

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Psalms: God's Nurture Of The Inner Man In The Life Of Faith

LXXXIV: A Pilgrim Psalm On God's Great All-Sufficiency

(Psalm 84:1-12)

I. Introduction

- A. God required that Israel's men travel to the temple three times a year, and when pilgrims traveled toward the Jerusalem temple, they authored psalms that praised the Lord Whom they were about to worship.
- B. Psalm 84:1-12 is one such psalm, it focuses on God's great all-sufficiency and we view it for our edification:

II. A Pilgrim Psalm On God's Great All-Sufficiency, Psalm 84:1-12.

- A. The introductory remarks of this psalm comprise the first verse one in the Hebrew text (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 1049), so we stay with the numbering system of the English Bible in this lesson.
- B. We thus translate Psalm 84:1-12 as follows:
 - 1. "How lovely is Your dwelling place, O Jahweh of hosts!" (Psalm 84:1)
 - 2. "My life principle (*nepesh*, Ibid.; R. B. Girdlestone, Syns. of the O. T., 1973, p. 56-59 - physical, mental, emotional, spiritual life principle) longs for and even faints in yearning for the courts of Jahweh; my heart and my flesh cry out for the Living Elohim!" (v. 2)
 - 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, O Jahweh of hosts, my King and my Elohim," Psalm 84:3.
 - 4. "Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they are ever praising You," Psalm 84:4.
 - 5. "Blessed are those whose strength is in You, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage," Psalm 84:5.
 - 6. "They pass through the Valley of Baca [a desert-growing balsam tree, B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 113; Zon. Pict. Ency. Bib., v. One, p. 457], they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with blessings," Psalm 84:6.
 - 7. "They go from [one level of] strength to [the next level of] strength (grow in strength; H. C. Leupold, Exposition of the Psalms, 1974, p. 606) until each appears before Elohim in Zion," Psalm 84:7.
 - 8. "Hear my prayer, O Jahweh Elohim of hosts; listen to me, O Elohim of Jacob. Selah," Psalm 84:8.
 - 9. "Look upon our Personal Hand-held Shield (*magen*, Ibid., Kittel, p. 1050; Roland deVaux, Ancient Israel: Vol. I: Social Insts., 1961, p. 244-245), O Elohim; look with favor upon Your Anointed One," Psalm 84:9.
 - 10. "For better is a day in Your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather stand at the threshold [door] in the house of my Elohim than to dwell in the tents of the wicked [who avoid God's fellowship]," v. 10.
 - 11. "For Jahweh Elohim is a Sun and a Personal Hand-held Shield (cf. v. 9 above); Jahweh bestows favor and honor; no unwholesome thing does He hold back from those whose walk is blameless," Psalm 84:11.
 - 12. "O Jahweh of hosts, blessed is the common man (*'adam*, Ibid., Kittel; Ibid., Girdlestone, p. 45-50) who relies upon You," Psalm 84:12.
- C. We note significant observations and applications regarding this psalm (as follows):
 - 1. As the pilgrim expresses his desire to be at God's house (v. 1-4), his pilgrimage there (v. 5-8) and his praise of God there (v. 9-12; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to Psalm 84), the all-sufficiency of God for the psalmist's entire existence is expressed: (a) his whole life principle of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual life powerfully yearns for the Lord as if utterly dependent on Him, v. 2. (b) The pilgrim appreciates how even the lowly sparrow and swallow are given homes in God's temple (v. 3) along with the provisions to the priests who serve and praise God there (v. 4) and the provisions of the pilgrims, v. 5. (c) Even passing through the desert valley, he notes how God's autumn rains make it a place of springs and cover it with fresh greenery and flowers, v. 6. (d) The pilgrims are given increased strength as they make the pilgrimage until they are equipped of God to reach the temple to worship Him, v. 7. (e) At the temple, the pilgrim views God as his Lord of hosts, his God of the nation Israel (fig. Jacob, v. 8) and the Personal Hand-held Shield of their anointed king who ruled them (v. 9).
 - 2. Thus, the psalmist preferred just to stand at the threshold of the temple door versus living in the tents of the wicked who avoid God's fellowship (v. 10; Ibid., Leupold, p. 607), for God was His Personal Hand-held Shield and Provider of every good thing as he walked uprightly (v. 11) even as a commoner (v. 12).

Lesson: The Lord is the All-Sufficient God for all those of His people whose walk is blameless before Him.

Application: May we walk blamelessly in the power of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:16) for comprehensive blessing.