

## Psalm 84

Written by K B Napier  
Monday, 10 April 2017 10:31

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This Psalm combines warfare with praise, a combination avoided or ignored by modern believers whose minds are tainted by 'love-everybody-no-matter-what', which is evidence of having little true knowledge of doctrine and facts. We are in the last days, which are growing in wickedness, so no Christian can afford to be ignorant, or a coward... cowardice being more dangerous to body and soul than warfare.

### Verse 1

1.

To the chief musician upon Gittith, A Psalm for the sons of Korah. How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!

Matthew Henry repeats the thoughts of other theologians, who think this Psalm was written by David, when he was forced out of his own city by his son, Absalom. It is also thought the psalm resembles the same 'spirit' as that of Psalm 63, and is fit for the Sabbath day. The psalm was to be sung, as the word '*gittith*' suggests, a kind of musical instrument (probably a harp). It actually means 'wine-press' and like several others, was used to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

The Psalm was intended for the "sons of Korah", whose earlier families challenged Moses for access to the priesthood. Moses summoned the men and families of Korah to burn incense before God, Who warned him to be rid of the 'sons of Korah'. Moses prayed publicly to the Lord that if this was to be done, it had to be shown as God's judgment, and not his own, thus warning the Hebrews to obey God through Moses.

God showed His intervention in spectacular fashion, opening up the ground and swallowing the men and members of Korah's family, with their possessions. It was recognised to be God's judgment for their contempt, because Moses prayed out loud for this to happen - and it did. The Hebrews standing nearby ran away for fear of being judged also, and the 250 men of Korah who burnt the incense were destroyed by divine fire. It seems the descendants of the family of Korah are given strength and blessings in this Psalm, as a reminder to obey the Lord and not to sin.

The psalmist writes that God's tabernacles are 'amiable'; lovely, pleasant, and beloved, as with

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everything of God. Why choose what is NOT of God? Note that though 'tabernacles' may apply to the Temple/moveable tabernacle, the word is plural, so it must also apply to other places of God, including shepherd's huts. Perhaps we may conclude that anywhere where God is, must be praiseworthy and good – which is an automatic truism. The word for 'God' here is Jehovah, His name. One should recognise that as Lord of hosts, **tsaba**, He is also Lord of His divine army, implying battle.

Yet another facet of God that modern Christians find distasteful! They think this because they are cowards, and ill-prepared to do battle against God's enemies, shirking hardship that goes with warfare. This warfare can be physical, mental or spiritual. This is an active response to enemies, for the Hebrew refers to 'that which goes forth'. Heavenly angels are included in this 'host', as is the created cosmos of stars, sun, moon, etc. In other words – He is Lord of everything known and unknown!

Such warfare requires us to be warriors, whether mentally, spiritually or physically. This means that worship is astride the back of God's warfare. Does this question if worship is genuine and godly if the worshipper refuses to do war with the Lord?

### Verses 2-4

1.

My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

2.

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.

3.

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

Because of the Lord's magnificence and warlike greatness, lending faith and encouragement to the believer, the psalmist says his "soul longeth" for the "courts of the Lord". In this text 'soul'

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refers to the active mind and innermost part of mankind, **nephesh**. This is the untouchable part of a man, the 'thing' that makes him a living being. In this text, it does not refer to 'spirit'... in the unbeliever, the spirit is dead. (Read my article on spirit. This shows that spirit is the same as soul in 50% of scriptural texts using these words). However, the psalmist is godly, and he is only referring to his own soul.

His soul 'fainteth'; is completed and fulfilled by God's presence in the "*courts of the Lord*". 'Courts' indicates enclosures, the abodes (again, plural) in the area around the tabernacle or Temple,

**chatser**

, where the trumpet/clarion is blown (

**chatsar**

). The power and might of God is implied by this language, a power that builds the believer in his faith. Indeed, so much so that the heart and flesh (mind and body) cries out for the "*living God*"

; the believer is overcome,

**ranan**

, and sings aloud with joy, regardless of the enemy and difficulties of life.

'God' in this text is **'el**, a reference to the Lord's might, power and greatness. The word was also used of pagan false gods, but this is probably why the psalmist adds the word 'living',

**chay,**

thus qualifying

**'el**

. This is apt because

**'el**

is rooted in

**chayah**

– to quicken and save, and to sustain life.

The psalmist is rapt by God, and poetically says that even the tiny sparrows and swallows are able to find rest in the presence of God. In the one phrase the psalmist speaks of God as Jehovah, royal king (**melech**), and **'elohiym**, such is his thrill at knowing God and His saving power. All who live in His house (which must also include 'in His presence', wherever they are) are blessed (happy/ **'esher**). Because they are in

His presence they continually praise Him. If

*you*

do not do this, are you in His presence? The psalmist introduces a musical pause at this juncture, probably to emphasise the message and for listeners to dwell on the words.

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### Verses 5-8

1.

Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.

2.

Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

3.

They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.

4.

O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah.

The man whose strength is from God will be strong indeed. Those who claim strength in their own name (Islam is like this) are not strong, but dictators and deceived. The godly man has strength direct from the Lord, and his heart (the seat of his emotions, passions and thoughts) is ruled by Him.

Baca was a valley in Israel (Baca='weeping') where a well was dug to collect the rain, to refresh the weak and weary. Thus enlivened they go on from strength to strength, until they stand before God/ '**elohiym**' in Jerusalem (where the tabernacle/Temple was, on a mount within the walls) and see Him, such is their reward.

O Jehovah '**elohiym**', hear my prayer! Listen to my pleas and praise, '**elohiym**' of Jacob, for the Lord lives and is with us from the beginning. (Pause).

### Verses 9-12

1.

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Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.

2.

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.

3.

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.

4.

O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

The psalmist then calls God/ **'elohiym** the 'shield' of the nation, and asks Him to look at the face of the king with approval. 'Anointed', **mashiyach**, is also a reference to the Messiah and others.

The psalmist is joyful and says that he would rather spend one day with the Lord than a thousand days with the wicked. Sadly, many Christians prefer to spend many days with the wicked than even one with God's people and God Himself! Their 'good works' are usually self-defined and done, with no reference to truth.

Jehovah **'elohiym** is our shield, which means that when we are not living holy lives we do NOT have the shield and its protection. Why, then, do believers wish to remove the shield and prefer sin? He is our sun, giving warmth, light and comfort. He gives us grace and glory... without Him our lives are filled with ignominy and disgrace. Even so, many of us sin willingly, ignoring godly grace and glory, preferring the fleeting delusions of sin, which do us harm!

If we obey and worship Him alone, He gives us everything we need – nothing is held back from us. That what we desire is something else denies us this joy. Even God's rocky and perilous

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path is better than the smooth wide road leading to spiritual disaster and death.

Happy and content is the man who trusts in the Jehovah of **tsaba**/hosts. It is as well to be reminded that to trust in God and to follow Him is to accept that we are in His royal army, and that a soldier must fight and stand against our sworn enemies.

Today is a time in history when the demons of hell attack us with great ferocity, under the name of 'Islam'. Whether that enemy is quiet/'moderate' or bloodthirsty, he is our enemy, and the enemy of the Lord. Therefore, we must stand against each one of them, with deep resolve and courage, not allowing our emotions to cause us to be compassionate towards them, when the Lord has no such compassion. We must remember that an enemy will attack both by frontal violence and by stealthy smiles and friendliness.

Many other enemies come before us with smiles and friendliness; they belong to non-violent enemies of God – false religions such as Catholicism (which was once as violent as Islam), Mormon, JW, spiritualism, Hinduism, Buddhism... they are all there in huge numbers, ready and willing to destroy us, even when some of them do not understand they are doing so.

Naïve Christians are ready meals for the wolves of Satan. They extend 'love' and compassion to those God hates, thus rejecting God's judgment on them and giving a 'love' that God does not require or command us to give. This comment has nothing at all to do with 'hating' enemies; it is a sign of obeying the Lord and following His example. He hates our enemies unless they repent and turn towards Him.

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