By a striking apostrophe, David turns himself to the kings, princes, and wise ones of the earth, and the men of power and authority. "Remember," he says to such persons, "that the earth is the Lord's!" He tells them that He is Lord of all. "It was He," he says, "Who gave you your kingdoms. He has set up Christ as King over all, Whom – if you do not adore and acknowledge – you shall perish, along with your kingdoms; and you shall be dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel." He exhorts such persons to acknowledge themselves to be sinners; for these powerful ones – these Pharisees and supposed "wise men" of the world – are blinded with a conceited opinion of human wisdom and righteousness, and are infuriated against the Gospel more than anyone else. When the Kingdom of grace and remission of sins is preached; and when Christ is declared and proclaimed by the Gospel to be the only King of eternal peace, and the only victorious King over sin and death and the devil – then these tyrants and these powerful ones of the world immediately burst out with their cry of pride: "Who is this King of glory? Who?" It is as if they would say, "What! Shall those poor foolish fishermen teach us? Instead of the law of Moses and the religion which we received from our forefathers, shall these ignorant ones force upon us this new worship of God, and this King of theirs – Who was hanged upon the cross? Shall they persuade us to believe such dreams as these?"

This Psalm, therefore, also hints at the fact that this Kingdom of Christ should not be an earthly one, nor shall it be of such a kind as to destroy political

Overview of the Psalm, adapted from Charles Spurgeon:

From the title of this Psalm, we learn nothing except the authorship of David; but this is interesting, for it leads us to observe the wondrous operations of the Holy Spirit upon the mind of Israel's sweet singer – enabling him to touch the mournful string in Psalm 22, to pour forth gentle notes of peace in Psalm 23, and here to utter majestic, triumphant strains. We can sing all things when the Lord strengthens us.

This sacred hymn was probably written to be sung when the Ark of the Covenant was taken up from the house of Obed-edom, to remain within curtains upon the hill of Zion. The words are not unsuitable for the sacred dance of joy in which David led the way upon that joyful occasion. The eye of the Psalmist looked, however, beyond the upgoing of the Ark; for he looked to that which it spiritually represented: the sublime ascension of the King of glory.

This composition makes a pair with the 15th Psalm. It consists of three parts. The first glorifies the true God, and sings of His universal dominion; the second describes the true Israel, who are able to commune with Him; and the third pictures the ascent of the true Redeemer, Who has opened heaven's gates for the entrance of His people.

governments. Rather, it is a Kingdom in which its preachers bring the world and its empires into subjection under Christ, by the Word and the Gospel. To this Kingdom, says David, earthly monarchs and rulers shall oppose themselves. They crucified the King and Lord of Glory Himself, and they shall persecute the Apostles and ministers of the Word. Nevertheless, in defiance of every opposer, the Lord Jesus and His Gospel shall reign in the midst of all His enemies. He shall give His people words and wisdom which none of their adversaries shall be able to resist. And even while the mightiest kingdoms of the earth (as the prophet Daniel says) shall be moved and destroyed, this eternal King shall endure forever; and He shall be truly manifested as the Lord of victory and glory!

“Who is this King of glory?” Verse 8 describes Him for us as “the Lord mighty in battle.” Well may our King be glorious in the eyes of His people, seeing that He has worked such wonders *for* them, *in* them, and *by* them! *For* them, the Lord Jesus destroyed every foe upon Calvary and broke all the weapons of the enemy in pieces, by His finished work of satisfac-



tory obedience. By His triumphant resurrection and ascension, He completely overturned the hopes of hell – leading captivity captive, making a show of our enemies openly, and triumphing over them by His cross. Every arrow of guilt which Satan might have shot at us is now broken, for who can lay anything to the charge of God’s people? Vain are the sharp swords of infernal malice, and the perpetual battles of the serpent’s seed! For in the midst of the Church, even the lame ones can capture the prey, and even the feeblest warriors are crowned. But the Lord’s people may also adore Him for His conquests *in* them; for the arrows of their natural hatred are snapped, and the weapons of their rebellion are broken. What victories has God’s grace won in our evil hearts! How glorious is Jesus when the natural will is subdued, and when sin is dethroned! As for our remaining corruptions, they shall sustain an equally sure defeat; every temptation, doubt, and fear shall be utterly destroyed. In the Salem of our peaceful hearts, the name of Jesus is great beyond compare! He has won our love, and He shall have it. And because we are in Him, we are encouraged to know that He will also work victories *by* us. We are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us! Through Him, we shall cast down the powers of darkness which are in the world; we shall win sinners to Jesus, we shall overturn false systems, and we shall convert nations – for God is with us, and none shall stand against us! This day, let the Christian warrior chant the war-song and prepare for tomorrow’s fight. Greater is He Who is in us than all who are in the world!

Lord Jesus, we beseech You to continue to break down and defy every opposer, so that You and Your Gospel may reign in the midst of Your enemies. Give Your people words and wisdom which their adversaries shall be unable to resist! Amen.