

## THE EARTH IS OF GOD IN ITS FULLNESS

Responsorial Song from Psalm 24 for All Saints A for Psalmist (Cantor), Assembly & Descant with Keyboard, 2 Flutes [or Trumpets] & Guitar

## **TONY BARR**

We are your people, O God. We long to see your face.

The earth is of God in its fullness, the world and all Nations, all people. Who has set it firmly on the waters, and who anchored it safely on its base.

Who may come to the mountain of this God? Who may climb to the Holy Place? Who may stand in the sight of the Pow'rful One? Who may gaze on the Holy face to face.

The innocent of hand and of heart, whose lives are not empty and aimless, who seek justice and integrity, and whose ways are truthful and blameless.

They shall be blest by their God, who do not forge lies against each other, who waste no time in pursuit of slander, and whose word is guardian of faith.

Psalm 24 is a hymn to the Creator, a God of Justice, which developed from the New Year, a rite of election of God to be King once more. In the later Feast of Tabernacles, as the pilgrims arrived in Jerusalem, they were overcome by the magnificent holy mountain, and sang hymns to honor their Creator. Entering the Temple courts, they were challenged with the cost of discipleship: there can be no admittance, no praise, without justice. Singing of a battlefield victory, they brought God into the assembly with them.

The verses describe what happens. Verse 1 is sung as they gather at the city gates. Verses 2-3 follow their progress up Mount Zion to the Temple gates and the dialogue with the Gatekeeper about their worthiness to enter the Temple Courts. Verse 4-7 describe their journey into the Temple, a litany of praise and dialogue with the Temple Choir. Arriving at the Temple doors, they hammer on them, demanding admission. Once again, the God of Covenant, and justice itself, returns to the world.

Each year, at harvest time (late September - early October) Jewish people celebrate a high feast. Of the three harvest festivals (barley in spring, wheat in early summer, fruit in autumn), the final harvest is observed as a great festival. Later Judaism invested the spring harvest with greater importance, as Passover. At this time, several festivities took place, all influenced by the neighboring pagan states.

The feast was basically a **New Year festival.** Autumn meant the end of the agrarian cycle, the year coming to a close. A new year was to begin, with the rains of early winter. It was a time for **celebrating Harvest.** The crops had been gathered, homesteads were well stocked with grapes, olives, fruits, wine. This was a prosperous time, a time for weddings (dowries were in good shape)! Much of Israel's wedding poetry used the image of the vine, an image the Prophets used to describe the bonding between God and Israel. And it celebrated **the Feast of Enthronement.** Nations honored their kings as gods, who had led them in a year of prosperity. The people welcomed their king-gods as rulers for the forthcoming year, to ensured continued blessings. Israel did not honor the king as God, but welcomed God as their King. And so this feast re-elected God as King for another year.

After the return from Exile (BC 535), later Judaism devised an elaborate Temple Liturgy, investing early feasts with rich meanings. Enthronement became a Messianic Feast, honoring the God of Exodus as King whose return would herald a new exodus, a new creation, a new age of justice and prosperity for all.

- Tony Barr

music & text from Psalm 24 © 1988, 2020 Tony Barr graphics & typesetting by Jabulani published by Jabulani Music 1988, 2020 (One License)

Jabulani Music, 1520 E Saint Germain St, Apt 81, Saint Cloud, MN 56304 phn 847-508-6576 email tbarrjabulani@gmail.com

## The Earth Is Of God In It Fullng

Responsorial Song from Ps. 24 for All Saints (A)









## The Earth Is Of God In It Fullness

Responsorial Song from Ps. 24 for All Saints (A





