

Sermon on Psalm 24 prepared by Jonathan Shradar

Psalm 24 / YouVersion events

It was a joy to be together virtually last Sunday. And here we are a week later, still unsure of what the days and weeks ahead hold for us, but trusting Jesus through it all.

This week I had the chance to listen to a podcast called “Gospel Bound.” A newer podcast but one endeavoring to engage authors and important issues of the day from a gospel perspective. This week though they asked the question of longing for leadership. The guest had written a book about Winston Churchill and the conversation nostalgically reminisced about historic leaders.

People of quality, composure, and character. And in times like these, we are certainly on the lookout for such leaders. But whether we find them in the halls of power or in our neighborhoods, the church remains stable because our “head” is a leader above all others.

A King composed, unsurprised by events, steady. So the church keeps calling out to all who will listen:

Look to Christ our King and find lasting hope.

To be reminded of our King we turn to Psalm 24, written by David in celebration and longing for the true King.

Psalm 24:1-10 “The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, [2] for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

[3] Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place?

[4] He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to

what is false and does not swear deceitfully. [5] He will receive blessing from the

LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation. [6] Such is the generation

of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob. Selah

[7] Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. [8] Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle! [9] Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. [10] Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory! Selah” (ESV)

David’s song as the Ark of the Covenant returns to Jerusalem. The very presence of God coming, with a call to open the city to him, to welcome him into his kingdom.

A King of glory, not David, but the One truly reigning. In answering who this King is we find our strength, our rootedness, and hope for tomorrow.

1) Unshakable King

He is the One who holds it all.

“The earth is the Lord’s (Yahweh’s) and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell in it.”

The Creator of all things, the God above all things, the universe belongs to him. And it is his presence that is coming to dwell with his people.

He is the One who sets seasons, the timeline of humanity, sovereign, in control of all things.

Isaiah 46:10 “[I declare] the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.’”

Those worshiping him then can trust in his authority, his directing of circumstance and surroundings.

Question 27 of the **Heidelberg Catechism**:

“Question: What do you understand by the providence of God?

“Answer: The almighty, everywhere present power of God, whereby, as it were, by his hand, he still upholds heaven and earth with all creatures and so governs them that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, indeed, all things come not by chance, but by his fatherly hand.”

His fatherly hand. His caring hand leading people to a place of comfort and trust in him. We can then rest on the “pillow of God’s sovereignty.” Oh how I want more of this in the places of my life where I wrestle him for control!

Always up to something, accomplishing his purpose.

A week ago a clip from a Billy Graham sermon has gone viral. Where Billy uses Habakuk to incite trust in God.

I can’t do it justice...

“Habakkuk said, “Lord please tell me what you’re doing.” And God said, “No, I’m not going to tell you, Habakkuk. Because if I told you what I was doing you wouldn’t believe it.”

“If God today told us what He’s doing in the world, we wouldn’t believe it. Don’t you think God’s given up, and God’s abdicated, and God’s left the throne. He hasn’t. He’s still on the throne. And those of us that know Him put our trust in Him and Him alone.”

“I don’t put my trust in Washington. I don’t put my trust in the United Nations. I don’t put my trust in myself. I don’t put trust in my money.

“I put my trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. When all the rest of it fails and crumbles and shatters, He’ll be there.” **Billy Graham**

He is the One who holds it all.

He is also the One Who is Perfect.

Did you notice the high standards of being in his presence? Not only does this King reign over all things, but he is also uniquely different, perfectly holy, absolutely other.

“Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? Who can even stand in his holy place?”

Whoever has clean hands (that’s all of us right now!). Whoever has a pure heart. Who does not lift up his soul to what is false and doesn’t swear deceitfully.

No sweat. To be in His presence we too need to be perfect in righteousness. In truth.

Warning here for Israel, something to live up to. This King of Glory is so different, you have to be clean before him.

Where it could be a burden than for us... how can we live up to this? It is actually a relief for us. Because Jesus is the One who ascends the hill and gives us entry into the presence of God, into his kingdom.

“David’s faith would have been launched to heaven, where he could see the day when his Greater Son, who brought the face of God to earth, would be welcomed back to heaven upon his ascension, after securing his people’s salvation. The one united to Christ by faith has then been brought into the throne room of God’s grace and may therefore enter boldly by prayer.” GTB

Hebrews 9:24, 26-28 “For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf... he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. [27] And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, [28] so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.” (ESV)

So this perfect God comes himself to make a way for us to be in his presence. Takes on flesh lives perfectly righteous and takes on the judgment for sin that we deserve.

He receives blessing from the Father and gives it to us. He grants us his righteousness, our salvation.

This is the good news we live for. This is what gets us excited! This is why we can trust His sovereignty. This is the King who doesn't shake in the face of trouble or pandemic but instead holds his people as he works his purpose.

And it is his kingdom that is coming.

“Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.”

The King strong and mighty, mighty in battle, he is coming. To welcome his presence in Jerusalem, but now to welcome his kingdom to the ends of the earth.

This is the invitation for the world to be opened to him.

To look to him, to surrender to him. To worship him, in response to his grace and goodness, his glory.

This is still the call today. To believe in the King, to believe in Jesus. To be made part of his kingdom. To take hope in him. And spread his hope everywhere.

So the question of who is this King becomes who are we in light of him?

Citizens of his kingdom. The unshakable kingdom.

2) Unshakable Kingdom

Because this King of Glory has come in we have security, identity, and hope for tomorrow that carries us through today.

Just as the King can be trusted so too will his Kingdom stand. And that is meant to be a great comfort to us.

The author of Hebrews anchors us in this hope. Comparing entering into the presence of God under the old covenant and the new, we find such grace.

The Message tells it so well.

Hebrews 12:25-29 “So don’t turn a deaf ear to these gracious words. If those who ignored earthly warnings didn’t get away with it, what will happen to us if we turn our backs on heavenly warnings? His voice that time shook the earth to its foundations; this time—he’s told us this quite plainly—he’ll also rock the heavens: “One last shaking, from top to bottom, stem to stern.” The phrase “one last shaking” means a thorough house cleaning, getting rid of all the historical and religious junk so that the unshakable essentials stand clear and uncluttered.

28-29 Do you see what we’ve got? An unshakable kingdom! And do you see how thankful we must be? Not only thankful, but brimming with worship, deeply reverent before God. For God is not an indifferent bystander. He’s actively cleaning house, torching all that needs to burn, and he won’t quit until it’s all cleansed. God himself is Fire!”

By the blood of Christ. When everything else is stripped away - the Kingdom stands. In fact, it flourishes as the church is refined. We are the people brimming with worship, saved by grace and transformed for his glory. Because of who he is we have a peculiar trust and optimism about what is to come.

Practical ways the Kingdom is unfolding...

- Stripping away of distractions, hunger for answers, for God.
- The overwhelming flow of gospel content.
- Where loving our neighbors could seem like something added after we did all that we desired, now it is sacrificial, tangible.

Pandemics don’t shake the King or the Kingdom and that’s something we can hold onto.

So we declare with unshakable trust: **Look to Christ our King and find lasting hope.**

Look Up - friends, Believe in Jesus the King; his life, death, and resurrection for you. Position yourself in his word and in worship. Longing for his Kingdom to come.

Matthew 6:9–13 “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. [10] Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. [11] Give us this day our daily bread, [12] and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. [13] And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” (ESV)

Look Around - Take stock of the kingdom unfolding, and invite others in.

Where the world is in want of great leaders, the church stands firm under the steady hand of our unshakable King. Rejoice in this. Rest upon this. Let it make you resilient for you belong to the King fo Glory.