

**The Lord of Hosts**  
**By Sharon W. Betters**

**Today's Treasure**

*My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?*  
*Psalm 42:2*

The Psalmist uses several names for God throughout Psalm 84: Lord of hosts, the Living God, my King, and my God. In fact, he uses "the Lord of Hosts" four times:

*How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts!*  
*Psalm 84:1*

*Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, at your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.*  
*Psalm 84:3*

*O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob!*  
*Selah Psalm 84:8*

*O LORD of hosts, blessed is the one who trusts in you!*  
*Psalm 84:12*

The title "Lord of Hosts" is rarely used in the Psalms. Seven of the twelve times "Lord of Hosts" is used in Psalms are in the eleven Psalms for the Sons of Korah:

|             |                      |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Psalm 24:10 | Psalm 46:7           |
| Psalm 46:11 | Psalm 48:8           |
| Psalm 59:5  | Psalm 69:6           |
| Psalm 80:4  | Psalm 84:1, 3, 8, 12 |
| Psalm 89:8  |                      |

What makes the use of the "Lord of Hosts" by the Sons of Korah so significant? Their great grandmother Hannah first used this title in her prayer for a son:

*And she vowed a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to*

*your servant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head."*

*1 Samuel 1:11*

When we understand what the Lord of Hosts means, Hannah's use of this title makes complete sense. This name for God is used 235 times throughout Scripture. The literal meaning in Hebrews is "Lord of Armies". How eye opening to learn the first time it appears in the Bible is when barren Hannah cries out to God for a son. Hannah keys in on this quality of her God for only He has the power of life. He is the "Lord of armies", God of creation who makes something out of nothing. Only He creates life. Hannah's only hope is in the Lord of Hosts – the One who speaks but a word and the whole of creation obeys. The Lord of Hosts "upholds the universe by the word of his power":

*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.*

*Hebrews 11:1-3a*

Another translation of "Lord of the Hosts" is Lord of the Angel Armies. 2 Kings 6 tells the story of Elisha and his servant as they faced the Syrian army. The servant saw the Syrian army surrounding the city. The hoard of horses and chariots terrified him, crying out, "Oh my lord, what shall we do?" Elisha answers with words we need imprinted on our hearts:

*"Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."*

*2 Kings 6:16*

Though unseen to the servant, Elisha knew the Lord of Hosts was with them with his vast army, an army greater than any other. He asks the Lord to allow the servant to see why Elisha was not afraid:

*And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, LORD, so that he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.*

*2 Kings 6:17*

Imagine the shock and awe of such a sight, especially when confronted by an enemy as wicked and strong as the Syrian army. The Lord of Hosts is the Lord of armies of angels. His reach cannot be over exaggerated and we see another example in this story:

*As the enemy came down toward him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, "Strike this army with blindness." So he struck them with blindness, as Elisha had asked.*

*2 Kings 6:18*

After Elisha led them into the city, he asked the Lord to remove their blindness. God spoke the word and the eyes of the Syrians had to obey the command of the Lord of Hosts. Every human cell is sustained and bows to the command of the Lord of Hosts.

### LIFE-GIVING ENCOURAGEMENT

Are you facing what appears to be an insurmountable mountain of despair, pain or confusion? Is the enemy whispering or shouting: *you don't deserve God's blessings or forgiveness? You will never amount to anything. Look at what your family did, how you were raised. No one will want you when they know your history.*

The Sons of Korah could have lived under a heavy, self-imposed cloak of guilt and maybe they did for a while. Yet in time, the Lord redeemed their family history and placed them in positions of honor. The same Lord of Hosts they called on is our Lord of Hosts. Every cell, every being must submit to His voice.

Elisha's words are true today, "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them". Count on this truth. When you are in a spiritual war, those who are with your Lord, the Lord of Hosts, are more than those who are against you.

In the first months and perhaps even years of learning a new normal after the death of our son Mark, like Elisha's servant, I repeatedly cried out, "Oh Lord, what shall I do?" I often reminded the Lord of His promises, sometimes concluding He could not keep them. I forgot that my God is the mightiest of warriors, the Lord of all armies, the Creator of all creation. Every tear I shed was under His sovereign care. In time I concluded the Lord of Hosts who upholds the universe by the power of His word (Hebrews 1:3a) was upholding my broken heart as well. You, too, can call on the Lord of Hosts and know those who are for you, though hidden from your sight, are more than those you can see.