

Psalm 84

For the director of music. According to *gittith*. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm.

- ¹ *How lovely is your dwelling place,
Lord Almighty!*
- ² *My soul yearns, even faints,
for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh cry out
for the living God.*
- ³ *Even the sparrow has found a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may have her young—
a place near your altar,
Lord Almighty, my King and my God.*
- ⁴ *Blessed are those who dwell in your house;
they are ever praising you.*
- ⁵ *Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.*
- ⁶ *As they pass through the Valley of Baka,
they make it a place of springs;
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.*
- ⁷ *They go from strength to strength,
till each appears before God in Zion.*
- ⁸ *Hear my prayer, Lord God Almighty;
listen to me, God of Jacob.*
- ⁹ *Look on our shield, O God;
look with favor on your anointed one.*
- ¹⁰ *Better is one day in your courts
than a thousand elsewhere;
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.*
- ¹¹ *For the Lord God is a sun and shield;
the Lord bestows favor and honor;
no good thing does he withhold
from those whose walk is blameless.*
- ¹² *Lord Almighty,
blessed is the one who trusts in you.*

INTRO to series “Summer in Psalms” – The Hebrew Psalms in our Bible are filled with ancient prayers, poems, laments, hymns, and spiritual songs written by God’s people throughout many generations. As the Holy Spirit spoke through them, their words of praise and faith were collected into five books with 150 different psalms.

Our Summer series will survey several of the Psalms which proclaim God's faithfulness in all generations. They also call on us to trust the Lord in our own generation, seeking His best purposes in our homes, our church, and the world in which we live. A special part of this summer series will be the incorporation of music and singing led by our worship teams based on the Psalms we study.

INTRO to **Psalm 84**: Another one of the psalms of the "Sons of Korah," Psalm 84 is often referred to as one of the "pilgrim psalms" that the Jews would sing when making pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the festivals. It is also a psalm that speaks about the hope and joy of worship for those who are depressed, down in the dumps, or who cannot be where their hearts long to be.

I. Does your heart long for true worship in God's presence? (vs. 1-4)

-Because the Temple in Jerusalem was the most sacred place on earth for the Hebrew people in the days of the Kings and Prophets, every Israelite longed to visit its courts whenever possible.

-Here the psalmist seems to indicate that he cannot go to worship as he desires, and so his heart is longing and yearning to be in God's presence.

-The psalmist appears almost envious of the birds—like the sparrows and swallows—who would nest in little crevices among the stones of the temple and be present inside its courts. The birds, like all of creation, were also singing God's praises...and God welcomes them and provides for them! (There are more than 50 verses about birds in the Bible, see **Matthew 6:25-27** and **Matthew 10:29-31** below where Jesus uses birds to remind us how God cares for us!).

-**vs. 4** is one of the beatitudes in this psalm: *Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.*

-We don't have to visit Jerusalem to experience God's presence in worship. He is present in our hearts and in the Church when we call upon Him and gather in His name. We are not strangers to Him, we are members of His household! (see **Ephesians 2:19-22** below).

II. How do you worship even in dry or difficult seasons? (vs. 5-7)

-**vs. 5** is another beatitude: *Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.*

-The Valley of Baka, also known as "The Valley of Weeping," was a dry and difficult place through which to travel. But here, the genuine worship of the people of God singing His praises creates springs and feelings like that autumn rains which make pools of fresh, life-giving water.

-On the way to worship in Zion (Jerusalem), even in the midst of difficulty, there is hope with every step and a joyful expectation of being in God's presence in worship.

III. Do you desire the Lord in your life above anyone or anything else? (vs. 8-12)

-The psalmist believes that God not only hears his prayers but also sees the needs of his people. He prays for the security (shield) and leaders (anointed one) among the people, and yet still longs for more than just the good things life can offer.

-In **vs. 10**, the psalmist expresses his true desire is to be in God's presence, and even to be near God's presence would be better than being in the finest places anywhere away from the Lord and among the wicked.

-Because the "Sons of Korah" are described in Scripture as doorkeepers at the tabernacle and temple, this Psalm speaks from personal experience of being at the threshold of the temple courts where worship is happening.

-**Psalm 84** concludes with worship statements about who God is and why our deepest desires can only be met by Him:

- The Lord is a sun – His light always shines upon us
- The Lord is our shield – He protects us from evil
- The Lord blesses His faithful and obedient people with favor and honor withholds no good thing from them.

-**vs. 12** ends with one final beatitude – All who trust in the Lord are blessed, even if they never make it to Jerusalem.

-Every believer is on a pilgrimage through this Life with the Lord and toward the Lord and someday to our eternal home, where the final Temple and worship will happen with the Lord and the Lamb forever! (see **Revelation 21** below)

Other Scriptures Referenced:

Matthew 6:25-27: *"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"*

Matthew 10:29-31: *Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.*

Ephesians 2:19-22: *Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*

Revelation 21:1-5, 22-27: *Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."*
⁵ *He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." . . . ²² I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³ The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. ²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. ²⁷ Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.*

Other Quotes/Resources:

-“Our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee.” –Augustine