

**Psalms 84:0 ¶ To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.**

This is a psalm directed to the music director at the temple with instruction to play it on a harp (from Hebrew for “Gittith”) and have the sons of Korah sing it.

Interesting to note in light of verse 10, the Korahites were the appointed keepers of the gate at the tabernacle.

*1 Chronicles 9:19 “And Shallum the son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his brethren, of the house of his father, the Korahites, were over the work of the service, keepers of the gates of the tabernacle: and their fathers, being over the host of the Lord, were keepers of the entry.”*

**Psalms 84:1 ¶ How amiable *are* thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!**

The psalmist opens with a statement noting how the people loved the tabernacles (plural) of the LORD. This seems to indicate that it was written before the temple was built and sacrifices and worship were conducted at the tabernacle and the tabernacle of David that housed the ark of the covenant respectively.

**Psalms 84:2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.**

The psalmist expresses his intense yearning to dwell in God’s house in the presence of the living God. He knew that there was only one living God Almighty—all other false “gods” only live through those that profess to worship them; they have no power in and of themselves.

I liked Guzik’s application: “This speaks to those who are leaders in God’s house today. More than offering programs, social connections, entertainment, excitement, or self-improvement, they must make places and meetings where people meet the living God.”

**Psalms 84:3 Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, *even* thine altars, O Lord of hosts, my King, and my God.**

I think the CJB translation gets to the heart of this verse: “*As the sparrow finds herself a home and the swallow her nest, where she lays her young, [so my resting-place is] by your altars, ADONAI-Tzva’ot, my king and my God.*”

It serves as an exclamation point to the previous verse. The psalmist desires to be like the little birds who made their nests in and around the house of the LORD.

**Psalms 84:4 Blessed *are* they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee. Selah.**

The psalmist knows that those that dwell in the presence of the LORD are so blessed that they will want to praise God forever.

Selah = a pause, an opportunity for reflection and meditation

**Psalms 84:5** Blessed *is* the man whose strength *is* in thee; in whose heart *are* the ways of *them*.

**Psalms 84:6** *Who* passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

**Psalms 84:7** They go from strength to strength, *every one of them* in Zion appeareth before God.

After looking at the Hebrew, I think the NLT expresses the heart of this section: *“Happy are those who are strong in the Lord, who set their minds on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. When they walk through the Valley of Weeping, it will become a place of refreshing springs, where pools of blessing collect after the rains! They will continue to grow stronger, and each of them will appear before God in Jerusalem.”*

The psalmist is probably thinking of those that make the long journey to Jerusalem during the appointed feast days.

**Psalms 84:8** ¶ O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

The psalmist pleads with God, the God of Israel, to give heed to his prayer.

Selah = a pause, an opportunity for reflection and meditation

**Psalms 84:9** Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

**Psalms 84:10** For a day in thy courts *is* better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

The wording is interesting. It seems as though the psalmist is praying for the people from a personal perspective. He addresses God as “our” (Israel’s) shield, their protector and defense. He asks that God regard His people with pleasure (from Hebrew for look “upon”). He then makes his request personal, declaring that he would rather be a doorkeeper, a lowly servant, in the house of God than to dwell with the wicked (in luxury seems to be implied). The NLT words it this way: *“...than live the good life in the homes of the wicked.”*

I liked the way Spurgeon put it: “God’s worst is better than the devil’s best.”

Many commentators say the psalmist is referencing the king (David) as the anointed one, but I think he is referencing himself in context. The Hebrew for “anointed” makes reference to one who is consecrated...a saint; to be consecrated is to be set apart. All of God’s chosen people—Israelite and Christian—can rightly be identified this way.

**Psalms 84:11** For the Lord God *is* a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

**Psalms 84:12** O Lord of hosts, blessed *is* the man that trusteth in thee.

The Hebrew for sun makes reference to a doorkeeper. Taken in context with a shield, I think the psalmist is referencing God as one that guards and protects His own. He bestows favor and honor upon those that seek to honor Him. In fact, he declares that

God will withhold nothing that is good from those that live with moral integrity (includes one's motives) before Him. Every person that takes refuge and places their confidence and hope (from the Hebrew for "trust") in God will be blessed.