

Spiritual Talk

Discussion and Understand the Context are adapted from EXPLORE THE BIBLE: PSALMS –INSPIRING TRUTHS
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Psalm 84

1 How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord of armies 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.

Understand the Context

This Psalm depicts a pilgrimage going to the Temple in Jerusalem. The Psalmist refers to the temple as God's dwelling place. The Hebrew word is the plural form of tabernacle, this is the portable structure used during the Exodus. This word accentuates the nearness of God inside the temple. The Psalmist speaks of his desire to be in the temple in the presence of God.

The writer cannot escape the awesome nature of God. He addresses God as the LORD of armies. LORD is God's personal name, translated Yahweh. It is compounded with a military term for armies. In its early uses in Israel's history, this title affirmed Yahweh as the true commander of Israel's army. However, this meaning doesn't fully account for all the term's usages in Scripture. Early in its history, Israel acknowledged that God likewise commanded an angelic army. Later the word was also coupled with heaven to denote God's authority over the heavenly bodies. Thus, LORD of armies is an exalted title that expresses divine sovereignty. God commands.

Discussion

- Identify as a group the things the psalmist named that produces happiness.
- What role does passion play in worship? How does the expectation of God's presence affect that passion?
- What was the value of God's presence for the psalmist? How does God's presence serve as a source of strength for you?
- How does the realization that God anoints rulers and leaders influence the way you pray?

