

Ushering in the King of Glory

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Psalm 24:7–10 (NKJV) *“Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall 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 you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. ¹⁰ Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah”*

This psalm was regarded by the early church as a Messianic ascension psalm. It may have been used at the time when King David and the people of Israel brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem.¹ As King David and the procession of people came down the Mount of Olives and crossed over the Kidron Valley to ascend to the Eastern Gate, they would shout to the gate keepers, “Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in!” Those on the walls would call out to the procession a response of liturgical celebration, “Who is this King of Glory?” King David and the procession would respond by declaring the name of the King of Glory.

Since gates open outwardly, what is meant by “lift up”? In His Old Testament Commentary, Warren Wiersbe says the following: “Martin Luther translated it, ‘Open wide the portals,’ that is, ‘Give a hearty welcome to the Lord!’” In other words, to lift up the gates is to open the door of access to the King. It means to usher in the King of Glory with a great celebration of welcome.

Psalm 24 was sung in the temple on the morning of what is called Palm Sunday, the day that Jesus entered Jerusalem prior to His crucifixion. Imagine this passage being upon the minds of the people as Jesus descended the Mount of Olives on the foal of a donkey to enter the city of Jerusalem through the Eastern Gate. Imagine the procession of people who followed in welcoming Him as the King, the son of David. Unfortunately, not everyone was ready to welcome Jesus as the King of Glory!

The title “King of Glory” is only used five times in the Bible, and all five of these are in this passage. So, who is the King of Glory? When asked that question, those in the procession declared, “The LORD strong and mighty! The LORD mighty in battle! The LORD of hosts!”

The King of Glory has an army. Kings have armies because of the threat and opposition of enemies. In the Old Testament, Israel fought against natural enemies. Although they had an earthly king, the King of Glory was their heavenly King. The LORD is the true King of Israel. In the New Testament, the spiritual enemy of God’s people is revealed to be Satan and the devil.

The name “The LORD of Hosts” in the Hebrew is *YAHWEH Sabaoth* which means, “The Lord of Armies”. Consider the following passages in the Old Testament:

2 Samuel 7:26 (NKJV) declares, *“So let Your name be magnified forever, saying, ‘The LORD of hosts is the God over Israel...”*

2 Samuel 6:2 (NKJV) *“And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the LORD of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim.”*

A careful study of The LORD of hosts reveals that He is none other than our LORD Jesus Christ.²

¹ 2 Samuel 6:12-19; 1 Chronicles 13

² Isaiah 6:1; John 12:41

What are the “gates” that are to be lifted up? What are the “everlasting doors”? Ancient cities were often fortified with great walls to protect them from enemies. These walls had gates through which people could enter. The elders of the city sat in the gates to evaluate who was coming in and out of the city. The gates of the city functioned as a courthouse of sorts where business was transacted. When an enemy threat arose, the gates of the city were closed and barred. Gates then represent access. The “everlasting doors” let us know that this psalm is about more than a natural gate or door. There are a couple of passages in the Old Testament that help us understand the spiritual nature of these gates and doors.

First, the gates are called the “gates of righteousness.” Psalm 118:19 (NKJV) says, *“Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go through them and praise the LORD.”* True righteousness begins in the heart. The gate of righteousness is the gateway of access to the heart. This speaks of the righteousness of faith. It is faith that lifts the gate of righteousness to let Christ the King enter our heart. What about the gate of your heart? Have you allowed Christ to enter your heart by faith? What about the gate in your home? Have you allowed Christ access into your home? What about the gate of your church? Of your city? Of your nation? When we enter through the gates of righteousness, we enter it by faith with an attitude of praise.

Second, the gates are called “Praise”. Isaiah 60:18 (NKJV) declares, *“...But you shall call your walls Salvation, and your gates Praise.”* The gates of praise are our lips. Hebrews 13:15 (NKJV) says, *“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”* As we open our mouth in praise, we usher the King of Glory in a welcome celebration. Many times we keep Christ out because we refuse to praise Him. Are we keeping the gates of our lips closed? Are we opening the gates to the LORD in our praise?

The gate of our heart and the gate of our lips are both necessary elements in salvation. Consider Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) *“that if you **confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.** ¹⁰ For **with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.**”* We allow access for Jesus Christ the King to enter our lives in salvation when we believe in our heart and when we confess with our mouths.

When the Ark was brought into Jerusalem it was then taken to its resting place or place of rest. In the Old Testament, the initial resting place for the Ark was in the Holy of Holies within the Tabernacle of Moses. Numbers 10:35–36 (NKJV) records, *“So it was, whenever the ark set out, that Moses said: ‘Rise up, O LORD! Let Your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate You flee before You.’ ³⁶ And when it rested, he said: ‘Return, O LORD, to the many thousands of Israel.’”*

After the Ark was captured and returned by the Philistines during the wicked priesthood of Eli, it was brought to Jerusalem by King David into the tent he had prepared for it. This tent was known as the Tabernacle of David. There the Ark found a temporary resting place. King David often spent time in worship before the LORD. Psalm 132:7–9 (NKJV) records the exhortation of his heart: *“Let us go into His tabernacle; let us worship at His footstool. ⁸ Arise, O LORD, to Your resting place, you and the ark of Your strength. ⁹ Let Your priests be clothed with righteousness, and let Your saints shout for joy.”*

King David prepared for the building of a permanent resting place in Jerusalem for the Ark that would be built by his son King Solomon. Thus the temple is known as The Temple of Solomon. At the dedication of the temple King Solomon invoked the LORD to come. 2 Chronicles 6:41 (NKJV) records his prayer: *“Now therefore, arise, O LORD God, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength. Let Your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let Your saints rejoice in goodness.”*

Ultimately the LORD finds His resting place in the praises of His people: *“But You are holy, enthroned in the praises of Israel.”³* When God’s people begin to praise Him with their lips and from their heart, the King of Glory will come and sit upon His throne. There His Presence and kingdom are present.

³ Psalm 22:3 (NKJV)

It is time to open the door of our heart to Jesus in faith! It is time to open the gates of our lips in praise! It is time to welcome the King of Glory into our lives, into our homes, and into our churches! It is time to declare who the King of Glory is! He is the LORD, strong and mighty! He is the LORD, mighty in battle! He is the LORD of hosts! His Name is Jesus! May we usher Him in today!