

WEEK NINE  
DAY TWO

How lovely is your dwelling place,  
O Lord of hosts!  
Psalm 84:1

How

מָה  
*mah*

– interrogative what? how? why?  
when?; also exclamation, what! how!

lovely

יָדִיד  
*yēdiyḏ*

– loved, amiable, well beloved

is your dwelling

מִשְׁכָּן  
*mishkan*

– a residence including a shepherd's  
hut, the lair of animals; specifically, the  
Tabernacle, dwelling place, habitation

place

מִשְׁכָּן  
*mishkan*

– a residence including a shepherd's  
hut, the lair of animals; specifically, the  
Tabernacle, dwelling place, habitation

O Lord

יְהוָה  
*Yēhovah*

– the self-Existent or Eternal; Jewish  
national name of God —Jehovah, the  
Lord

of hosts

צָבָא  
*tsaba'*

– a mass of persons, especially  
organized for war; an army, company,  
host, soldiers

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WEEK NINE  
DAY THREE

**How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!**  
**Psalm 84:1**

When I was a child, I visited Bangkok, Thailand, with my parents. I vividly remember touring The Grand Palace – the centuries-old dwelling place of kings of Siam. Famously depicted in *The King and I*, The Grand Palace is more majestic than Oscar and Hammerstein could describe. Breathtaking architecture surrounds, lovely paintings decorate, and gold leaf abounds. Lots and lots of gold leaf.

In the first verse of Psalm 84, the psalmist introduces the subject of the psalm – indeed, the subject of the entire Bible: God Himself, the LORD of hosts! The Bible tells us a story, a true and glorious story, not about US but about THE LORD OF HOSTS. “Who is this King of Glory?” asks Ps. 24:8. He is I AM WHO I AM, the One Who Always Is. He is Yahweh, the GOD of His chosen people. He is the God who sees, El Roi. These are only a few of His names, for though He is ONE God, His character is more majestic than the biblical writers could comprehend or relate.

What could be adjectives describing the dwelling place of an Incomparable, Sovereign Being? Frightening. Mysterious. Overwhelming. Yet what one word does the psalmist apply to the dwelling place of the LORD of hosts? “Lovely.” The Merriam-Webster definition of “lovely” is “delightful for beauty, harmony, or grace.” The LORD is majestic, holy, and glorious, and yet His dwelling place is known as “lovely.” Amazing.

When I consider the people, places, and objects I deem “lovely,” I am ashamed. Celebrating beauty is not wrong; we are to rejoice in beauty as a reflection of its Beautiful Creator (Ecc. 3:11). My shame originates in 1) my celebration of loveliness in the ABSENCE of the Beautifier and 2) my inability to appreciate what is truly beautiful.

I ask myself: Do I love what is beautiful because it points me to the Creator or do I idolize the beauty by ignoring the hand of God in it? John Piper asks a similar question: Do we grieve not only evil things but also grieve any creation in which God is not acknowledged? If He is the Fountain of life (Ps. 36:9), the Giver of all good gifts (Jas. 1:17), there is no good apart from Him (Ps. 16:2). Second comes this question: What do I consider lovely? Do I truly love what is good and hate what is evil, or do I hold onto worldliness and see as lovely what God sees as vile?

While The Grand Palace was beautiful, spiritual darkness encompassed it. Central to the compound was a massive temple, packed with statues of Buddha, the god of many Thai people. Our God is the One True God, God of light, whose home is infinitely more desirable than The Grand Palace. We have the blessed hope that we will one day sing with all the saints: “To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” (Rev. 5:13). Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

~ Elisabeth Hooker

WEEK NINE  
DAY FOUR

**How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!**  
**Psalm 84:1**

Longing is written all over this psalm—it is all about the deep desire of the saved soul for personal communion and relationship with God in Christ. A beautiful psalm of praise—God does not need our praise, but we need to praise God. By basking in His presence, we drink in the joy of His infinite love and rejoice in the One who came to redeem and restore us. “In your presence there is fullness of joy,” the psalmist says. “At your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Ps. 16:11 ESV). The world, our flesh, and the evil one would tell us that pleasure is found in personal satisfaction of our personal desires. That is a lie from the pit of Hell and the reason so many Christians lack true joy: soul-satisfying joy is only found in knowing God and being in His presence.

So, today, let us heed the words of C.H. Spurgeon: "Come, then: believe, trust, rejoice, adore! If you have neither gold, frankincense, nor myrrh, bring your faith, your love, your repentance, and falling down before the Son of God pay him the reverence of your hearts." Let us stoke the flame of our longing for God in our lives by meditating on His Word:

“Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!  
Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!”  
Psalm 34:8

"As a deer pants for flowing streams,  
so pants my soul for You, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.  
When shall I come and appear before God?"  
Psalm 42:1-2

“How precious is your steadfast love, O God!  
The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of Your wings.  
They feast on the abundance of your house,  
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.”  
Psalm 36:7-8

“Because your steadfast love is better than life,  
my lips will praise you.  
So I will bless you as long as I live;  
in your name I will lift up my hands.

My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food,  
and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips.”  
Psalm 63:3-5

Prayer:

Father, I long to be in your presence...increase my longing all the more. In the name of Jesus, I pray.

~ Jeanine Dungan

WEEK NINE  
DAY FIVE

**How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!**  
**Psalm 84:1**

There are many thoughts on who wrote Psalm 84 and why this person was either banished from or unable to go to the house of God. However, we can clearly see throughout Psalm 84 the author describes the blessedness of those who frequently attend services in the house of God for worship. They are not blessed by the grandeur of a structure or the beauty of its decorations.

Instead, believers are blessed by seeing and experiencing as John Gill describes, "...where Christ is openly set forth, as crucified and slain, in the ministry of the word, and the administration of ordinances; here the Gospel trumpet is blown, and its joyful sound echoed forth, and songs of love and grace are sung by all believers; besides, what makes these tabernacles still more lovely are, the presence of God here...and they are lovely to such, and to such only, who have seen the unamiableness of sin, and are sick of its tents, and of enjoying its fading pleasure, and to whom Christ is precious, and altogether lovely: these have an intense affection for him, and for his house, word, worship, and ordinances, and with admiration say, 'how amiable.'"

The gathering of believers is not something to be marked off our weekly to-do list. The gathering of believers is to be cherished, for we see the supremacy of Jesus Christ in so many ways, which keeps our eyes on Him!

Pray for a new way to see your Sunday church service, mid-week prayer meeting, ministry gathering, times of fellowship, or Bible study group, if these times have become boring or seemingly inconvenient to you.

~ Trish Bruce

