

## Psalm 24

**Read Psalm 24:1-6:** We begin this psalm with the creation account. There was no chaos in the universe until God made man as a free moral agent.

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form, and void; and darkness [a]was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. (Genesis 1:1-4)*

Jesus made the heavens and the earth...and everything that is in it. He holds all things together. God is in absolute control. He always has been; and he always will.

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or [e]principalities or [f]powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. (Colossians 1:15-17)*

Man's poor decision making affected his environment and nature. God has set up this universe to teach man how unfathomable he is. Once the redemption plan for man is complete; God will burn it all up; and make another heaven and earth. So we have God on his secure and peaceful throne; while man makes his own messes down on earth. We are to be living as foreigners. We have a heavenly citizenship; and we are pilgrims in a foreign and fall land.

Charles Dickens wrote the Tale of Two Cities in the 1800's. It was about the two vastly-different worlds that existed during the French Revolution. One was in touch with reality; and another was an imaginary and unsustainable dream of easy living, without regard to reality. Today, we have reality in heaven and in the hearts of God's people; and we also have a virtual and godless society which is gaining momentum around us. The worse that things get on earth; the easier it is to set our hopes in heaven. How do we make the transition from this rat race of compromise, to a place of total perfection? Part of connecting with God is to look at the truth of all things.

We do not have to get to heaven to see some of God's greatness. There is infinite wisdom in the way that God suspends the planets in their orbits. There is wonder in the nature cycles that replenish our air and water and food needs. It is staggering to learn how our own bodies heal themselves. The closer we look at what he has done; the more we realize how much though he has put into our lives. We are made of atoms and molecules. An atom or molecule is over 99.9% empty space. It is God who is currently holding my subatomic particles together. He has crafted an extraordinarily-complicated system of organs and tissue in me to live in an environment unique to the known universe. God actually thinks about me more than all of this complicated universe.

*How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! 18 If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; (Psalm 139:17-18)*

There is only one formula by which a grimy sinner like myself can ever be with God. He has a special-case redemption program. God has an open door for those who decide to crawl out of the swamp and forsake this world's attractions. God will only be approached by those who intend on sincerely following him. He is a Good Shepherd, who has given his people a beautiful place to live. So we have a path to heaven; but we live in this war zone. He has given us tools to navigate down here.

God is perfectly in control; but he has allowed man to manage his own affairs. God has given man an instruction manual; as to how to be a steward over the earth. The administration of God's authority and governing of earth by man has been a failed project.

Since the beginning, man has broken faith, and tried to do things in a different way. It is like the founder of a company handing the keys over to an irresponsible son. God has informed us about the blessings that come when we follow his plan; and the curses that are the results of man's other plans. The children of Israel saw these curses play out as prophesied verbatim. Similarly, we have a similar cause and effect to our behavior.

We have taken God's word out of our laws and our schools. We have permitted confusing lifestyles into our culture. We are seeing the mini-plagues of disease, and increasingly-poor governmental leadership. Drugs and adultery have infiltrated every aspect of our culture. Fewer and fewer Americans are productive citizens. We have seen a quick slide from our godless methods; but God is still in control.

### ***If You are Obedient to God's Plan***

*"Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. **2** And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God: **3** "Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. **4** "Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. ...*

### ***If You Go Another Way***

**15** *"But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: **16. ...20** "The Lord will send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in all that you set your hand to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, because of the wickedness of your doings in which you have forsaken Me. (Deuteronomy 28)*

Unfortunately, every generation of man messes things up so badly that God has to intervene. We seem to follow a suicidal path of wrong choices for immediate gratification. God has cleaned off the slate and intervened many times to allow the world to continue and provide yet another opportunity for the next generation to come. God has all power and might to fix any mess. It could be like the renaissance; that followed the dark ages, if we repent. We have turned our back on the power and resources of heaven. We are witnessing the beginning of a moral free-fall in our country. We have gone from poor choices in our political leaders and increasing media censorship of conservative dialogue, to now having opening congressional prayers with a prayer to a hindu idol. The slide downhill is accelerating. The time has come to stand back, and ask God to send in his Kingdom of Light to restore order, and salvage our blessed country.

Psalm 24 is a contrast between two simultaneous truths. This planet belongs to God, to do with whatever he pleases. He built it; and he maintains it. He allows us to ruin our own lives if we choose to. We are rapidly destroying our foundations. This course is not sustainable. God not only needs to build the universe...and hold it together (atom by atom)..but he has to keep intervening and fixing what we have broken.

Once again it is time to have our *master-mechanic* make a house call. Once again we are broken. The situation has gotten away from us. We now have God-sized problems. It's time to have our creator and founder and master fix our planet, before it is broken beyond repair. We do not have the resolve to even clean up our own messes. There are areas in San Francisco where human feces have to be cleaned off of the sidewalk 5 times per day; despite adding open sewer-access holes in the sidewalk; where street people will squat in the middle of the public sidewalk. I have spoken to city officials who tell me that they have hotel rooms provided for the homeless. Even so, the *house rules* (curfew, no drugs or violence, etc) are too much for them to abide by; so they choose to take drugs and live under tarps and cardboard. It is not only a problem for the depraved street person; but it has an impact on all of us. Despite our technology, we are going back to medieval times. The rubbish and human waste are piled high in a sea of rats and hypodermic needles and disease. The Black Plague has returned, despite our technology and knowledge.



We can clearly see that we have taken a beautiful place of provision; and we are absolutely ruining it. God help us! **We are a country of two nations.** Those who are living in a virtual world; without back-checking any manipulative propaganda; and those who know the trouble we are in.

The good news is that God knew that we would have a tendency to destroy whatever is good. The prophets told us what we would do long before we did it. Moses told the children of Israel how they would ruin the land of plenty by mixing into the local idolatrous cultures, before they even crossed the Jordan river. God's knowledge and control is precise, amidst our chaos. His patience serves a greater purpose. How can you convince a hard-headed person that they have chosen the wrong path? Let them live with the results and ramifications. We are doing exactly that in our country.

The biggest question is really not how to fix each problem. This cannot be solved with better public policy. We are surrounded by symptoms of a broken relationship with God. We need to restore our relationship with God. We will receive a blessing from God as soon as we do that. Until then; things will keep falling apart.

We know that the world is going to continue to decay. But we also know that God will bless us amidst all of this as we enter into a deeper fellowship with him.

**Read Psalm 24:7-10:** I used to think that I was in no hurry to see the LORD return. I was satisfied to see him after my last breath; and walk with him in the Spirit until then. My view is transforming as mankind makes this country and this planet more of a mess. I find myself asking God to come and clean up our mess. Jesus will return right as man is on the verge of destroying himself again at the battle of Armageddon. It will be like the days of Noah; when all flesh has again become violent and corrupt, bent on mutual destruction.

*For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the [c]elect's sake those days will be shortened.... "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30 Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. (Matthew 24, various verses)*