

Communion

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[0:00] Please, back. Oh, I can use it on here. So he is the King of Glory. I don't know if you saw the news this week,!

In his country. And this has caused quite a stir in the international community due to a lot of Western countries, ours in particular, wanting to use more eco-friendly resources, not oil and gas. However, he is right. It is a gift from God. Sorry, I'm looking at my notes. I can't get my notes down. In God's loving benevolence, he has granted Azerbaijan those precious resources. It is a gift from God. He created them, the Lord God, and he has placed them there, as well as many other minerals and resources.

[1:25] And we see that, don't we, in this psalm, in verses 1 and 2. The maker. The earth is the laws and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.

For he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters. The Lord made this world, the cosmos.

It is his, not ours. This world did not happen randomly, by chance. He fixed it into place. And all who live in it, us, we are made and planned by him.

He owns it. From the tiniest molecule to the gargantuan blue whale. He is the maker and sustainer of all things. He is the master craftsman, and he determines what happens to us, what happens to this world.

He will decide tomorrow, if the snow falls at 5 o'clock, in the north of England, or in Scotland. Ultimately, it's his. It's the Lord's. And it's not our country.

[2:38] It's his country. The planet is ruled by him and governed by him. We see that. Let's move on. He is the powerful maker of everything.

And next, verses 3 to 6, really, or 3 and 4, the mount. So I was talking about this earlier. The mountain of the Lord, in verse 3.

Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? Well, this mountain is where the temple was, the temple mount in Jerusalem, where God's headquarters were, his HQ, the place of his dwelling, where earth and heaven meet.

It was a holy place, the holy of holies. Only the priests could go in there once a year, the high priest. And it was a very important place for Jews.

A place of atonement, where their sins were cancelled. Where animal sacrifices and others were made, so that mankind could be right with him.

[3:57] And who can go there? Who can go up to the hill? Well, the answer is in verse 4.

He who has a clean hand and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to an idol, or swear by what is false. Ever since Genesis 3, the way to the Lord has been barred.

The flaming sword, you recall, at the entrance to the Garden of Eden, in Genesis 3, 24. And then the thick curtain, at the entrance of the holy of holies, in the temple.

That's in Exodus 26, 33. This has kept sinful, impure humans outside, away from a holy God. So the question is, who may go in?

Oops. Lastly, we see the mighty one. In the last verses of this psalm.

[5:13] Verses 7 to 10. And we find the answer posed in these questions. Do you notice the repetition in verses 7 and 9?

I'll read it. Lift up, you heads, you gates. Be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. And verse 9. Lift up, you heads, O you gates. Lift them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in.

It's more or less the same, isn't it? And also in verse 8. Who is this King of glory? The Lord is strong and mighty. The Lord mighty in battle. Look at verse 10.

Who is he? This King of glory, the Lord almighty, he is the King of glory. It mirrors each other, doesn't it? Very common in Hebrew literature.

So who is being described as the King of glory? Well, glory is kavod in Hebrew.

[6:14] Some of you will know that. Meaning weighty in power. Meaning perhaps weighty in riches, influence, immorality, respect, reputation.

That's what kavod means. And strangely, the writer uses anthropomorphic language in verses 7 to 9. What does this mean?

It means language that you would normally associate with a human being. Like lifting up your head. In verse 7 and verse 9.

But it talks about lifting up your gates. So he's referring to inanimate objects, gates. Which is quite strange. Yeah.

You don't say that to a gate, don't you? Lift up your head. Are you gates? And gates and doors were very important in that culture.

[7:16] We don't really put as much significance, do we, on doors and gates these days. Yeah, we have many of them, don't we? They're not that important.

But in that culture, they were. They were of great significance. They were places of commerce, business, where there was transactions, where there were big decisions made, and there was debates, judgments, important meetings.

You had an elders meeting before. That would be done by the gates, in the gates of the city. So it's a very important place for the gates. Just for you to know.

And this last section seems to picture a crowd trying to glimpse this war warrior coming in, coming back from battle.

He is lord and encheered as he returns from fighting, victorious. He enters Jerusalem after conquest with crowds awaiting him.

[8:27] Everyone's craning their necks to see who it is. The question is who can be, who can both ascend the mountain of the Lord and enter his presence and at the same time be the Lord's, Yahweh, the mighty one himself?

And the answer is in Psalm 2, verse 6 and 7. Let's turn back to that. Psalm 2, which Daniel referred to this morning.

6 and 7, verse 6 and 7.

I have installed my king on Zion, my holy hill. I will proclaim the decree of the Lord's. He said to me, you are my son. Today, I have become your father.

God almighty has given us his divine son to reign. This king is God's son.

[9:39] A thousand years after this psalm, the king of glory led his people back into his presence, the presence of God.

He did it by hanging on a cross for us outside the city walls, bearing the punishment for our sins.

And oftentimes, you wonder, don't you, how can we stand in his presence?

How can we stand in his holy place? How can he accept me, a sinner? But we must remember that we don't approach him on the basis of our own pure hearts.

We approach him because of the blood of Jesus. Let's read in Hebrews. Hebrews. Chapter 10.

Hebrews chapter 10, verse 19. Hebrews chapter 10, verse 19.

[11:13] Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the most holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way open for us through the curtain, that is his body.

And since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.

So we can come, brothers and sisters, tonight to the table, not on our own merits because we are all impure, but on the basis of Christ's purity, his innocence.

He is the great warrior king who enters the mountain. He goes into God's presence. And he is the Lord himself who dies on the cross for us.

So let's sing this psalm. Psalm 24.