

Psa. 24:0 A Psalm of David.

Self-explanatory; David is the author of this Psalm.

Psa. 24:1 The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

This is an important truth that is often ignored today. Every part of creation is the possession of the YHWH, the self-existent, eternal God. God created the earth for mankind and gave him authority over the creation.

Gen. 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Man rebelled against God and relinquished his dominion to Satan. Satan is the "god of this world"; however, that time will come to an end.

2Cor. 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Rev. 20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

Rev. 20:3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

Rev. 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

Rev. 20:8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea.

Rev. 20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

Rev. 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Satan is being allowed a time of dominion on earth; but YHWH is sovereign in the universe, and Satan can only act within the parameters established for Him by God. The book of Job gives us a prime example of this truth.

I seem to have taken a detour—back to verse 1.

The Psalmist makes specific reference to planet earth—its land and its inhabitants. The Hebrew for *fulness* specifies that he is referencing everything associated with planet earth. This makes me think of a chorus we used to sing as youngsters, "He Owns the Cattle on a Thousand Hills," taken from another Psalm.

Psa. 50:10 For every beast of the forest *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills.

Psa. 50:11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field *are* mine.

Psa. 50:12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world *is* mine, and the fulness thereof.

Psa. 24:2 For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

David knew the scriptural account of creation. He knew that the waters were in place first and that the sky and land were brought into existence by separating the waters.

Gen. 1:6 And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

Gen. 1:7 And 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.

Gen. 1:8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

Gen. 1:9 And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry *land* appear: and it was so.

Gen. 1:10 And God called the dry *land* Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that *it was* good.

Psa. 24:3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

First, we need to identify the hill of the LORD. The Psalmist does that for us.

Psa. 2:6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

Psa. 9:11 Sing praises to the LORD, which dwelleth in Zion:

Psa. 132:13 For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired *it* for his habitation.

It stands to reason that the “holy place” is the temple. It is the place where the priesthood ministers before God.

Ex. 26:33 And thou shalt hang up the vail under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the vail the ark of the testimony: and the vail shall divide unto you between the holy *place* and the most holy.

So, the question seems to be: Who is qualified to minister before the Lord or enjoy fellowship in His presence?

This is especially interesting since there was no temple during David’s lifetime; it was built by his son Solomon. David had erected a tabernacle in Jerusalem to house the ark of the covenant. He wanted to build the temple, but God did not allow him to because he was a man of war. He was allowed, however, to make all the preparations.

Psa. 24:4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

The answer to the questions posed in verse 3 includes four characteristics.

- **One with clean hands** – The Hebrew for *clean* states, “innocent, blameless, guiltless.” This seems to be a reference to our actions; it is

primarily with our hands that we physically serve or harm one another.

- **One with a pure heart** – The Hebrew for *pure* states, “beloved, empty, clean.” The first two words were quite interesting to me and not what I expected. When I saw the word *empty*, I immediately connected it guileless and selfless—having no ulterior motives. It makes sense that one who is innocent and blameless in his/her relationship with others and is not known for deceit would be *beloved*.
- **One who does not have a vain soul** – My first thought on reading this verse was that this was a reference to pride. The Hebrew for *vain* states:
“evil (as destructive), literally (ruin) or morally (especially guile); figuratively idolatry (as false, subjective), uselessness (as deceptive, objective; also adverbially, in vain):—false(-ly), lie, lying, vain, vanity.”
I think the CJB gives a clearer translation for this phrase: “who don’t make vanities the purpose of their lives.” Some of the other translations focus in on idol worship, but it would seem that the Psalmist is making reference to a much wider range of evil and immoral actions.
- **One who is not deceitful** – Again, the CJB seems to have the best translation from the Hebrew: “or swear oaths just to deceive.” This would characterize a person who has no ulterior motives. More importantly, regarding service to the Lord, the psalmist is referencing one who is serving from a heart of love and obedience to the Lord. It describes a person who refrains from using people as pawns to accomplish his own agenda.

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

The person who meets the qualifications in the above verse is the one who will receive blessing and righteousness from YHWH. In David’s day, to be clothed in that righteousness was an ongoing process through the sacrificial system looking forward in faith to God’s permanent provision through His Son. For believers today that righteousness is imputed to us when we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior by faith. *Blessing* is a reference to abundance and prosperity. Where we go wrong is assuming that this is a reference to material things. It can include material things, but our richest blessings are spiritual and eternal.

Psa. 24:6 This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.

Again, I like the CJB translation of this verse:

Such is the character of those who seek him, of Ya’akov, who seeks your face. (*Selah*)

Jacob is a reference to the nation of Israel as the father of the twelve tribes of Israel. David is referencing those of Israel who are seeking to serve God in truth from their heart. *Selah* is reference to a pause in the music. I think David is saying, “This is a truth worth thinking about.”

Psa. 24:7 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

This is a call for the entrance of the King of glory to His temple on Mt. Zion. In my mind the gates would be a reference to the gates of the city and the doors would reference the entry to the temple.

“everlasting doors” – This indicates to me that David expected a time when the “King of glory” would come to dwell in Zion in His temple among His people for eternity.

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

David identifies the King of glory as YHWH, the self-existent eternal God. He is also picturing the Lord as a warrior. I don't know if David realized the spiritual warfare ongoing between the armies of God and the legions of Satan. He was well aware, however, of God's provision for Israel in physical battle against their enemies. He knew that God had given Israel victory many times through His miraculous provision—beginning with the exodus from Egypt. David also knew of God's provision on a personal basis, most famously by slaying the Philistine giant Goliath.

Psa. 24:9 Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift *them* up, ye 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.

When studying Isaiah, I learned that a characterizing mark of Hebrew poetry is repetition. David is a poet and this repetition not only emphasized the might and power of God, it probably added to the beauty of the song he was composing.