

Psalm 84 - Shelter

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.

Seeking Shelter



We all have a longing for home.
In the world of turmoil we just want a safe place.
The exile displaces all Israel.
They are desperate, relocated, refugees, deported.
Scattered, diaspora. There is no homeland.

This is Dabaab in Northern Kenya.
The first shelters were made here 25 years ago by Somalis who fled here.
It is now a refugee camp to over half a million people - the largest in Africa.
This camp is so large it is now considered the 4th largest city in Kenya.
It is not the only refugee camp in Africa or the world.
There are many more.

The Psalmist dreams of a place of security.
The temple is the representation of where God is.
Where is your safe place?

Sanctuary from the Storm (v.1-4)



*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.*

The first 2 books of the Psalms are pre-exilic - meaning before Israel is exiled.
The longing for home is understandable.
But it's not just for home - it is for something more.
It is a longing for God himself.
v.2 A spiritual & visceral longing
v.3 The tenderness of bird imagery - hidden and sheltered- near to the altar - to God.

Streams in the Desert (v.5-7)



*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.*

v.5 - Blessed are those whose hearts are on pilgrimage.

Not physical movement but internal.

Where are their hearts going?

Trust, security, love, hope.

v.6 They are the ones who turn the desert into an Oasis.

Those whose strength is God transform the places they are at.

It doesn't get more missional than this.

We are the representation of where God is.

How are you a blessing where you are?

[uGM video]

v.7 Their strength increases as they go - journey to Zion.

Zion is Jerusalem.

It is their literal and figurative home.

There are two images in the Old Testament - Exodus & Zion

Both in times of trouble and distress.

They make it into spirituals of the American south.

We too have a Promised Land, a Zion.

A lot of times we have made it "Heaven"

But this Psalm gets it right - we aren't looking for a place.

Not a pie in the sky in the sweet by and by.

And this leads us deeper into the psalm.

Everything becomes Prayer (v.8-9)



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.

Like many psalms there is a shift from reflective 3rd person to address in the 2nd person.

The psalm turns to prayer.

When you are faced with trouble, how often do you try to solve it all on your own?

We are trained to be effective problem solvers

but there are some problems that are intractable.

This is not to say that we withdraw and do not apply ourselves,

but we should consider that God knows and that he is present in all things.

The psalmist finally looks to God and makes request.

Our Home is Not a Building but a Person (v.10-11)



*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.*

v.10 - What is the job of the doorkeeper?
You open the the door.
You welcome the people in.
It is among the least but most important roles in the kingdom.
It is the opposite of the evil.

v.11 - The recognition that God is Sun & Shield
He is the true home and shelter.

The True Temple (v.12)



*LORD Almighty,
blessed is the one who trusts in you.*

A conversation of the City Consultation.
The sign of God's reality and power in found in his people.
Hospitality of the Church.
Is us - our love, our unity.
We are the temple of the Holy Spirit.
That if you are among us - you will find not only peace, but Go himself.

Prayers for those who need shelter

The Refugee

The Grieving

The Physically Ill

The Lonely

The Homeless

The Anxious

The Faithless

The Oppressed

The Mentally Ill

The Enslaved

The Fearful

The Ignorant

The Unemployed

The Homesick

The Exploited

The Complacent

For All