

Psalm 24

Of David. A psalm.

- ¹ *The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;*
² *for he founded it on the seas
and established it on the waters.*
- ³ *Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD?
Who may stand in his holy place?*
⁴ *The one who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not trust in an idol
or swear by a false god.*
- ⁵ *They will receive blessing from the LORD
and vindication from God their Savior.*
⁶ *Such is the generation of those who seek him,
who seek your face, God of Jacob.*
- ⁷ *Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, you 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, you gates;
lift them up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.*
¹⁰ *Who is he, this King of glory?
The LORD Almighty—
he is the King of glory.*

God the Creator (vv. 1-2)

- ¹ *The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it,
the world, and all who live in it;*
² *for he founded it on the seas
and established it on the waters.*

1. God as the Creator has the complete blueprint of the universe. He knows every detail. Unlike us who only have partial information, God has all the information. We are limited to see time in the past, the present and the future. But God sees everything in one glance. His timeline is perfect, He sees it all, from the beginning to the end.

2. It was out of love that God created mankind and the universe. God was already in a perfect state, without creation. God was in perfect contentment within the fellowship of the trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. When God created mankind, He knew that man would rebel against Him, and He knew the only way to save us is by sacrificing His Son. Yet, He chose to create us, out of love.

3. As the Creator, everything in the universe belongs to God. He owns us, yet He doesn't treat us like slaves. He gives us freewill. It doesn't change the fact that He remains the God who is sovereign, who is above all things, above every forces. Nothing and no one can be compared to Him. He is in charge; He is in control.

Those who have carefully examined the mechanics behind the universe and living things realize that science is proving how little we know. Beholding the wonders of the universe, of how a human body and brain works, they recognize how magnificent God is, in creating the world with such complexity. The universe, creation, humans, are far too complex to happen by a chance of coincidence. It is evidence that the universe is intentionally created by someone, by God, our Creator, who is sovereign.

4. God who creates all things, also cares for His creation. Scriptures show us the details and lengths that Gods goes to make sure His creation thrive (e.g. Genesis 1-2, Psalm 104).

Matthew 10:29

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care.

Jesus was teaching His disciples not to worry because God cares for them. In doing so, Jesus says even the sparrows that worth little to humans will not fall to the ground without the knowledge of the Father. God cares for His creation extensively. Throughout Scriptures, God showed how He cared for people: individuals, families, the nation of Israel.

5. God is sovereign in good and challenging times. When we are in a good place, when things are going our way, we are tempted to rely on our own abilities, our own plans, and our own success.

- How does God's sovereignty apply to us when it seems like we can manage our lives on our own, when we don't need His help because all is well?

God the Holy One (v. 3)

³ *Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD?
Who may stand in his holy place?*

1. God the Creator is the Holy One. He is without sin, while we are sinful in nature. Since God is without sin, it means that He cannot tolerate sin. Unfortunately for us, that means that God cannot tolerate being with us who are sinful. As much as God loves and cares for mankind, He cannot dwell among us because the holiness of God would consume man. No one is holy enough to ascend to the mountain of the Lord; no one may stand in his holy place.

Exodus 33:19-20

¹⁹ And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. ²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."



2. God knew sin separates His people from Him, so He made a way for mankind to approach Him. In His grace, He device a temporary plan for His people to approach Him, with the hundreds of laws and rituals in the Old Testament. God was holy and for Israel to come before Him, Israel must be atoned; there must be a payment for their sins, so that they can be holy to come before God. The length of the laws and rituals show the sacredness of God's holiness,.

God's ultimate plan was to send His Son, the perfect sacrificial Lamb, that would bring the perfect atonement. Through the sacrificial work of Jesus Christ on the cross, we are now perfectly atoned. We are declared righteous, clean and pure, not because of what we do, or what we don't do, but because of what Christ has done. Jesus lived a perfect and sinless life on earth, and He took our place in paying the price of the punishment for our sin, dying on the cross. And on the third day, He rose again. Jesus Christ has defeated death and sin.

3. God's grace has no significance if God is not holy. We become grateful towards the sacrifice Christ has made when we see our sinfulness that separates us from the holy God. We appreciate God's grace, mercy, and forgiveness.

Repentance (v. 4)

*⁴The one who has clean hands and a pure heart,
who does not trust in an idol
or swear by a false god.*

1. The bible constantly speaks about our need of a Saviour, and our roles in responding to our Saviour. What Christ has done on the cross has bought us salvation. We are no longer condemned to death by our sin. But, we have a role to play. We need to actively participate in God's sanctification process.

Philippians 2:12-13

“¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose.”

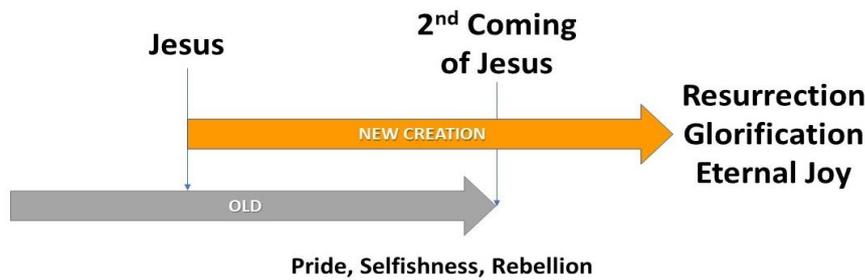
2. Grace and works:

Legalistic	License to sin	Salvation for life after death
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on doing good works to obtain salvation. - The good works that we need to do, the sins that we need to abstain from, in order to assure they have salvation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus is on God’s grace, on the finished work of Christ on the cross. - Jesus has done it all, and all our sins will be forgiven. - We can do anything, and still will be forgiven. - God’s grace becomes a license to sin. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only cares for salvation for the afterlife. - They believe in what Jesus has done for them. They try to “work out” their salvation by doing good works. - But, to merely to secure their place in heaven when they die. - They want to continue to live their lives the way they desire.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undermines the work of Jesus on the cross, treating it as it was not enough. - In their pride, they think their destiny is in their hands. - They feel the need to earn their salvation as they are conditioned by the norm of the world that nothing is given freely, everything has to be earned. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cheapens the work, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. - They misuse God’s grace for their own gain. - They convey that the suffering and death of Jesus has no value to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - They are very self-centred. - The focus is on what they can gain in this lifetime, as well as in the afterlife.

It is easy to look at this list, and try to say, “I’m not like this.” But, if we are honest to admit it, we are all of them. We need to repent from our wicked ways. Our gratitude for God’s forgiveness should lead us to worship, to reverence, to respond to God’s sanctification. None of us deserve what God gives, that is why it is called “grace”, “unmerited favour”. God’s grace and love should lead us to repentance. We don’t repent in fear of judgment and condemnation. We repent in response to the forgiveness we have received from Christ.

The love of God, the sacrifice of Jesus, the forgiveness of our sins, should lead us to repentance, to worship, to surrender, to be willing to do anything for Jesus.

3. Repentance is an ongoing, lifelong process, until we meet God face to face.



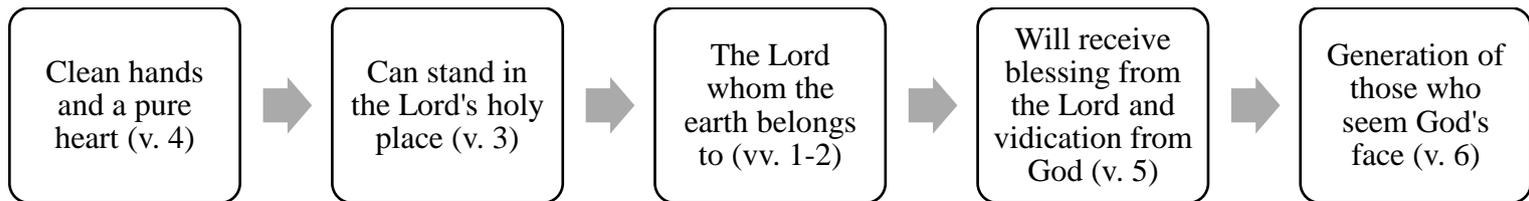
When Jesus came, we are saved from the slavery of sin. We are no longer the old person; we are new creations in Christ. But, we are still living in a broken and sinful world, we are redeemed but we are still in the process of sanctification. We still wrestle with pride, selfishness, rebellion and other sin. The process of sanctification will be completed at the 2nd coming of Jesus, where we will receive resurrection, glorification, and eternal life.

4. God gives us the Holy Spirit to help us overcome sin. God the Holy Spirit gives us grace and strength, not only to resist temptations and selfish desires, He also replaces them with godly desires to live a holy life. As we continue to surrender to the Holy Spirit, the desires of the flesh weaken. Jesus has broken the power of sin, and through the Holy Spirit, He is able to lead us to be holy like Him.

Blessing and Vindication (vv. 5-6)

⁵ *They will receive blessing from the LORD and vindication from God their Savior.*

⁶ *Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, God of Jacob.*



Reflect on our Sunday Sermons about Paul in the book of Philippians:

The early church Christians were persecuted for their faith in Jesus. Many of them were martyred. In a human's perspective, they were never "vindicated". In the midst of such hardship, they know of the blessing of "Emmanuel", God with them; the blessing of friendships within the family of Christ; and the blessing of the advancement of the Gospel. And they were secured with the hope of their reward in eternal life, in being with the One who loves them, and the One they love. Their blessing and vindication will be met in the 2nd coming of Jesus, where Christ will be the Judge that rewards the righteous and punish the wicked.

The King of Glory (vv. 7-10)

⁷ *Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, you 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, you gates;
lift them up, you ancient doors,
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¹⁰ *Who is he, this King of glory?
The LORD Almighty—
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The psalm ends with the coming of the King of Glory. The King of Glory is pictured as a victorious king that has defeated all His enemies. This King of Glory is Jesus Christ. At His first coming, Jesus defeated death and brought salvation through His sacrifice. At His second coming, He will defeat every form of evil and wickedness, and leave no stones unturned.

We can take courage of the victory that is coming. Our King, who is strong and mighty, is glorious; He is coming, He will bring victory.

Prayer Items

1. Psalm 24
 - We may know God as our Creator, the Holy One, the King of Glory
 - We may grasp and appreciate the grace and love of God; leading us to seek God in repentance
 - We may recognize and receive God's blessing and vindication
2. Church
 - Guidance and wisdom in restarting services
 - Renovation
 - Open doors for us to reach out to our new community
 - Salvation: opportunities & courage to be God's witnesses
 - Empowerment to confidently lead in the workplace
 - Ministries: Life Explorers, Redeeming Roses, Destiny Kids & Teens, Worship, Sunday School, Lifeline Youth
 - Si Yun & Ee Khai (Jayden's parents): tumour in Si Yun's colon
 - Aaron & Hannah's wedding
 - Shoban: slipped disc
3. Covid-19 pandemic
 - Deliverance & protection
 - Those infected & their family: healing, comfort & strength
 - Every person: rid of our selfishness, to be considerate and responsible
 - Leaders (government and companies): wisdom, compassion & integrity
 - Grace and favour upon the foreigners, poor and vulnerable
4. Malaysia