

Part 1 – Longing to Be Near to God

We now come to the *second* part of the “Leviticus book” of the Psalms (chapters Ps 84-89), which is the ‘*Sanctuary in Relation to Yehovah*’ (instead of ‘to man’). And the subject/title of this particular chapter is “*The Blessedness of Its Worshipers*”. Now, we’re not directly told *when* this Psalm was written. And some people think that it was written by someone who was travelling to Jerusalem for a Feast in Israel. However, from the context of the Psalm, it’s more likely that it was written by someone who had been loyal to David at the time his son, Absalom, led an insurrection against him. When this happened, David – and those faithful to him – fled to the east side of the Jordan River. And they remained there until Absalom’s army was defeated in battle. And *then* they went *back* to Jerusalem. But, just as it was a long trip to the east side of the River Jordan, so too did it take time to go back home to Jerusalem. And it was during the journey home (to Jerusalem, where the Tabernacle of God was at that time) that this Psalm was likely written. Knowing this helps us to understand the longing that the Psalmist has to be close to the Lord again; for back in those days, they were *supposed* to worship at the Tabernacle (where God’s Ark of the Covenant was), even though we *today* are not to do so (Jesus told us to worship God ‘in spirit and in truth’ in John 4:23-24). And that’s simply because, back then, they still *had* to offer blood sacrifices (and other physical gifts) *in order to* have a relationship with the Lord (YHWH). As Solomon pointed out, that was the *only* reason they had a *physical* Temple to worship at (2 Chron 2:6). However, today we are not to make physical (blood) sacrifices for God anymore because Jesus Christ has fulfilled *all* blood sacrifices *once and for all times* (Heb 10:10, Col 2:14, Eph 2:15). So, our sacrifices are now to be *spiritual* sacrifices (1 Peter 2:4-6, Ps 141:2), such as: *thanksgiving* (Ps 50:7-15, 107:11, 116:17, Jonah 2:9, Amos 4:5), *praise* (Ps 54:6, Ps 141:2, Jer 17:26, 33:11), *joy* (Ps 27:6) *righteousness* (Deut 33:19, Ps 4:5, Heb 13:15), and *controlling our body* (Rom 12:1-3, Ps 119:108).

So, the person who wrote this Psalm was (at the time the Psalm was written) ‘*away* from the Sanctuary’ but ‘*on the way* to the Sanctuary’. And this is (like most of the Psalms) quite prophetic for us today. For, while in the flesh body we are physically away from our Heavenly Father (Jesus Christ) but, like the Psalmist, we too are on a ‘journey’ *to* the Temple (Tabernacle) of God as well - which looks forward to being able to physically dwell with God in the Millennial Temple (Ezek 43:7-9, Rev 21:3-4). But thankfully, even though we cannot be physically close to God’s Millennial Temple (*yet*) – so long as we remain faithful to our Heavenly Father (Jesus Christ), we can be *spiritually* close to Him. For as Paul so aptly explained, when the Holy Spirit (the Word of God) is *within us*, we are the Temple of God (1 Cor 3:16-18, 1 Cor 6:15-20, 2 Cor 6:14-18). And *that* means we can be *spiritually* close to our Heavenly Father, through our faith in Jesus Christ (the Word of God), *because* His Word and Holy Spirit *dwell within us* (John 15:1-11) – leading, protecting and strengthening us through the ‘journey’ of this flesh life, so that, *one day* we’ll be able to *physically* dwell in the Millennial Temple, serving our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ forevermore (Rev 20:4-6)...

Psalm 84

1 A Psalm for the sons of Ko'rah.

Now, this is yet another Psalm '*for the sons of Ko'-rah*'. It's now the **seventh** of nine so ascribed. Seven were in the 'second book' (of Exodus: 42,44-49) and four are in this 'third book' (of Leviticus: 84,85,87,88) (Apx 63 VIII). And, as we've learned before, Exodus 6:16-24 tells us that Korah was a cousin of Moses and Aaron who (along with some other men) rebelled against the Lord (YHVH) and was killed by a miraculous event by the Lord (YHVH) Himself (Num 16:1-3, 24-27). But not all of Korah's children died, *because they obeyed* Moses' command to get away from their father (Num 26:9-11 and 27:3); which is why they were later allowed to be singers, and porters, for the Lord's Temple (1 Cor 9, 15) and even appointed over the 24 courses of singers for the Temple (1 Chron 6:33, 1 Chron 16:39-43, 1 Chron 25:1-7). And in 1 Chron 25:1 we're told that they were to prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals and in verse 5 we're told that Heman was king David's seer, which means he was a prophet. So, while not we're not told who this Psalm was written by, it was likely by a descendant of one of those 'sons of Korah' who was spared the same fate of his father, by our Heavenly Father's great grace and mercy. And, as noted before, he was likely a faithful follower of David (a type of Jesus Christ) on his way back to Jerusalem, where he truly longed to be so that he could worship the Lord (YHVH) again...

Psalm 84

1... How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

So, the Psalmist begins this beautiful Psalm with a figure of speech (*Ecphonesis*, Apx 6) which is familiar to us today. It's simply an *exclamation* (which is why there's an exclamation mark [!] at the end) – meaning, it's *an outburst of words, prompted by emotion*. So, we know this Psalmist is writing this Psalm with a lot of emotion. And the word '**amiable**' simply means **loved** (#3039) and has even been rendered as **beloved**. And the word '**tabernacles**' simply means **a residence** but is used here to refer *specifically* to **God's Tabernacle** (dwelling place) (#490). But, notice that it is plural – **tabernacles**. The Psalmist probably uses the word in plural because, in his day, there were actually *two* Tabernacles of the Lord (YHVH). There was still the original Tabernacle that Israel made under the command of God (and instruction, and supervision, of Moses) when they were in the wilderness (Ex 35-40). But then, when David was king, he erected a Tabernacle in Jerusalem (Zion) and had the Ark of the Covenant brought there (2 Sam 6:17). But, it's likely that the rest of the furniture remained in the original Tabernacle, until Solomon made the *permanent* Temple, and brought everything else into it (all the furniture; such as the altars and candlesticks) along with the Ark of the Covenant (1 Kings 8:3-4). And it's clear from Scriptures that people (even king Solomon) still went to the original 'Mosaic' Tabernacle to offer sacrifices until the permanent Temple was built (1 Kings 3:4-5). So, *both* places were considered proper

places to worship God at (until Solomon built the permanent Temple), which would explain why this Psalmist uses the word ‘tabernacles’ in the *plural*.

And then the Psalmist uses what the *Companion Bible* calls one of ‘Yehovah’s titles’ – “**the Lord of Hosts**” is actually *two* words combined to become a ‘title’ for the Lord (Yehovah = YHVH) Himself. We’ve seen this ‘title’ of the Lord (YHVH) used already back in Ps 24:10, 46:1 and 48:8. And, as we learned when studying those chapters, The word ‘**Lord**’ here is God’s Sacred Name [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/946>], **Yehovah** (#3068), which means (the) **self-Existent** or **Eternal**. And the word ‘**hosts**’ is *tsaba’* or (feminine) *tseba’ah* which means **a mass of persons organized for war**, which essentially means **an army** (#6635). Apx 4 II in the *Companion Bible* points out that ‘Yehovah’s titles’ is when the Sacred Name of God (**Yehovah**) **is combined with another word**. And it’s used to indicate a specific characteristic trait about our Heavenly Father. As notes in the *Companion Bible* (on 1 Sam 1:3) explain, **this ‘title’ denotes God of Israel as the Lord of all the hosts of heaven and earth**. So, the fact that this Psalmist uses this ‘title’ of the Lord (YHVH) reveals that he is in a ‘covenant’ relationship with our Heavenly Father; for Yehovah is the true God *in covenant relation* to those whom He has created. Yehovah thus the Eternal or Immutable One, He Who WAS, and IS, and IS TO COME. The Divine definition is given in Gen 21:33. He is especially, therefore, the God of Israel; *and* the God of those who are redeemed, and are thus now ‘in Christ’.

Psalm 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.

So, while the Psalmist started out by proclaiming how *much* he loved the Lord’s (YHVH’s) Tabernacles, he now explains how he longs *to be there*. If the Psalmist was a ‘son of Korah’ (and he likely was) then he was most likely one that was given the duty to sing (or play instruments) for the Lord when worshiping Him. As 1 Chron 6:33, 1 Chron 16:39-43, 1 Chron 25:1-7 all tells us, the sons of Korah were over the 24 courses of singers for the Temple. And, He clearly loved what he did, as well as being very devoted to the Lord (YHVH). And he expresses his great love (and loyalty) to our Heavenly Father by proclaiming (in this vs 2) that his soul (the very essence of who he is, #5313) ‘longeth’ and ‘fainteth’ for the courts of the Lord (#3068 **Yehovah**). Again, this certainly implies he longs to go back to his ‘job’ of singing (or playing) in the worship services of the Lord (YHVH). The word ‘**longeth**’ means (in the context of this verse) **to pine after** (#3700) and the word ‘**fainteth**’ means (in the context of this verse) **to be consumed** (#3615). And he further goes on to say that his heart (desires, emotions #3820) and flesh (body #1320) ‘cried out’ (metaphorically) for (to be near) the living God. The word ‘God’ here is the ‘title’ **’El** (#410), which means the **Almighty God** who is *Omnipotent*; it shows His strength, power and might.

So, he *wholeheartedly* longed to worship the Lord (YHVH) again; and remember, they were *supposed* to do that at His Tabernacle back in those days. If you've ever participated in 'praise and worship' services before, you'll likely understand the emotions of this Psalmist. Good music is *really* uplifting and that's why God commanded it be played during the morning and evening sacrifices, as well as during the Feast days of Israel, when the oblations to the Lord were given (2 Chron 2:4, Ex 27:20-21, Lev 24:1-9, Ps 92:1-3). As 1 Chron 15:16 says: *And David spake to the chief of the Levites to appoint their brethren to be the singers with instruments of musick, psalteries and harps and cymbals, sounding, by lifting up the voice with joy.* Psalms 33 and 92 are two other Psalms (among several) that point this out. So truly, this Psalmist's heart was sincerely right with God. He desired to worship our Heavenly Father more than anything else, which is also what we should be like too. As Peter wrote in 1 Peter 4:1-2: *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, **arm yourselves likewise with the same mind:** for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he **no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.*** While it's not bad to love and enjoy our family, friends, hobbies and jobs, they *cannot* take the place of God in our heart. Our loyalty, and love, to Him, *must* be first and foremost in our heart (desires, emotions) and mind (thoughts). Otherwise, we'll end up falling away to idols, which are anything that's more important to us than loving, worshiping and serving (obeying) our Heavenly Father. As Eccl 12:13 says, *fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.* And Jesus taught us this as well; for He commanded: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with **all thy heart**, and with **all thy soul**, and with **all thy mind** [and **strength**]. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets* (Matt 22:37-40, Mark 12:30). Moses taught us the same thing in Deut 6:4-9 [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/1017>]. And truly, that's exactly what this Psalmist is doing...

Psalm 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.

First off, notice that the first part of this verse is in parenthesis. This means that it's an interjected thought and the latter part of the verse picks up from the prior verse 2. So, the Psalmist was saying how he longs for the 'courts' of the Lord, and now he's saying that he also longs for God's 'altars'. The 'courts' of the Lord is simply referring to the courtyard where he played (or sang) music to the Lord (YHVH); and the altars were the brazen altar of burnt offerings and the golden altar of incense. The altar of incense was actually *inside* the Tabernacle and the brazen altar was *outside* of it but *still within* the outer wall of the Tabernacle. The diagram from this link helps shows this quite well [https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Exodus/338]. So, while the Psalmist wouldn't have actually seen these things (for he was not of one of the priests who actually ministered to God IN the Sanctuary; he was appointed as a singer or a musician), he did play (or

sing) *very near* to them - and therefore, he had a *great* emotional attachment to them *because they represented his relationship with God*. The burnt offering is where his sins were atoned for and the altar of incense represented his prayers going up to God. You can learn more about this studying these parts of the Tabernacle...

Altar of Incense https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Exodus/214

Altar of Burn Offering https://t.me/BibleStudyBooks_Exodus/319

But, let's not forget that this is **not** how we worship today. For, since Jesus Christ (the true Messiah) has come and paid for the sins of mankind *once and for all times* (Heb 10:10, col 2:14, Eph 2:5) we are *now* supposed to worship God '*in spirit and in truth*', as Jesus told us to (John 4:23-24). That means that we must learn to control our carnal mind (our heart), which is the part of us that causes us to want to sin (Rom 8:5-8). And this means we must put off our 'old man' *which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts* (Eph 2:22), and *not serve sin any longer* (Rom 6:6). We do this by *renewing in the spirit of our mind* (Eph 4:23) *through studying God's Word* (Col 3:10) so the Holy Spirit will help us put on the 'new man', which *is created in God's image of righteousness and true holiness* (Eph 4:24). But, at the time this Psalm was written, this is how they could have a relationship with God. Again, that's why the Psalmist yearned to be near to God's Tabernacles again; he wanted to be able to praise, worship and offer sacrifices to the Lord (YHVH) again. Today this would be equivalent to your having lost all your personal items to a fire, tornadoes or a flood – and you didn't have time to save anything. So, you lost your Bible (and other study tools like the *Strong's Concordance*). If you really enjoy studying God's Word, it would make you *very* unhappy to lose these items! Thankfully, it's easier for us to get a new Bible (albeit without the many notes you likely have in your current Bible) and a *Strong's Concordance* (etc.) than it was for this Psalmist to get back to Jerusalem. But, this analogy helps us to appreciate where this Psalmist is 'coming from' to truly understand what he's saying.

Now then, the Psalmist uses the same 'title' for the Lord (Yehovah) as he did in verse 1. So, we know that the words "**the Lord of Hosts**" is actually *two* words combined to become a 'title' for the Lord (Yehovah = YHVH) Himself. And, this 'title' *denotes God of Israel as the Lord of all the hosts of heaven and earth*. So again, the fact that this Psalmist uses this 'title' of the Lord (YHVH) reveals that he **is** in a 'covenant' relationship with our Heavenly Father. And that is *proven* by the way he is *longing* to get back to the Tabernacle(s) of God *so that* he can worship Him again! But, in addition to that, he also calls the Lord (YHVH) His 'King', even though David was the king of Israel at that time. And the reason for this is because, while there are earthly kings, only Yehovah (and Jesus Christ) is King of (above/over) *all* kings (Ps 47:7, 1 Tim 6:15, Rev 17:14, Rev 19:16). And the Psalmist also calls Yehovah his 'God', which here is the 'title' '*Elohiym* (#430), which means **the Supreme God**, who is our **Creator**. '*Elohiym* (or '*Elohim*) is God the Creator putting His omnipotence ('*El*) *into operation*. It's first occurrence (Gen 1:1) connects it with creation, and gives it its essential meaning as the Creator. ***It indicates***

His relation to mankind as His creatures (see note on 2 Chron 18:31, where it stands in contrast with Yehovah as indicating *convent relationship*).

But why then does the Psalmist add the parenthetical thought in between verses 2 and 3? To refresh our memory, the Psalmist wrote: *Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young*. He's simply using a metaphor to explain how happy he will be when he finally gets back to Jerusalem, where he can worship the Lord (YHVH) again. Remember, this Psalm is likely written by a descendant of Korah who was faithful to David. And when Absalom rebelled, David and his faithful followers fled clear over to the east of the Jordan river, for safety, so they could re-group and eventually put down the rebellion. But, then they had to make the long trip home. And so, just as a bird works hard to find a place to build her home (or make a nest from scratch), so too is this Psalmist having to endure a long trip home. Further, just as a bird finds safety in her home, so too was this Psalmist looking forward to the safety of being close to God again. So, as the Psalmist was making the long journey home, he was longingly thinking of the Tabernacle (and Sanctuary) of God - and the *relationship* he has with the Lord (YHVH) – and is thus simply making a comparison of himself, to being as a bird, that is happy (and safe) making a nest so she can raise a family. So, perhaps this Psalmist was even wanting to raise a family soon?

But, regardless, his love and faithfulness to the 'Lord of hosts' is clearly expressed through this lovely metaphor. He longed to get back to the place (home) where he would be able to praise and worship the one and only *true* God once again. And this shouldn't be too hard to understand, for don't we, today, long for the return of Jesus Christ *for the same reason*? We long to see all the wickedness in the world stopped so that we can worship the Lord (Jesus Christ) unabated. And this day *will* come. But, we must never forget that *we don't need a physical Temple to worship the Lord (YHVH) anymore*. We can do so wherever we are, through Jesus Christ, when we have the Word of God *within us*. For when we have God's Word within us, we have His Holy Spirit within us. For the Word of God IS the Holy Spirit, *in written form* (John 6:63). And so, **true worship** *is not about going to a certain place and doing certain rituals* (as Psalm 50 very clearly pointed out). It's **learning of the Lord** (through His written Word), **absorbing it into our heart** (desires, emotions, intentions and motivations) **and mind** (thoughts) **and then acting upon it in our daily life** (i.e. obeying it *sincerely*, the best we can). And thankfully, when we fall short (and we all do, Rom 3:23) we have an advocate (Jesus Christ) who will intercede for us (1 John 2:1-2; Rom 8:26-34; Heb 7:25), when we pray to God, so that our sins *are* forgiven. And then we've simply got to continue to learn, and strive *sincerely*, to follow God's Word (John 8:31). As Prov 16:6 says, *by mercy and truth iniquity is purged*. So, when God gives us mercy (and forgives our sins) then we must work to cleans our 'inner man' (heart and mind) by putting *truth* (God's Word) *within it*. And the purpose for doing so (studying God's Word) is so that we **learn how** to obey God (from the heart) and strive *to do* so (*obey Him*) sincerely (1 John 2:3, 3:22; John 17:3).

So, while this Psalmist's longing to be nearer to God is understandable, we've got the amazing opportunity to be near to Him *all the time*. But, the choice of *how* near to Him we get, is *up to us*. How much effort do you put into daily studying God's Word? While we've all got different 'appetites' for the Word (not everyone needs to study the same amount of time), we all need it *daily*, just as we need daily physical food and water. So, if you feel lonely – or far away from God – open your Bible and take a refreshing drink, and piece of bread, from the Living waters and the Bread of life...

*35 And Jesus said unto them, **I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.***

36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

*40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that **every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.***

John 6:35-40

That time is *soon* coming, beloved. Make sure you've got the **Oil Needed and Be Sure You're Ready** for it [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/286>]...

We'll pick this up in part 2...

AMEN.