

A Royal Audience

Introduction

Context:

A post-battle, victorious procession of God's people and the Ark of the Covenant returning to Jerusalem and the temple. → Piper quote

Audience:

The title of the sermon

One request a meeting with a prime minister or president, but one requests an audience with royalty.

Royalty were originally considered God's regent and authority and to be in their presence, for whatever reason, was to hear their wisdom.

And the protocol for entering into the presence of royalty indicated that person's importance.

- Curtsey or bow (the head only) - although you can also shake hands if the queen offers
- On presentation to the Queen, the correct address is Your Majesty and subsequently Ma'am
- Be early. Guests should arrive before a royal.
- Take the Queen's lead. Don't talk unless spoken to, sit until she sits or begin eating until she does.
- Bring a gift.

An audience with the sovereign ruler of the universe following a great military victory.

Main Idea: God is the glorious and victorious King over all ~~whose presence we~~ *and we should greatly*
~~should greatly desire.~~ *desire his presence*

Psalm 24 ESV

A Psalm of David.

¹ *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*

The King's Description

¹ *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.*

- God is the supreme sovereign ruler over everything; he is King because he is Creator
- Starting with this makes sense in light of the victorious battle backdrop
- All of the physical structure is his and all of the inhabitants of the physical structure are his
- Too theoretical? Canada is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, London and those who dwell therein.
- ^A ~~The~~ great myth of Western society and thought is that there is such a thing as autonomy; God owns everything and everyone
- Why? Because he made it.
 - "Creation is an act of God alone, by which, for his own glory, he brings into existence everything in the universe, things that have no existence prior to his creative word." ⇒ All creation is dependent upon God and would not exist apart from him
- Underneath the scientific objections people raise against a created universe are the moral objections against a creator; people rightly recognize the consequences of that reality.
- "founded it upon the seas and established [continues to maintain] it upon the rivers" – poetic or polemic? fanciful words or fighting words?
- A victory over the Canaanites:
 - Canaanite mythology deified the forces of nature
 - Gods named "Prince Sea" and "Judge River"
 - In declaring Gods sovereignty over the seas and rivers they were celebrating their victory over the Canaanites.

Application: Use praise as push back!

- Praise God for specific attributes of accomplishments in the face of the battles you are fighting.
- Society and culture that is rejecting a biblical understanding of gender as well as a biblical understanding of life and its value we might praise:
- ○ The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded even in the womb and established it at the very moment of conception.
- ○ If you're struggling with mental health issues, what a wonderful thing it would be to contend by glorifying God with words of praise that pertain to your situation: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon my entire soul and established it upon my mind."
- ○ If you're struggling with relationship issues, what a powerful thing it would be to confront those problems by glorifying God with words of praise that pertain to your situation: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon all my relationships and established it upon my marriage."

Praise God for his sovereignty and ultimate victory over the battle you are facing.

The King's Requirements

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

— audience with the Ruler of the universe
— "it shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

- The victorious procession now approaches Jerusalem, or even more likely, approaches the temple where they are heading to celebrate the victory
- These words were a type of preparatory liturgy to get the people ready to enter the presence of the King of the universe
- Pause: what a marvel it is that people can approach the Creator! I am not expecting to see the Queen! God is awesome and approachable.
- In preparing the procession for the presence of God, the psalmist asks a question (two different ways) and provides an answer
 - Question:
 - *Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place?*
 - Who gets an audience with the Emperor of the world?
 - Answer
 - Comes in the form of a summary statement and an example
 - Summary statement:
 - *He who has clean hands and a pure heart*
 - He who is pure in all his actions (hands) and all his motives, thoughts, desires, and choices (heart)
 - An audience with the King requires perfect innocence; a holy place in the presence of a holy person requires holiness
 - Everyone is eliminated ... unless some sort of provision is made – sacrifice → *priest reminding worshippers*
 - Example:
 - *[He] who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully*
 - Lifting up one's soul to what is false is to embrace a false intention internally (unclean heart)
 - Swearing deceitfully is using your words to deceive (unclean hands)
- An audience with God requires perfect innocence externally and internally

- Those who do gain an audience, who are admitted into the presence of God are privy to a great blessing and righteousness
 - Blessing = a gift, spiritual or physical
 - Righteousness = vindication, recognition of being in right standing with God
- Those who gain an audience are worshippers and diligent seekers

Application: Remember: being granted an audience means being granted grace! ⇒ *You do not and cannot get their on your own merits!*

Hebrews 10:11-22 ESV

¹¹ And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins *provision* he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. ¹⁴ For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying,

¹⁶ “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord:

I will put my laws on their hearts,
and write them on their minds,”

¹⁷ then he adds,

“I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more.”

¹⁸ Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin.

¹⁹ Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places *audience, access* by the blood of Jesus *no merit, grace*, ²⁰ by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, ²¹ and since we have a great priest over the house of God, ²² let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

GOSPEL = good news of how sinners get to God

① Praise as push back ② Remember grace

Remembering the necessity of grace leads us into our final point which is this: all of this psalm and what we have discussed is built upon the foundation of the coming of the King. The victory, the grace, the audience; all of this is dependent on the King and his coming.

The King's Comings

Three comings:

1. The coming of the victorious King to Jerusalem/temple in Psalm 24
2. The coming of the King to win us a permanent audience with God
3. The coming of the King in final victory

The coming of the victorious King to Jerusalem/temple in Psalm 24

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!*

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¹⁰ *Who is this King of glory?*

*The Lord of hosts,
he is the King of glory! Selah*

- It seems the King is with those in the victory procession
- The gates of Jerusalem, or the temple, must open for the victorious King
- Personification: The gates are slumped in worry and fear
- "Rise up for the King of glory, the Lord strong and might, the victorious sovereign may enter"

- The procession has the ark with it? God's presence?
- This attributes the victory to God and also the access to God
- What makes best sense of this ultimately is seen in our second of three comings of the King

The coming of the King to win us a permanent audience with God

Hebrews 9:11-14 ESV

¹¹ But when Christ appeared [coming] as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) ¹² he entered once for all into the holy places [access], not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to [serve the living God] [clean hands and heart].

access

Before the throne of God above

Before the throne of God above
I have a strong, a perfect plea;
A great High Priest, whose Name is Love,
Who ever lives and pleads for me.

My name is graven on His hands,
My name is written on His heart;
I know that while with God He stands
No tongue can bid me thence depart.

The coming of the King in final victory

All Christians anticipate the literal, visible, bodily return of Jesus Christ to Earth at his second advent (Matthew 25:31-32; Mark 8:38; Acts 1:10-11; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17; 2 Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 1:7). This Second Coming is not merely a spiritual phenomenon. Christ's climactic and triumphant physical return will impact the entire cosmos and end human history as we now know it

Hebrews 9:24-28 ESV

²⁴ 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. ²⁵ Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, ²⁶ for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, 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.

Application: Eagerly wait for the coming of the King because everything good is connected to the comings of the King.

Review:

- Push back with praise for the King.
- Remember grace bestowed by the King.
- Eagerly await the second coming of the King.