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*“The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.”* Psalm 24:1

**Main Idea:** When we walk on this earth, look to the sky, breath the air, eat the food off the land, we must pause and realize all we see and feel, all we can have or want belongs to our Lord. Even our very lives are His. He is the Creator and Sustainer, and we are His. Know that He created it all--the entire universe, the oceans, lakes and rivers, even the substances of the water itself. Therefore, what right is it of our's to have any of it? Can we go to His Heaven and stand in The Holy Place? Not unless He makes it so and invites us in. We must have thoughts and actions that honor God as Lord. We must swear rightly and not lie. We must do right for the right reasons, that honor Him. We cannot worship other things or gods or have distractions greater than Himself. He is the One Who saves and protects. We must trust in Him as Lord, then we will receive His blessings. Make room for God in your life! He will have our backs because we have a sincerity of trust in Him and place Him first and foremost in our lives. We are to remove all that gets in the way of Him. We must remove any egotism, distractions, wrongdoings or wants; all should be lifted away to make room for God as our Most Holy Lord. As He is the Mighty of all that, there is no one or anything stronger or of more worth than God Who created us and all things. So, why bow to a creation when we can have the Creator, our Lord Almighty, all powerful!

### Contexts and Background:

This shepherding Psalm of David's depicts God's people in great ceremonial victory procession with God Himself as the King of Glory. This is in the character of epic celebrations. After David becomes king, he conquers Jerusalem, and takes it back to God from the Jebusites. He then takes the Ark from its temporary residence from the household of Obed-Edom where they were exceedingly blessed, and moves it to Jerusalem where the Tabernacle was set up. He led a procession with 30000 young men. David sang and danced as he escorted the Ark back to its proper resting place. Previously the Ark was miraculously retrieved from its captivity from the Philistines under Saul, who was afraid of it, so it got no celebration because of Saul's disobedience (1 Sam. 5-6; 2 Sam. 5-6; 1 Chron. 13-16; Psalm 68; 138).

This Psalm also has several names for God and point us to what Christ will Be. And, this Psalm is also usually recited by the Christian Church on Ascension Day, and many classic hymns use it as lyrics.

### Commentary—Word and Phrase Meanings:

- *Earth is the LORD's.* Meaning the Creator and Sustainer. Like a city's founder or an empire like Rome, originated by the brothers Romulus and Remus. The entire universe, including our planet earth is created and continued by God. It is His creation, and it is under His ownership and control. It is also a reminder that all belong to Him—all wealth, precious objects, the fertility of the land and animals. We are merely the stewards. He blesses us with Creation not for our exploitation; rather, He gives so that through our careful management, we will glorify God. This is to calm our lusts and power trips and bow to His ways and presence (Psalm 9:7; Isa. 6:3; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; 10:25-31; John 3:16).
- *Founded it on the seas.* This is poetic imagery of an ancient understanding that the earth is set in the cosmos, and the foundation in an “apse,” an architectural allegory of a semicircular, covered recess, where the earth is set on this foundation with a hemispherical vault like the semi-domes of the rest of the universe. Grand cathedrals were built in such fashion to portray this. This is a replication of the Creation account in Genesis One. Here it describes the primordial water-like substance that God creates where matter is derived from. This also refers to the water-table and springs that wells draw from, where humanity gets their water for all our needs. *Sea* also refers to what is scary, foreboding, and sometimes evil. Here God is victorious over the seas (Psalm 29:10-11; 77:16-20; 104:5-9; Nah. 1:4; Dan. 7).
- *Established it on the waters.* Like a solid, strong earth rising out of the waters, which is how the continents were formed and shift (Gen.1: 2-9; Psalm 8:1; 46:2-5; 74:13; 96:11; Isa. 57:20; Heb. 2; 2 Pet. 3:5).

- *Who may ascend the mountain of the LORD?* A portrait of worship, as in making it a deliberate quest. And, to stand in God's presence in His throne room. To stand as a 'sojourner' or stranger in a place that is only temporary. The Tabernacle was God's earthly dwelling place prior to the Temple being built; this was about God dwelling amongst man, being with them. This was to show the Promised Land was not just about the possession of the land; rather, it was about how God possesses our hearts and minds. We cannot possess God. It is He who desires to possess us. It is about being humble, so we are dependent upon Him and His dwelling amongst us, as we are full in Him. Here it is God as humanity's Host that asks us to come worship; it is a personal encounter with God (2 Chron. 7:1-18; Psalm 15:1; Mark 9:3; Eph. 2:16; Col. 1:19-23; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 1:8; Rev. 7:9)!
- *Holy place.* Perhaps the actual throne room of God, or it refers to the altar inside the inner sanctuary where the Ark of the Covenant was kept where the high priest, only once a year and only one person of Israel, had a close relationship to God on the Day of Atonement. This is when the high priest took the incense from the altar/table, along with the blood of the sin offering, into the Most Holy Place. Meaning we have access to God's Heavenly Temple when God calls us there, where before, in the earthly copy, only the high priest had access. This was a shadow of the Person and Word that Christ would do and now has done. Now for the Christian, Christ carries us to the Most Holy Place, the location of our worship of Him now and our eternal rest to come. This is a monumental opportunity and shows us the depth and magnitude of how much we have been saved (Ex. 40:5; Lev 16:12-14; 1 Kings 6:22; Heb. 9:1-10; 10:19-22; 12: 14-29; 13:14).
- *Clean hands.* Refers to a duty to righteous action, (Isa. 1:15; 33:15; Matt. 5:8; Titus 1:15; 1 Tim. 2:8; 1 John 3:2).
- *Pure heart.* Refers to a mindset and motivation for righteous action, as to seek to embody the character we are called to (Psalm 17:15).
- *Trust in and / lift up soul to an / idol.* Literally means to 'nurse an appetite,' as in a desire for what is wrong and evil or what is empty and of vanity, that disgusts God. When God calls us to passionately desire and trust Him as Lord (Psalm 25:1; 86:4; 143:8; Jer. 5:7).
- *Swear / deceitfully by a false god.* Take the names of a deity or idol as a reference for one's loyalty and promise and not by the Word of God. In relationships, means to go around and seek untrue information against someone or spread information that is false or unverified in order to create humiliation (Gen. 42:9; Lev. 19:16; Psalm 12:2; 15:4; 60:11).
- *Blessing from the LORD.* Because one seeks God's face and desires to adhere to His precepts, then God accepts us in an age before Christ (Psalm 23:3).
- *Vindication from God.* Having the favor of God on oneself, and being accepted by God. Like the righteous pronouncement from a judge in one's favor. What is righteous, as in good conduct and character causing success instead of deceit.
- *Savior.* A descriptive name for God, that gives us a sense of command for our devotion, reverence, and awe of our Lord, that we have to yield to Him and His authority, power, as well as His love. From our gratitude because He saved us (Isa. 43:3; 45:15; Gal. 2:20-21).
- *Generation.* This means breed or race of people or circle of people currently of age (Psalm 12:7).
- *Seek your / God's face.* Meaning to place God first in one's life and depend upon Him and thus act with piety and character. The blessing of a face-to-face encounter with God, that Jacob and the rest of the Patriarchs and Moses merely caught a shadowy glimpse of. Now, we do so by Christ's shed blood. It means the true follower of God will worship freely, powerfully, fervently, and truthfully to God (Gen. 32:29-f; Psalm 11:7; 17:15; 63:1; Prov. 8:17; Matt. 6:33; 7:7).
- *God of Jacob.* A title for God, the "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob (Exodus 3:15)".

- *Lift up your heads.* A personified reference to the temple gates. Refers to an architectural reference of the top of the gates header or beam. Ancient buildings that needed the entrances opened wider or the cornice removed. Like a top gate opened or even the gates pulled off their hinges when a large procession or assembly comes or as in pagan shrines when the man made deity is placed into its spot. This can also refer to any headdress like a turban, to be lifted up or a priest's headdress or soldier's helmet. Also, this is a metaphor from these images to ready oneself for worship. To lower one's head to be humble and to raise one's head to rejoice.
- *Gates.* The excitement of a large procession coming in with great celebration and praise. Referring to the entrances of places of worship, where one will be reminded where they are at, so to calm their other thoughts and desires down and offer up a true praise to God. Also, refers to how God opens His entrance for us to approach Him when we are right with Him. As the entire Levitical system is adhered to, then you enter rejoicing.
- *Ancient doors.* How God has been with His people before time. Also means the exercise and the tradition of the pageantry of the battle cry of the faith and the Church (2 Chron. 10:3-5).
- *King of glory / hosts.* A descriptive name for God, how He is strong and mighty, "One-strong" in Himself, the unparalleled mighty in His acts and offering us salvation. This refers to how Solomon carried the ark into the Tabernacle that David had made for it, and then into the Temple he built for it. This also points to how Christ made His public entrance into Jerusalem and His ascension into heaven (Jos. 5:14; Psalm 24:7; 1 Kings 22:19; Hos. 12:5; Amos. 4:13; Matt. 21:10; Heb. 1:6)
- *May come in.* A depiction of how a victorious king coming back from a great battle that saved the kingdom, and how the people welcomed him and cheered. Also, how God offers His salvation of Redemption to those of us who are unworthy.
- *LORD mighty in battle.* A descriptive designation for God, how He fights for us. A Battle march that started with the Exodus and continues in the history of Judaism and into the life of each believer (Ex. 15:3; 1 Chron. 16).
- *LORD Almighty.* A descriptive name for God, that He is "All-Sufficient." A version of this name referred to God as a powerful mother. You have probably seen pictures of the ancient statues of a god who had dozens of breasts, which were actually power nodules not breasts. Those idols of the heathen are called "*sheddin*." In Hebrew, it means a God who is "Over Power", "One who thunders" as a strong God such as the Viking's Thor and his hammer. Nothing can overcome God's omnipotence! Gen. 17:1, 2. (Gen. 17:1-2; 31:29, 49:24, 25; Proverbs 3:27; Micah 2:1; Isaiah 6:3; 60:15, 16, 66:10-13; Ruth 1:20, 21; 2 Cor. 6:18; Rev. 1:8; 16:7).

### **Devotional Thoughts and Applications:**

This Psalm depicts God's absolute Holiness and the life of a follower of God before the redemption of our Lord, Jesus Christ. What we are to gain is how we should be and how we should live because of He has done. We are not live for Christ out of obligation, but by gratefulness and reverence for His rescue of our souls. Because He saved us, we should live a life pleasing to Him. Because of Who He is, I can and will be focused on my devotion to the One True God. To be centered in my thinking and behaviors to His precepts, our best to be our best for His glory. In so doing, we must realize our unworthiness and His Holiness. God should overwhelm us by His singular mighty power and majesty. He redeems, yet He is overpowering. Thus, to help us strive in our response, we should see God as God, not some mere Friend! We should be in utter awe of Him. Because God has and is absolute sovereign power, we have no right or cause to argue or fight with God as Job leaned. That He is The Holy Lord Almighty, and will be so in my life. We can't meet His standard by our own efforts, but we can strive to under His empowerment. God has an impossible standard--so tough that we'll never reach it in this life fully, but we must try anyway. And we can rejoice that a day is coming when we too will stand in God's presence as holy people singing "*Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty* (Gen. 12:8; Psalm 2; Rev. 4)!"

**Christian Life Principle:** We have in Christ, the Lord Almighty, all powerful! Our Lord is the Only One Who is qualified and able to ascend to Heaven, from the fact He is the Creator and by victorious His work on the cross. This is where we begin our worship—His Holiness—and from our unworthiness and indebtedness flows authentic praise.

**The Essential Inductive Questions** (for more Inductive questions, see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

**Additional Questions:**

1. Have you ever been to a great victory celebration? How did it feel?
2. What hymns and worship lyrics can you remember that use this Psalm?
3. What is the portrait of worship that this Psalm can help you paint in your mind?
4. How does this Psalm show us God as the King of Glory? How should this influence the way we worship Him?
5. What names for God, can you find in this Psalm? How do they point us to what Christ will Be?
6. What does it mean that we are under God's His ownership and control? Does this scare you or comfort you? How does this relate to your daily life, problems and all?
7. Since God is in complete control, how should this calm our lusts and power trips and help us bow to His ways and presence?
8. Have you ever considered that we all stand as a 'sojourner' or stranger in a place of our lives that is only temporary? How does this help us deal with difficulty?
9. Why does God call us to be humble? How does this help us be dependent upon Him?
10. What does it mean that God is Holy and also approachable, what is real and important in life is found here, not in what others say or think or do.
11. What is in the way of you fully placing God first in your life and be depended upon Him? How would this help you act with piety and character?
12. What can you apply from this psalm to help you focus yourself as a true follower of God? Consider, how you can worship freely, powerfully, fervently, and truthfully to God.