

Psalm 84

by Henry Law

The sermon explores the longing for God's presence and the joy of public ordinances, emphasizing the God who hears and answers prayer.

Scripture: Psalm 84:1-4, Psalm 84:8-9, Psalm 84:11

Topics: "Public Worship", "Prayer Life"

Description

Henry Law preaches about the deep longing and desire expressed for the joy of public ordinances, extolling the happiness of those who frequent God's court and magnifying the God who hears and answers prayer. The Psalmist passionately expresses intense desire for the enjoyment of God's presence in the sanctuary, longing for the living God. Believers are likened to tribes journeying to Jerusalem for festivals, finding strength and refreshment even in the Valley of Weeping, ultimately reaching the heavenly Zion. The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, recognizing God's protecting presence, and the incomparable blessings of trusting in the Lord.

Transcript

Longing desires are expressed for the joy of public ordinances. The happiness is extolled of those who frequent God's court. The God, who hears and answers prayer, is magnified.

1. "How amiable are Your tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!"

The Psalmist speaks as one far distant from the hill of Zion. He remembers the delight of gazing on the beautiful Temple. The very sight had kindled love and devotion. In the fervor of retrospective ecstasy he extols the much-loved spectacle. May the sight of every consecrated house of worship fill us with adoring thoughts of Him whose worship there is sought!

2. "My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cries out for the living God."

Passionate expressions pour forth intense desire for the enjoyment of God's presence in the sanctuary. The heart burns with longings; the internal feeling is warmly exhibited. May the like feeling ever swell within us!

3. "Yes, the sparrow has found a house, 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."

Some obscurity may hide the precise significance of this poetic image. Let us be content to gain edification. Regard the birds of the air. They seek and find some secret places of repose, where they may rest in calm security and nestle with their infant brood. Thus our souls should find their tranquil home in nearness to their King and their God.

4-7. "How happy are those who can live in your house, always singing your praises. Happy are those who are strong in the Lord, who set their minds on 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."

We see the picture of the tribes pursuing their journey to the great festivals at Jerusalem. They faint not, neither are weary. The needful strength is supplied. They are upheld in the journey. A gloomy valley must be passed, but in it they find refreshment. Water fails not. The wells have been replenished by the seasonable rains. Their limbs each day are girded with fresh strength. At last each pious Israelite safely treads the sanctuary for which his heart had panted. This is a picture of believers toiling through the march of life. The way is sometimes long; dark valleys must be passed, but sweet streams are ever near. Needful vigor is maintained. The heavenly Zion is surely reached. No pilgrim has perished on the road. They went forth to go into the land of Canaan, and into the land of Canaan they came.

8. "O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob."

In such prospect who will not cry, 'Give ear, of Jacob, listen to my cry, and bring me safely to Your longed-for home?'

9-10. "Behold, O God 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 to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

It is good to cause our pilgrimage to resound with prayer, and ever to recognize God's protecting presence. It is good to remind Him that we have the unction of the Holy One, and have received the earnest of heaven into our hearts. It is good to add that we prefer the lowest station in His courts to the highest splendors of stately palaces. Let us be followers of Moses, who chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

11-12. "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. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusts in You."

Who is a God like our God? What can we require that is not ours in Him? What is the sun to the world? What is the shield in the day of battle? All this and more than this He is to us. What can they need, from whom no good thing is withheld? May the Spirit guide us to walk uprightly! Then shall we inherit the blessedness of all who trust in Him.

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