

SBC – Oct. 26, 2025

Psalm 84:1-12 (NKJV)

“Longing for the House of God”

Psalm 84 (NKJV)

To the Chief Musician. On An Instrument of Gath. A Psalm of the Sons of Korah.

This Psalm was intended to be used in conjunction with corporate worship. The Psalms are often referred to as the songbook of God’s people.

An instrument of Gath was some type of musical instrument, perhaps likely associated with the Philistine city of Gath. It appears in the titles of Psalm 8, 81, and 84. Some suggest it may have been a musical instrument that David acquired from Gath. But all of this is uncertain.

The **sons of Korah** were Levites. Their ancestor Korah led a rebellion of 250 community leaders against Moses and Aaron during the wilderness days of the Exodus (Numbers 16). The rebels challenged the divinely appointed leadership of Moses and Aaron, claiming that all the Israelites were holy and could hold the priestly office.

When Moses heard of this rebellion he fell on his face...

Slide # 1

Numbers 16:5 (NKJV)

5 and he spoke to Korah and all his company, saying, “Tomorrow morning **the LORD will show who is His and who is holy**, and will cause him to come near to Him. That one whom He chooses He will cause to come near to Him.

Those in the conspiracy continued to complain about the leadership of Moses saying you, “keep acting like a prince over us” (Num. 16:13).

Moses then issued this warning...

Slide # 2

Numbers 16:28–30 (NKJV)

28 And Moses said: “**By this you shall know** that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will.

29 If these men **die naturally like all men, or if they are visited by the common fate of all men**, then the LORD has not sent me.

30 But if the LORD creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the LORD.”

Slide # 3

Numbers 16:31–32 (NKJV)

31 Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them,

32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods.

Korah and all his followers died in a most unique fashion with the earth opening up and swallowing them alive. Thus God's divine judgment was clearly demonstrated against those who challenged God's chosen leaders.

However, the children are not held accountable for the sins of the father nor vice versa. Ezekiel 18:20 is very clear that everyone is responsible for their own sin.

God judged Korah and those leaders in rebellion with him, but the sons of Korah remained (cf. Num. 26:9-11). By David's time, these remaining descendants of Korah had come to be leaders in the matter of temple worship (cf. 2 Chron. 20:19). Biblically they are seen as the gatekeepers and musicians in the temple (cf. 1 Chron. 6:22; 9:17-32; 26:1).

The sons of Korah in one way or another are accredited with 11 Psalms (Ps. 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 84, 85, 87, 88). Whereas the Psalms of Asaph (Ps. 50, 73-83) largely deal with the destruction of the temple and the nation, the Psalms of the sons of Korah have as a key theme the temple's restoration and the prospect of once again worshiping God in person there.

Psalm 84 is seen as a companion Psalm to Psalm 42-43 because it expresses the same intensity to worship God in person at the temple.

Slide # 4

Psalm 42:1–2 (NKJV)

1 As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God.

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

Psalm 84 technically might be considered a “pilgrimage Psalm,” but it is not put in the collection of the “Pilgrimage Psalms,” which are Psalms 120-134.

Psalm 84 is the deep expression of pious Jews longing to be in the place of worship at the temple. For them, there is nothing greater than being in intimate fellowship with God.

Psalm # 5

Psalm 84

“Longing for the House of God”

vv. 1-4 Longing for the House of God

vv. 5-7 Strength in the Pilgrimage

vv. 8-9 The Pilgrim’s Prayer

vv. 10-12 The Blessings of Fellowship with God

1 How lovely is Your tabernacle, O LORD of hosts!

This Psalm was perhaps composed in the days of the tabernacle (under David) or perhaps in the days of the temple (under Solomon). Tabernacle is literally “dwelling place”. Either way, his affection is clear. He loved the house of God. He considered it lovely or beautiful.

LORD of hosts is literally “YHWH of hosts” which refers to the eternal unchanging God of Israel as the One who is sovereign over the armies of heaven. This is a POWER name! He is a God who is sovereign over all powers and has all power at His disposal.

2 My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

The writer is desperate for God! His soul longs, and even faints for the courts of the LORD. It wasn’t merely a place he longed for, but as the rest of the verse makes clear, his longing was really for the living God!

He longed to be in the place of intimate worship! He longed to be in God's presence, which in the OT was most intensely connected to the tabernacle or the temple. This is all about intimate fellowship with God!

Such longing for God is precious to Him! He seeks for true worshipers who will worship Him in spirit and in truth (Jn 4:23-24).

A love for God is indicative of true salvation. Both John MacArthur and Jonathan Edwards emphasized that "holy affections"—a deep love for God and spiritual things—are the greatest evidence of salvation.

Slide # 6

1 Corinthians 8:3 (NKJV)

3 But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

1 Corinthians 16:22 (NKJV)

22 If anyone does not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed. O Lord, come!

Ephesians 6:24 (NKJV)

24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

1 John 4:19 (NKJV)

19 We love Him because He first loved us.

Of course, as believers, we can lose our first love (cf. Rev. 2:4). We can get off track! We can grow cold and distant. As James 4:8 says, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."

But down deep there is something for God – some affection – some appreciation of what He has done for us in saving us. May God make us thirsty for Him, where we passionately long for Him like the Psalmist.

Truly, as John says, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son (1 Jn. 1:3). Sometimes we need to be reminded how very precious this reality is! It is amazing how prone we are to wander, as the song says, "Prone to leave the God I love." We do love Him, and yet we are so easily distracted – so easily prone to wander.

This speaks to all who come to the [place of worship] today. They must come without primary focus upon programs, social connections, entertainment, excitement, or self-improvement; they must come with the primary focus and expectation of meeting with **the living God**.

– **David Guzik**

One of my favorite titles for God in the Bible is that of Him being **“the living God.”** It is found in both the OT and the NT (cf. Deut. 5:26; Josh. 3:10; 1 Sam. 17:26; Isa. 37:17; Dan. 6:20; Matt. 16:16; Acts 14:15; 2 Cor. 3:3; 1 Tim. 3:15). In 1st Timothy Paul refers to God as “the living God” three times (1 Tim. 3:15; 4:10; 6:17). The writer of Hebrews refers to Him as “the living God” four times (Heb. 3:12; 9:14; 10:31; 12:22).

The living God emphasizes Him as moving, as a relational God who interacts with us, who moves in our midst, who intervenes, who speaks to us, who acts, and interacts with us and our situation. He answers prayer. He moves in our hearts. He reveals truth. He brings conviction. He brings comfort and on and on. He is our living God who constantly interfaces with us in a myriad of ways.

3 Even the sparrow has found a home, And the swallow a nest for herself, Where she may lay her young— Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts, My King and my God.

In a sanctified sense, he is envious of the sparrow and the swallow who find a nesting place in the context of the altars of the LORD. They live so close to the LORD – how blessed they are just to live close to God’s presence in this way.

The sparrow in Scripture is a picture of “loneliness”.

Slide # 7

Psalm 102:7 (NKJV)

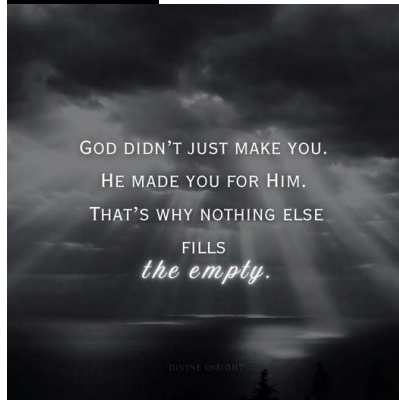
7 I lie awake, And am like a sparrow alone on the housetop.

The swallow is known for its restless darting here and there. It is a picture of restlessness.

Birds are relatively insignificant and yet even they are found in the place of blessing near the presence of God. Jesus said not even a sparrow falls to the ground apart from the Father’s will (Mt. 10:29).

The idea is that the insignificant, the lonely, and the restless can all find a nesting/resting place in God's presence. This is the place of fulfillment and rest made available to all – even the most seemingly insignificant. All matter to God! It is a beautiful picture of the God Who cares (1 Pet. 5:7 – cf. Matt. 11:28).

Slide # 8



And then again he says, “**O LORD of hosts**” adding, “***My King and my God.***” God here is Elohim which recognizes God as the HIGHER power over him – the supreme Being over all. In the use of these titles the writer recognizes God's sovereign authority over all (LORD of hosts) and over himself personally (My King and my God – cf. Jn. 20:28).

4 Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; They will still be praising You. Selah

The first four verses make much over basking in God's presence. For the Psalmist, experiencing the presence of God is the greatest thing. Happy are those who dwell in God's house – which is to say His presence. Their whole experience is filled with praise! They can't get enough of God and they can't praise Him enough!

Slide # 9

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV)

11 You will show me the path of life; **In Your presence is fullness of joy**; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Fellowshipping with God in intimacy is a little taste of heaven! The OT saints experienced the presence of God as they came to the tabernacle/temple. However, the NT saints have an even great intimacy with God.

We not only go to the Holy temple, we are the holy temple. In fact, in 1 Corinthians when it says we as God's people are the temple of God it uses the word "*naos*" which is a reference to the inner sanctuary of the temple – meaning the "Holy of holies". There is another Greek word ("*heiron*") used in reference to the outer temple complex, but that is not the word used.

Under the New Covenant, we have the privilege of an even greater intimacy of fellowship with God than anything experienced under the old covenant in the OT. And now through the blood of Jesus we are invited to come boldly into the throne room to the throne of grace (cf. Heb. 4:16; 10:19-22).

Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; They will still be praising You.

This is the place of blessing!

Selah (Meaning stop and think about this.)

5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, Whose heart is set on pilgrimage.

The sense is that those in fellowship with God find strength in His presence. They are spiritually strengthened. And they value it so much that their heart is set on pilgrimage to get there.

The picture here is one a journey to get to the place of God's special presence – the place of the temple.

Slide # 10

Deuteronomy 16:16 (NKJV)

16 "Three times a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed.

The emphasis here in Psalm 84 is on the heart that is determined to draw near to God. The effort of pilgrimage to Jerusalem is worth it! It will result in a spiritual reviving time, a time of strengthening and spiritual refreshment. But the journey to get there could be challenging.

By way of application, we might talk about a committed effort to be in the place of worship with God's people, where we collectively experience the presence of the living God as we worship together. The godly value this, and it shows in their commitment to be there!

Some people are in the place of worship only when it is very convenient. Others, as a way of life, make every effort to make it happen. For them, it is a priority. The Psalmist has his heart set on pilgrimage to be in the place of worship! But it won't be easy...

6 As they pass through the Valley of Baca, They make it a spring; The rain also covers it with pools.

7 They go from strength to strength; Each one appears before God in Zion.

Verses 6 and 7 describe the journey to get to the temple. Such a trek was not necessarily easy. It involved challenges!

The "Valley of Baca" is a picture of a harsh journey. "Baca" means "weeping". So in view here is a "Valley of weeping".

Baca is a Hebrew word meaning "balsam tree," and the sap of this tree oozes like tears. – **Warren Wiersbe**

Hence, the idea of weeping. The Valley of Baca is a hard place of tears one experiences on the journey. We all have our Baca Valleys – our places of tears where we are in a difficult and painful place.

But if your heart is set on pilgrimage to the place of worship (so to speak) God meets us there. It is there that God provides a spring and refreshing rain – spiritually speaking.

All along the way we face difficult challenges and yet God gives strength for every challenge. And so the one intent on worship goes from strength to strength as they journey on to Jerusalem – the place of worship.

And as they go in the strength that God provides they get there. In the end each one "appears before God in Zion." Zion is the poetical name for Jerusalem. This is where the OT saints came to worship – to meet with God – to experience intimacy with God.

In our journey we “go from strength to strength.” I love that language. It does not say, “from weakness to weakness” or even “from weakness to strength” but rather “from strength to strength.” We go from one strengthening from God to another. He strengthens us all along the way in our pilgrim journey. In our relationship with God we can always find strength each step of the way.

Slide # 11

John 1:16 (LSB)

16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

2 Corinthians 4:16 (NKJV)

16 Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being **renewed day by day**.

Grace upon grace corresponds to “from strength to strength”. In our pilgrimage we are being renewed day by day. It is a daily reality!

Slide # 12

Isaiah 40:29–31 (NKJV)

29 **He gives power to the weak,** And to those **who have no might** **He increases strength.**

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall,

31 But those who **wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength;**
They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

There is the secret – waiting on the LORD. In our Baca Valley – wait on the LORD and He shall renew your strength. Thus we go “from strength to strength” in our pilgrimage journey of worship!

8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob!
Selah

The sense here is that this continual strengthening happens in answer to prayer. “O LORD God of hosts” recognizes God as the God of power. He is the source of our strength, and He gives strength in answer to prayer (cf. 1 Sam. 30:6). Prayer expressed dependence upon God! And so the psalmist prays, ***“Give ear, O God of Jacob!”***

Once again, “Selah” denotes a reflective pause! And it signifies to us to make application.

No matter what we are going through on our pilgrimage journey, God's strength is available to us as we look to Him in prayer.

Slide # 13

Philippians 4:6–7 (NKJV)

6 Be anxious for nothing, but **in everything by prayer and supplication**, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:13 (NKJV)

13 I can do all things through Christ who **strengthens me**.

9 O God, behold our shield, And look upon the face of Your anointed.

The shield portrays protection. The sense here is that God would look on His anointed (the king) with favor and through him provide protection. In the Psalms, the king is consistently referred to as God's anointed (cf. Ps. 2:2; 18:50; 20:6; 28:8; 89:38, 51).

10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.

The value of spending time with God to the writer is evident! No matter what the world might offer it is no comparison to what the psalmist finds in being near to God!

11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

A sun and shield illustrate provision and protection. God provides the needed heat, but He also provides protection from scorching heat. He gives grace (protection) but also glory. He gives us just what we need in the right amounts. That is what is being pictured.

Slide # 14

Sun/Glory (Provision)
Shield/Grace (Protection)

The LORD God (YHWH Elohim) is our provider and protector in accordance with just what is needed. He is our sun and shield. He is the source of just the right amount of sunshine and yet He shields us from being scorched to death.

It is a beautiful picture of God's sovereign care. If we were a little closer to the sun we would all burn up. If we had no sunlight, we would all go crazy. We need the sun, but not too much. We need the right balance of sun and shield. And that is what the LORD is to us!

How God suits Himself to our need! In darkness, He is a Sun; in the sultry noon, a Shield; in our earthly pilgrimage He gives grace; when the morning of heaven breaks, He will give glory. He suits Himself to every varying circumstance in life. – **F.B. Meyer**

And then at the end of the verse we have a Romans 8:28 like promise: "No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly." If it is good for you God will give it to you. The problem is we don't always know what is truly good for us (cf. Mt. 7:7-11).

Slide # 15

Psalm 84:11 (NKJV)

11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.

Romans 8:28 (NKJV)

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

What wonderful promises! God brings the sun (the glory) when we need it. God brings the shield (the grace) when we need it! Through it all, in it all He is working all things together for the ultimate good of those who love Him. Thus, He withholds no good thing from those who walk uprightly!

God does not give us everything we want, but He bestows on us all that is good for us, all that we need (see 1:1-3). – **Warren Wiersbe**

12 O LORD of hosts, Blessed is the man who trusts in You!

O LORD of hosts again emphasizes Him as being the God of power – the God of strength.

Blessed or happy is the man who trusts in Him! This is the bottom line! Life is all about trusting in God all along the way.

Slide # 16

vv. 1-4 – Blessed are those who dwell in God's PRESENCE.

v. 5 – Blessed is the person whose STRENGTH is in God.

v. 6-7 God's refreshing causes us to go "from strength to strength".

v. 11 God is our sun and shield, He gives grace and glory.

v. 11 No good thing will God withhold from those who walk uprightly.

May we be those who desperately long for God's presence – to be in the place of worship! He gives strength for the journey – "from strength to strength" in answer to prayer. May we be those who enjoy the blessings of fellowship with God.

Charles Spurgeon famously said, "**I have never heard a dying believer regret that he was a Christian**". And we might add we have never heard of a Christian on their deathbed regretting being overly committed to a close walk with God! Indeed, the very opposite is true! Walk intimately with God! Desperately seek to be ever closer to God. You will never regret it! This is the place of blessing!

Indeed, Blessed is the person who trusts in Him!