

The King of Glory

Psalm 24 Part XII

By Glen Gerhauser

“Lift up your heads, you gates,
And be lifted up, you ancient doors,
That the King of glory may come in!”
(Psalm 24:7, NASB).

Join me in seeing Jesus’ story – the greatest ever told – from a heavenly perspective. Imagine we are sitting with the angels, observing what they saw and hearing their conversations (1 Pet. 3:16). Let’s start with the resurrection. Jesus recently rose from the dead and is now ascending to heaven before his disciples (Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:9-11).

The angels cry, “Lift up your heads, you gates, and be lifted up, you ancient doors.” The King who exited your exalted gates to dwell with his creation is returning to his throne. Now he ascends to sit beside his Father in glory, where it all began (Luke 22:69). He left these quarters to fight the most significant battle — the war against sin, death and Satan. He fought to restore all the brokenness that Satan and his temptations brought to the world (Acts 3:21; Eph. 4:10).

When Jesus departed, the angels may have wondered, “How will he ever return?” (1 Pet. 1:12). For after Jesus exited out of the heavenly gates and ancient doors, his archenemy was waiting to devour him (Rev. 12:3-4).

The devil fought with Jesus even while his mother nursed him (Matt. 2:13-23). To eradicate the Holy Child from the earth, the evil one incited Herod to kill all the children under two years old. But the Father protected Jesus in the most unlikely place: Egypt. God’s Son entered into the darkest place of Israel’s history – their slavery in Egypt – for safety. In Egypt, his Father sheltered Jesus so that he could fully identify with his people and call him out of the darkness, fulfilling Hosea 11:1: “Out of Egypt I called my Son” (Matt. 2:15).

Once Jesus fully matured and after he was baptised, he entered the wilderness. Again, he identified with Israel’s history. In this empty place, Satan did not leave him to enjoy the serenity of the surroundings. Instead, he tempted him three times. The devil attacked him at his weakest point when fasting and hungry. He tried to persuade him to take shortcuts — to separate from his Father and still be fed, protected and honoured as the king. The adversary said, “I’ll give you all this – all the world and its glory – if you just bow to me” (Matt. 4:1-11).

Jesus chose a better way: his Father’s way. His response to every attack was God’s Word. In the end,

he said, "It is written, 'Worship the Lord and serve him only'" (Matt. 4:10). Jesus was not going to take the devil's alternative route to glory.

Throughout Jesus' life, the enemy pestered him through the Pharisees and Sadducees. Many of these men looked like the epitome of righteousness but were rotten to the core (Matt. 23:27). They bombarded the Son of God with traps and accusations, even right up to his death. It seemed like Satan and his seed were about to get the better of him.

Remember when the Pharisees tried to trap him regarding taxes, forcing him to choose between his loyalty to his people, Israel, and his submission to the Roman government? If he chose his people over the Roman government, the Romans would charge him with rebellion. If he chose the Roman government over Israel, his people would turn away from him (Mat. 22:15-22).

The Pharisees questioned, "Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar?". Stuck between a rock and a hard place, he transcended their petty ploy, saying, "Give me a coin. Whose face is on it? It's Caesar's, right? Then give to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God what is God's."

Soon, Satan made a last-ditch effort to bring down Jesus. He tried to get into one of his closest men, Judas. For money, he incited Judas to betray his own Rabbi and friend, Jesus.

The whole time Jesus washed his disciples' feet and celebrated the Passover with them, something was going on in Judas' head and heart. While he was being shown love and grace, Judas was plotting to betray Jesus. Yes, you can be in the holiest place with the holiest person and Satan himself can be influencing your thoughts.

Now, the devil thinks he has Jesus for sure. He's going to get Jesus' arrested. Maybe if he pushes hard enough, he can get him crucified. That's a long shot, but it's worth a try. And Satan succeeded – or did he?

During the crucifixion, Paul gives us insight that the forces of evil thought they defeated the King who had laid aside his glory (1 Cor. 2:8). The evil one reasoned that his death on the cross was Jesus' end. But the King who came from glory – and himself is God's glory – is the Lord strong and mighty. He is mighty in battle and won a great victory over the serpent through his death and resurrection. Yes, the serpent bruised Jesus' heel, but Jesus crushed his head (Gen. 3:15).

The cross was Jesus' greatest weapon. What seemed like the greatest attack against him was actually a death blow against his archenemy. It makes no sense unless you understand the power of sacrifice, a message God continually communicated to Israel. To Sum it up, it was through the sacrificial lamb and his blood that God set

his people free, causing them to escape death (Rev. 12:11).

The King of Glory laid aside his heavenly glory to show that his glory was more than his throne, power and authority over creation. His glory was an intrinsic quality that was the essence of who he was, no matter what people or even the serpent stripped from him.

Jesus' death was like the sacrifices in the temple: substitutionary — on behalf of every sinner. His resurrection was revolutionary — overturning the natural order of all things. Through it, he won the greatest war. Now that he has risen from the dead, it's time for him to claim his crown and throne (1 Pet. 3:22). He laid it down for a time, but it's time for him to receive it again.

And so Jesus ascends as his disciples marvel on (Luke 29:49-53). As he ascends, the angels call out to one another. "Lift up your heads, you ancient gates. Be lifted up, you everlasting doors, so that the King of Glory may come in" (Ps. 24:7). Heaven praises Jesus, singing, "Who is this King of Glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; The Lord mighty in battle, he is the King of Glory." And now that we've recounted his condescension and incarnation — along with his life, death and resurrection — we can understand their ecstatic celebration.

Just as he was welcomed by Mary when she conceived him, just as they welcomed him into Jerusalem with

praise — now heaven's guardians embrace him and acknowledge his rightful throne with jubilation.

He won the battle. More accurately, he won many battles. Herod tried to kill him when he was born. His own hometown attempted to throw him off a cliff. Wind and waves sought to engulf him. His disciples didn't comprehend him. Pharisees and Sadducees tried to trap him. One of his inner circle — the twelve — betrayed him. His chief disciple denied him thrice. They cursed, mocked, whipped and crucified him. Yet, none of this stopped him from saying, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

At the cross, it seemed Jesus had lost the battle. He died. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus embalmed him with spices, wrapped him in linen and buried him in a tomb (John 19:38-42). The tomb was sealed and guarded. No trickery was going to get past the government's watchful eye. It looked like his fate was sealed (Matt. 27:62-66).

But then the earth shook and the massive stone guarding the tomb rolled away (Matt 28:1-8). Life overcame death. Jesus' body — not merely his spirit — rose from the dead. Then he spent forty days revealing his resurrected glory, accumulating over five hundred eye-witnesses (Acts 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:6).

The ancient gates and everlasting doors opened when he ascended into heaven. We may have expected that

the angels closed them once the King of Glory took his throne, but that was not the case. Instead, these gates and doors stayed open, welcoming all who would humbly come to the king in faith and repentance.

These ancient gates and everlasting doors remained open so that Jesus could send his Spirit and disciples into the world to be his witnesses. Now, the apostles, evangelists and all of God's people echo the call of God's heavenly messengers, his angels, saying, "Be lifted up, you ancient gates, and be lifted you everlasting doors so that the King of Glory may come in."

Why are God's people echoing this call? Because they want the gates of your life and the doors of your heart open to the King of Glory. Those doors that you've locked for so long need to open. Jesus' goal is not merely to reign in heaven; he wants to reign in you. He calls at the door of your heart, desiring to come in and enjoy a feast with you (Rev. 3:20-21).

In this feast of glory, when he dwells with us, he also calls us up to the open door in heaven so that we can dwell with him in glory (Rev. 4:1). He invites us to be seated with him beside his Father and there's no higher place you can be. He fought the epic battle to capture our hearts and take us up with him so that we may share in his glory (John 17:22).

If you know him, it's time to arise and call others to open their gates and doors to the King of Glory. It's time to

pray that every single person would open up to him — to pray and pray and pray until every tongue, tribe, nation and people let the King sweep in. And if you don't know him, it's time to wake up and open the door to the Messiah because that's why you were created.