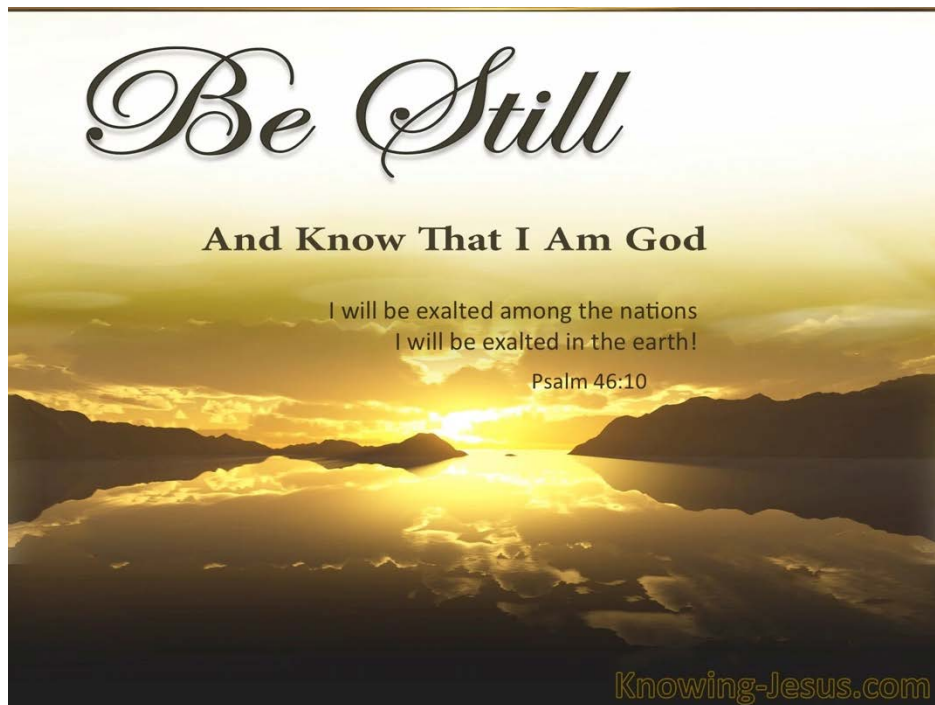


*A Song for the Journey: Psalm 84*

PSALMS OF THE SONS OF KORAH  
A SONG FOR THE JOURNEY  
PSALM 84



T. M. and Susie Moore

*A Scriptorium Study*

**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

Psalms of the Sons of Korah: A Psalm for the Journey

Psalm 84

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Susie Moore, Editing and Finishing

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## Introduction to Psalm 84

Psalm 84 is a pilgrim's song. It focuses on our journey to the dwelling place of God, and counsels us to draw on His strength to help us get through the hard places. It anticipates the joy of God's Presences and leads us to celebrate our calling as doorkeepers to the house of God.

This is a great psalm to use in contemplating your daily journey in life.

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May the Lord bless your work in this study, that you may grow to know Him better, love Him more, and serve Him more joyfully.

T. M. and Susie Moore

## 1 Glimpses of Glory

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 84.1, 2*

How lovely is Your tabernacle,  
O LORD of hosts!  
My soul longs, yes, even faints  
For the courts of the LORD;  
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

*Sing Psalm 84.1-4*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, how sweet Your dwelling; how my soul longs for Your courts!  
Let my soul with joy keep telling of Your grace forever more.  
Like a bird upon the altar let my life to You belong.  
Blessed are they who never falter as they praise Your grace with song!

*Read Psalm 84, meditate on verses 1 and 2*

*Preparation*

1. For what did the psalmists' souls long?
2. What were they thinking about as they composed this psalm?

*Meditation*

There's an "old timey" feeling to this psalm, a kind of "bluegrass" air to it. It mentions creation, a journey, difficulties, and faith – all the makings of a good bluegrass tune. The psalm works on two levels, and in so doing, it teaches us how we should envision our own lives in the Lord.

"How lovely is Your tabernacle..." (v. 1). Wait. Tabernacle? Wasn't that done away with when the temple and its courts were constructed in the days of the sons of Korah? Indeed, but the tabernacle that God directed Moses to construct in the wilderness was invested with much significance and many important memories for the people of Israel. People from throughout the land, as they journeyed up to the "courts of the LORD", singing this psalm, would have brought all that theology and all those memories from the past with them, to invest in the new temple and dwelling place of God.

The psalmists declare that their focus and desire is on that dwelling place (v. 2). Body and soul cried out to be in the Presence of the Lord. They gave this psalm, like the "psalms of ascent" David had written (again, a throwback to old times), to strengthen, prepare, and sustain people as they journeyed to Jerusalem. The glimpses of that glory provided in this song would be fully realized once the pilgrims arrived in Jerusalem.

In the same way, we glimpse the glory of God in our daily journey, a journey that ends in His Presence, where we will see Him as He is and be made like Him (1 Jn. 3.1-3). Like these psalmists, we must keep an eye on the *end* of our lives even as we continue our *daily journey* in and toward the Lord of hosts.

One more note of interest: The psalm was to be accompanied by "an instrument of Gath", that is, a Philistine instrument. The sons of Korah borrowed here from pagan culture, thus reminding us that coming to the Presence of the Lord is also for the Gentiles (Ps. 49), and that even in pagan cultures God gives good gifts to people, gifts that we can use, within the framework of our journey, for serving and honoring Him.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

The Museum of Appalachia in Clinton, Tennessee gives the history of the people who resided there through

stories and artifacts. It is a lovely place. The artifacts they created reveal mankind's need for the aesthetic and show that beautiful and useful objects can be created out of the humblest finds.

The museum is full of tools, paintings, cookware, and needlework; but truly unforgettable are the musical instruments. One in particular is memorable, as it is a ukulele made from a used can of ham. There it is, now housed under glass, a victory over circumstances, and a show of great creativity and repurposing.

The instrument of Gath speaks of the same kind of victory over circumstances. David, as we recall, courageously fought against the mighty giant Goliath of Gath. The use of this instrument, and its provenance, shouts of the victories that God gives us when we trust in Him.

“Yours, O LORD, *is* the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all *that is* in heaven and in earth *is Yours*; Yours *is* the kingdom, O LORD, and You are exalted as head over all” (1 Chron. 29.11).

“For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever” (Matt. 6.13).

“He will swallow up death in victory...” (Is. 25.8 KJV).

“*Death is swallowed up in victory*” (1 Cor 15.54).

“But thanks *be* to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15.57).

“*A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to victory; and in His name Gentiles will trust*” (Matt. 12.20, 21).

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith” (1 John 5.4).

Glimpses of glory for even a used can of ham.

### *Reflection*

1. In what ways is the life of faith like a journey? Why is it helpful to think of our lives this way?
2. Where does Jesus dwell now? What does Paul command us concerning this (Col. 3.1-3)? How do you practice that?
3. But Jesus also dwells in us by His Spirit. According to 2 Corinthians 3.12-18, how does that indwelling relate to the glory of God and seeing Jesus?

*This psalm was composed by the sons of Korah (see Ps. 42; 44–49; 85; 87; 88). There are six movements: (1) the expression of the desire to be at home in Zion (vv. 1, 2); (2) the blessings of being at home in Zion (vv. 3, 4); (3) the blessings of those who make pilgrimages to Zion (vv. 5–7); (4) a prayer for God's attention in Zion (vv. 8, 9); (5) the joy of being at home in Zion (vv. 10, 11); (6) the blessing of trusting in God (v. 12). Earl Radmacher (1931-2014), NKJV Study Bible Notes on Psalm 84*

### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 84.8-12*

Pray that God will give you a clearer vision of Jesus, exalted in glory, and that he will keep that vision before you throughout your journey with Him today.

### *Sing Psalm 84.8-12*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, my prayer receiving, hear me, help me by Your grace!

In Your courts I stand believing; turn to me Your glorious face!

Lord, our sun, our shield, our glory, no good thing will You deny

to those who proclaim Your story, and who on Your grace rely.

## 2 Daily Offering

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 84.1-4*

How lovely *is* Your tabernacle,  
O LORD of hosts!  
My soul longs, yes, even faints  
For the courts of the LORD;  
My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.  
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.  
Blessed *are* those who dwell in Your house;  
They will still be praising You.  
*Selah*

*Sing Psalm 84.1-4*

(Holy Manna: [Brethren, We Have Met to Worship](#))

Lord of hosts, how sweet Your dwelling; how my soul longs for Your courts!  
Let my soul with joy keep telling of Your grace forever more.  
Like a bird upon the altar let my life to You belong.  
Blessed are they who never falter as they praise Your grace with song!

*Read Psalm 84.3, 4*

*Preparation*

1. What image do the psalmists appeal to in these verses?
2. To what do they liken that image in verse 4?

*Meditation*

The apostle Paul may have had verse 3 in mind when he wrote that we should present ourselves as living sacrifices to God (Rom. 12.1, 2). As sacrifices were daily offered on the altar in God's temple, so we should offer ourselves each day to God. When our first steps each day are to offer ourselves to God, we will be more likely to know His blessings throughout the rest of the day.

What does this entail? First, begin your day with thanksgiving and praise. Let the Spirit lead you to offer prayers like sweet incense, celebrating all the goodness and greatness of God. Then, immerse yourself in the holy fire of His Word and Spirit. Let the Spirit form you, in the forge of God's Word, increasingly into the image of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 3.12-18). Look and listen for specific ways you might be made more like Him through your reading and study of the Scriptures.

Finally, commit your day to the Lord. Be specific. Ask for wisdom, strength, grace, skill, and the power and leading of the Spirit to accompany throughout today's segment of your journey. Seek the Kingdom and glory of God, as you have been called (1 Thess. 2.12), and let nothing distract you from following in the path Jesus walked (1 Jn. 2.1-6).

At the end of the day, lay down in the arms of the Lord to be refreshed in His grace, so that you can rise tomorrow and offer yourself to Him once again.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

“Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest...” (Ps. 84.3).

There are 33 different kinds of sparrows in creation, and they all sing.

Swallows are experts at catching flying insects. All in all, these two lovely creatures enhance the beauty and usefulness of any space they might inhabit.

Jesus taught His twelve disciples using sparrows as an example of God’s care for us: “Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will.” “Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows” (Matt. 10.29, 31).

Within God’s purview and His purpose for sparrows, swallows, and us, is the work of giving Him praise. To glorify God is the chief end of all creation (Ps. 19.1, 2).

The money-changers, those who bought and sold, and those who carried the wares to be sold in the temple, all fell under the wrath of Jesus. Instead of praising and glorifying God in His house, they were using it as a “den of thieves”. This place of worship was supposed to be “a house of prayer for all nations” (Mk. 11.15-17). The doves and other birds were innocent in this matter. It was the people who were failing miserably. We might be more valuable to God, but sometimes we are less useful, and can be intentionally disobedient.

Yet, it doesn’t have to be this way.

“Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they will still be praising You” (Ps. 84.4).

The birds in the temple sang praises and ate insects.

Would that we were as holy and useful as they!

#### *Reflection*

1. What does it mean for you to offer yourself to God as a living sacrifice?
2. How can the birds you see each day remind you of your calling from God? How might they serve as a prompt to thanksgiving or praise?
3. As singing is to sparrows, praise should be for us who are more valuable than sparrows. What can you do to enhance your praise life?

*Here the Psalmist expresses more distinctly the proper and legitimate use of the sanctuary; and thus he distinguishes himself from hypocrites, who are sedulously attentive to the observance of outward ceremonies, but destitute of genuine heart godliness. John Calvin (1509-1564), Commentary on Psalm 84.4*

#### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 84.5-7*

Seek the Lord for the strength you will need for all of this day’s work.

#### *Sing Psalm 84.5-7*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Blessed are they whose strength is founded in Your strength, O Lord above.

All whose hearts in You are grounded journey in Your strength and love.

Though they weep with tears of sadness, grace shall all their way sustain.

In Your Presence, filled with gladness, they shall conquer all their pain.

### 3 Heartset

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 84.5-7*

Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in You,  
Whose heart *is* set on pilgrimage.  
As *they* pass through the Valley of Baca,  
They make it a spring;  
The rain also covers it with pools.  
They go from strength to strength;  
*Each one* appears before God in Zion.

*Sing Psalm 84.5-7*

(Holy Manna: [Brethren, We Have Met to Worship](#))

Blessed are they whose strength is founded in Your strength, O Lord above.  
All whose hearts in You are grounded journey in Your strength and love.  
Though they weep with tears of sadness, grace shall all their way sustain.  
In Your Presence, filled with gladness, they shall conquer all their pain.

*Read Psalm 84.5-8*

*Preparation*

1. What did the psalmists know as their strength?
2. How did that help them along their journey?

*Meditation*

The word “blessed” here ties back to the first psalm, where “Blessed” is the opening word of the Psalter. Here “blessed” means something like “completely happy and fulfilled”. They are blessed throughout their journey in life who find their strength in the Lord (v. 5), by meditating and walking in His Law and all His Word (Ps. 1.1-3).

The psalmists compare the life of faith to a pilgrimage to God’s temple in Jerusalem. We know that the end of our journey will be to see Jesus face to face, and thus to be like Him (1 Jn. 3.1-3). We must set our heart for the journey, resolved that we will not be distracted from the path of His commandments (1 Jn. 2.1-6), and drawing on His strength for every step of the way. We will have some hard times, we know. We all must go through low points of weeping (“Baca”), but God can turn those into times of refreshment if we keep our heart set on His Word and draw our strength from Him (v. 6).

In this life we go “from strength to strength” (v. 7) – or, as Paul put it, from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3.12-18) – as we cleave to the Lord in prayer (v. 8) and persevere in our journey toward His dwelling place. Our progress toward God is gradual in this life. Gradual, but real. We can know more strength and glory every day of our lives as we set our face to see the face of Jesus and walk the path He has marked out for us.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

In 1955 Parker Brothers created a board game called *Going to Jerusalem*. As a child, while playing this game, I learned an important thing: Jesus’ intention was always to go to Jerusalem to die. Indeed, His heart was set on it. His pilgrimage (Ps. 84.5).

We, too, are called to pilgrimage; and to set our hearts on it. “My heart is set on keeping Your decrees to the very end” (Ps. 119.112 NIV) Or, as the NKJV has it, “I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes



forever, to the very end.” Either way, we are called to follow God daily until we have no more days left, until we are at the end of our journey.

Jesus’ example for us is an unflinching one.

In the game, every turn brought Him closer to the end.

For the players, whoever got there first, won. (A dichotomy, to be sure.)

Isaiah wrote of Jesus: “For the LORD God will help Me; therefore I will not be disgraced; therefore I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed” (Is. 50.7).

“Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem...His face was *set* for the journey to Jerusalem” (Lk. 9.51, 53).

Jesus was doggedly determined to go to Jerusalem. For us.

“And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again” (Mk. 8.31).

As we follow the Lord Jesus’ example of determinately going to Jerusalem, His Spirit will lead and guide us. He has gone before us to show us the way (Matt. 28. 7). In fact, He is the way (Jn. 14. 6). And on our way, we will need a guide for the journey found in His Word and Law. This was not a game for Him, nor is this a game for us. It is serious business. And we, like Jesus, have set our faces like flint to make it to the end.

“Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage” (Ps. 119.54). Heartset.

#### *Reflection*

1. What are some things that could keep you from fully setting your heart for your journey to our Lord? How can you keep from being distracted or derailed by these?
2. Why is it important that we travel this journey of faith with other believing friends?
3. How would you counsel new believers to cleave to Jesus throughout their journey to the Lord?

*The pilgrims to the heavenly city may have to pass through many a valley of weeping, and many a thirsty desert; but wells of salvation shall be opened for them, and consolations sent for their support. Those that press forward in their Christian course, shall find God add grace to their graces.* Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on the Psalm 84.1-7*

#### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 84.1-4*

Offer yourself to the Lord for today’s journey. Call upon Him for the strength you will need to live for His glory in everything you do.

#### *Sing Psalm 84.1-4*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, how sweet Your dwelling; how my soul longs for Your courts!

Let my soul with joy keep telling of Your grace forever more.

Like a bird upon the altar let my life to You belong.

Blessed are they who never falter as they praise Your grace with song!

## 4 More than Conquerors

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 84.9, 10*

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

*Sing Psalm 84.8-12*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, my prayer receiving, hear me, help me by Your grace!  
In Your courts I stand believing; turn to me Your glorious face!  
Lord, our sun, our shield, our glory, no good thing will You deny  
to those who proclaim Your story, and who on Your grace rely.

*Read Psalm 84.9, 10*

*Preparation*

1. What were the psalmists seeking?
2. Why were they seeking it?

*Meditation*

“In hoc signo vinces.” On the eve of the battle that would determine the fate, not only of Constantine but of the entire Roman Empire, Constantine had what he thought was a vision. In a bright light he saw or heard the words, in Latin, “In this sign, conquer.” At the same time, he saw the cross of Jesus. He instructed his armies to sew or otherwise affix the Christian cross to their shields and breastplates. He then led them forth into victory, gained the crown of empire, and set the stage for the rapid expansion of the Gospel throughout the Roman world.

When the sons of Korah called on the Lord to look upon them, and as He did, to look upon their “shield”, they were calling on Him to see Himself in them – His promises, His covenant, and even perhaps His Spirit (cf. v. 11; Gen. 15.1). Only in Him could they dare to seek the face of God, or to have Him look on theirs. And this is the great comfort that accompanies us in all our journey: Our lives have been hidden with God in Jesus Christ! (Col. 3.3) When God looks upon us, He sees Jesus. As we turn to look upon Him, we see Him through Jesus. In the sign of Jesus, we are more than conquerors (Rom. 8.37). Each day we launch out in our journey in Jesus, for Jesus, and with Jesus – conquering and to conquering for the righteousness, peace, and joy of the Kingdom of God (Rev. 6.1, 2; Rom. 14.17, 18).

Whatever we do, no matter how insignificant it may appear, when we do it in Jesus and for Jesus and with and by Jesus, it becomes the most exhilarating, exciting, fulfilling, and satisfying thing we can do (Col. 3.23, 24). Nothing compares to being in the Presence of the Lord through each step of our journey in life (v. 10), just as nothing will compare with being in His Presence and seeing Him face-to-face forever (1 Jn. 3.1-3).

“In hoc signo vinces.” You may not think your life is all that important or your work very significant. But walk it with Jesus, work it with Jesus, and in the sign of Jesus, in and through you, you will be more than a conqueror for Him and His Kingdom.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

“I *am* small and despised, *yet* I do not forget Your precepts” (Ps. 119.141).

*A Psalm for the Journey: Psalm 84*

“But I *am* poor and needy; make haste to me, O God! You *are* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, do not delay” (Ps. 70.5).

To know that various other psalmists felt this way is a comfort to our weary hearts. We certainly feel this way a lot of the time. Small, despised, needy, and insignificant.

But to know that the sons of Korah were taking the bull by the horns and suggesting that God look at them is emboldening. “O God, behold our shield, and look upon the face of Your anointed” (Ps. 84.9). Their confidence though, was not in themselves; it was in God alone.

To spur us on in this mindset, Jesus encourages us with these words: “With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible” (Matt. 19.26). Anything that we might try to do in our own power is impossible; but anything we attempt with the power of the Holy Spirit is possible. “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you...” (Acts 1.8).

And in this truth we are more than conquerors.

“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8.38, 39).

Not even our neediness, poverty, or insignificance.

Behold us, LORD, trusting in You.

Behold us, covered in the cleansing blood of Jesus.

Behold us, forgiven and empowered to serve.

Behold us, as conquerors.

*Reflection*

1. Jesus is leading you forth today, conquering and to conquer. What will that look like?
2. Finish this sentence: Because my life has been hidden in Christ with God...
3. Thank God for the ways He has shielded and protected you in recent days. How do you need Him to shield you today?

*In all our addresses to God, we must desire that He would look on Christ, his Anointed One, and accept us for His sake: we must look to Him with faith, and then God will with favor look upon the face of the Anointed: we, without Him, dare not show our faces.* Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on the Psalm 84.1-7*

*Closing Prayer: Psalm 84.5-7*

Set your heart before the Lord to follow and serve Him throughout this day. Call on Him to help you through any hard spots, trials, or temptations. Draw on the strength of His Presence with praise and thanksgiving.

*Sing Psalm 84.5-7*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Blessed are they whose strength is founded in Your strength, O Lord above.

All whose hearts in You are grounded journey in Your strength and love.

Though they weep with tears of sadness, grace shall all their way sustain.

In Your Presence, filled with gladness, they shall conquer all their pain.

## 5 Sun and Shield

### *Opening Prayer: Psalm 84.8-11*

O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;  
Give ear, O God of Jacob!  
Selah  
O God, behold our shield,  
And look upon the face of Your anointed.  
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.  
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.

### *Sing Psalm 84.8-12*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, my prayer receiving, hear me, help me by Your grace!  
In Your courts I stand believing; turn to me Your glorious face!  
Lord, our sun, our shield, our glory, no good thing will You deny  
to those who proclaim Your story, and who on Your grace rely.

### *Read Psalm 84.11*

### *Preparation*

1. How is the Lord described here?
2. Whom does the Lord bless with grace and glory?

### *Meditation*

We note first the combination of “sun and shield” in reference to God. God is the light-giving, life-sustaining, time-tracking Ruler of the cosmos. But He is also our shield, as we shelter in His Word (Ps. 12.5-7) and manifest Him to the world, emblazoned like a banner on every aspect of our lives (cf. Ps. 20.5). God gives us light and life, and He employs us in His light-and-life-giving work.

God radiates grace and glory toward us, that we might prosper in our journey with and toward Him. Grace is that divine disposition of favor which God declares to us, and by which He empowers us to live for His glory. We have been called to the Kingdom and glory of God (1 Thess. 2.12), but only because of His grace, freely given in Jesus Christ, can we hope to realize anything of these. By His grace and unto His glory, God gives us day by day many good things. From the beginning of creation, God’s intention toward us has been for good (cf. Gen. 1.31; Jer. 29.11). He gives us every good and perfect gift to sustain and prosper us in our journey, that we might serve and glorify Him in even our most everyday activities (1 Cor. 10.31).

But these good gifts come only to those who use them well – those who “walk uprightly” or “completely”, with a view to “becoming complete.” God does not squander His grace, glory, or gifts. As Jesus explained in the parable of the talents (Matt. 25.14-30), He gives them according to His will, and He expects us to use them wisely.

So as you take up your journey today, look to your Sun and Shield for grace, glory, and every good gift. Then get busy becoming more complete in Him, and bringing His Kingdom to greater fruition in all you do.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

Our job is to “manifest Him to the world”, with His goodness “emblazoned like a banner on every aspect of our lives.” And we who have experienced this goodness are the ones most capable of doing it.

After Jesus had done His good work of redemption for us, He went back to heaven to take up His rule; and He sent us His Holy Spirit to enable us to take up the work, in our own Personal Mission Fields, of sharing His infinite goodness with the world.

Psalm 84.11 has a plethora of corresponding verses throughout the Scriptures to illuminate its glory and to enlighten our understanding:

“Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! *There is* no want to those who fear Him. The young lions lack and suffer hunger; but those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good *thing*” (Ps. 34.10).

“And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the LORD your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed” (Josh. 23.14).

“...for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and the days of your mourning shall be ended” (Is. 60.20).

“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8.32)

“He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints” (Prov. 2.7, 8)

“But the path of the just *is* like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day” (Prov. 4.18).

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4.16).

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning” (James 1.17).

The Sun and Shield “gives us light and life, and He employs us in His light-and-life giving work.” Our Personal Mission Fields are full of hungry souls longing for the good things of God.

Wear your emblazoned banner in His goodness and righteousness.

#### *Reflection*

1. How do you experience God as your Sun and Shield?
2. How do you need to know God’s grace and glory more consistently?
3. What does God expect of you with respect to the good things He gives you each day? What good things?

*Sun and shield means “splendid shield.” Grace and glory may be rephrased as “glorious grace.” Whereas the anointed king was a “shield” (v. 9), the greater Shield is God Himself. No good thing will He withhold: This is the observation of a wise and righteous person; time after time, God gives good gifts to His people. Earl Radmacher (1931-2014), NKJV Study Bible Note on Psalm 84.11*

#### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 84.5-7*

In prayer, put on the whole armor of God – including the shield of faith (Eph. 6.10-20). Then commit the activities of this day to Him, and ask Him for grace and glory to bless you in all you do.

#### *Sing Psalm 84.5-7*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Blessed are they whose strength is founded in Your strength, O Lord above.  
All whose hearts in You are grounded journey in Your strength and love.

*A Psalm for the Journey: Psalm 84*

Though they weep with tears of sadness, grace shall all their way sustain.  
In Your Presence, filled with gladness, they shall conquer all their pain.

## 6 True Happiness

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 84.12*

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

*Sing Psalm 84.8-12*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, my prayer receiving, hear me, help me by Your grace!  
In Your courts I stand believing; turn to me Your glorious face!  
Lord, our sun, our shield, our glory, no good thing will You deny  
to those who proclaim Your story, and who on Your grace rely.

*Read Psalm 84, meditate on verse 12*

*Preparation*

1. What comes to the man who trusts in the Lord? What does that mean?
2. What must we do if we want to be blessed of the Lord?

*Meditation*

Happiness can be a fickle thing because it depends on circumstances (“hap” or “happenstance”), and circumstances can be unpredictable, fleeting, and disappointing.

But the Bible nevertheless holds out happiness to us – “blessed” here – as something to desire and seek. Biblical happiness is more like joy, in that the “hap” of Biblical happiness is the unchanging and unfailing God Who loves us and calls us into His Presence daily. In God’s Presence is fullness of joy; at His right hand, where Jesus sits, exalted in glory, are holy and eternal pleasures (Ps. 16.11).

That’s enough to make anyone deliriously happy.

We gain the Presence of God by trusting in Him. That Hebrew word, **בָּטַח** *batach*, means to trust, rely upon, or have confidence in. It actually derives from a Semitic root that means to fall on your face, fully extended. “Trust” indicates a state of quietness and security. We trust in God because He is God, our Creator and sovereign Lord, our Redeemer and Keeper. Trusting in Him we enter His joy and know His peace. God invites us to seek such happiness all along the way in our journey with and toward Him. At any place in our journey, whatever may be our temporal circumstances, our eternal circumstances are unchanging, and we know peace and security as we trust in the Lord.

As we pursue our journey each day in the strength of the Lord (v. 5), following His path (Ps. 1.1-3) and trusting in Him, we may expect to know complete happiness in His unchanging promises, His unfailing Word, and His sustaining Presence.

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

Jesus was disappointed by His friends. But He trusted in God. And in this trust, He found joy. He said, “Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (Jn. 16.32, 33).

*A Psalm for the Journey: Psalm 84*

He was not counting on anyone or anything to supply His joy and peace.  
He knew that the Father was with Him, and this brought Him true happiness.  
When we have the same mindset of trust in God, we too will experience true happiness.  
He withholds no good thing from us (Ps. 84.11).  
We will never be alone. In fact, we will be blessed!

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways acknowledge Him,  
and He shall direct your paths” (Prov. 3.5, 6).

“Trust in the LORD, and do good;  
dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness” (Ps. 37.3).

“Blessed is the man who trusts in You!” (Ps. 84.12)

“Jesus! What a Friend for sinners!  
Jesus! Lover of my soul;  
Friends may fail me, foes assail me,  
He, my Savior, makes me whole.  
Hallelujah! What a Savior! Hallelujah! What a Friend!  
Saving, helping, keeping, loving, He is with me to the end.”  
(J. Wilbur Chapman, 1910)

*Reflection*

1. How would you explain the concepts of “blessing” and “happiness” to a new Christian?
2. From the Christian point of view, what does the “pursuit of happiness” entail?
3. What can keep you from realizing true happiness? How can you overcome that?

*Let it be our care to walk uprightly, and then let us trust God to give us every thing that is good for us. If we cannot go to the house of the Lord, we may go by faith to the Lord of the house; in him we shall be happy, and may be easy. That man is really happy, whatever his outward circumstances may be, who trusts in the Lord of hosts, the God of Jacob. Matthew Henry (1662-1714, Commentary on the Psalm 84.12*

*Closing Prayer: Psalm 84.5-7*

Ask the Lord to increase your trust in Him. Look to Him throughout the day for the strength you need to follow where He leads, and for the blessings of joy He is preparing for you even now.

*Sing Psalm 84.5-7*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Blessed are they whose strength is founded in Your strength, O Lord above.  
All whose hearts in You are grounded journey in Your strength and love.  
Though they weep with tears of sadness, grace shall all their way sustain.  
In Your Presence, filled with gladness, they shall conquer all their pain.



## 7 Doorkeepers All

*Opening Prayer: Psalm 84.9, 10*

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

*Sing Psalm 84.8-12*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, my prayer receiving, hear me, help me by Your grace!  
In Your courts I stand believing; turn to me Your glorious face!  
Lord, our sun, our shield, our glory, no good thing will You deny  
to those who proclaim Your story, and who on Your grace rely.

*Read Psalm 84; meditate on verses 9 and 10.*

*Preparation*

1. How did the psalmists begin their “journey” to God?
2. How is it evident that they believed God would be with them as they journeyed?

*Meditation*

Psalm 84 is a psalm of pilgrimage, and since we are supposed to think of our lives in Christ as a pilgrimage in Him (1 Pet. 2.11), we should expect to find sound advice here to guide and bless us.

Everyone’s journey in the Lord matters, because we all have a Personal Mission Field of places and people which encompasses the “as-you-are-goings” of our lives (Matt. 28.18). All believers are doorkeepers in the Kingdom of God. After all, we know the way into the Kingdom. We can open the door for those who wish to enter, whatever else God has given us to do in our daily life.

Every Kingdom calling, gratefully accepted and energetically engaged, has more potential for fulfillment and glory than the flashiest or most powerful endeavor by those beyond the pale of grace.

The Lord takes our journey seriously, and He stands ready to meet us with His strength as we do the work appointed to us in our Personal Mission Field (Ps. 84.7). We trust the Lord to meet us with good things every step of the way (v. 11), to sustain us through hard times and keep us in His joy (v. 6), and to keep His eye upon us as we seek His strength throughout the day (vv. 9, 5).

Begin your journey each day devoting yourself to the Lord (v. 3), and set your mind on the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God, preparing a place for us in His holy city and dwelling place (vv. 1, 2; Col. 3.1-3; Jn. 14.1-4). Strap on the shield of faith and all the armor of God (v. 9; Eph. 6.10-20), and go forth to glorify God in everything you do (1 Cor. 10.31).

And remember: Jesus is with you always, even to the end of the age (Matt. 28.20). He will never fail you nor forsake you (Heb. 13.5), so look to Him at every step of your journey, for He Who has called you will be faithful to empower you to do His will (1 Thess. 5.24; Phil. 2.13).

*Treasure Old and New: Matthew 13.52; Psalm 119.162*

One day with Jesus is better than a thousand days lived unproductively without Him.  
And each day, we have the important work of being doorkeepers for His Kingdom.

We live in God's house and have been given the privilege of inviting others to join us there.  
We eagerly open the door for them, lovingly and with open arms, because we know that "blessed are those who dwell" in God's house (Ps. 84.4).

We look to Jesus to help us clarify the invitation. He said, "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know. I am the way..." (Jn. 14.2-4, 6). Jesus also told His disciples that He is the Door. He is the only entryway into the house and Kingdom of God.

As Jesus taught His disciples, He opened their understanding like a door, that they might comprehend the Scriptures (Lk. 24.45). And He does the same for us through His Holy Spirit. We must study and learn these truths to proffer the invitation succinctly so that it will be clearly understood. Doorkeepers illuminate the truth of the Door and how to walk through it.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28.19, 20). And He is "not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3.9).

"He Who has called you will be faithful to empower you to do His will."

Doorkeepers. For one day, or a thousand.

#### *Reflection*

1. In what sense are all believers doorkeepers for the Kingdom of God?
2. What does being such a doorkeeper require of you? How can you fit this calling into your daily life?
3. How can meditating on Jesus – incarnate, crucified, risen, reigning, and returning in glory – help to equip us for our calling as doorkeepers in the Kingdom?

*Let us account one day in God's courts better than a thousand spent elsewhere; and deem the meanest place in his service preferable to the highest earthly preferment.* Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *Commentary on the Psalm 84.10*

#### *Closing Prayer: Psalm 84.1-7*

Pray for today's journey with and toward the Lord. Set your heart to seek Him and His Kingdom. Devote your work to Him, that you might glorify Him in all you do. Ask Him to give you strength for each step of today's pilgrimage.

#### *Sing Psalm 84.1-7*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, how sweet Your dwelling; how my soul longs for Your courts!  
Let my soul with joy keep telling of Your grace forever more.  
Like a bird upon the altar let my life to You belong.  
Blessed are they who never falter as they praise Your grace with song!

Blessed are they whose strength is founded in Your strength, O Lord above.

*A Psalm for the Journey: Psalm 84*

All whose hearts in You are grounded journey in Your strength and love.  
Though they weep with tears of sadness, grace shall all their way sustain.  
In Your Presence, filled with gladness, they shall conquer all their pain.

*A Psalm for the Journey: Psalm 84*

*Questions for Reflection or Discussion*

1. What do we mean by saying that Psalm 84 is a pilgrimage psalm?
2. What destination did the psalmists have in mind? How should we personalize that?
3. What do we mean by a Personal Mission Field? How does this psalm help us in thinking about our work there?
4. What can we expect from the Lord as we look faithfully to Him throughout our daily journey?
5. What's the most important lesson you have learned from our study of Psalm 84? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

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Thank you.