

WEEK SIXTEEN
DAY TWO

They go from strength to strength;
each one appears before God in Zion.

Psalm 84:7

They go

הָלַךְ *halak*

– to walk (in a great variety of applications, literally and figuratively)

from strength

חַיִל *chayil*

– probably a force, whether of men, means or other resources; an army, wealth, virtue, valor, strength

to strength

חַיִל *chayil*

– probably a force, whether of men, means or other resources; an army, wealth, virtue, valor, strength

each one appears

רָאָה *ra'ah*

– to see, appear,

before

אֵל *'el*

– properly, denoting motion towards

God

אֱלֹהִים *'elohiym*

– (plural) can mean rulers, judges; in this case the supreme God

in Zion

צִיּוֹן *Tsiyown*

– Tsiyon (as a permanent capital), a mountain of Jerusalem:—Zion.

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Psalm 84:7**

Psalm 84:7 is one of my favorite verses in the Bible. I read it the first time when I felt I had no strength. At first, I felt it was not the verse for me, as I did not feel I had one strength, much less could go from strength to strength. I thought of the teachers and Christian leaders I knew and felt this verse was written more for people like that. Then I began to study the entire chapter and to dig, and I found it was written just for me. The visual of a person going from strength to strength follows exactly what I had been going through: a time of weakness, dryness, emptiness, and a sterile faith.

The Christian traveling to his reward in Heaven is symbolized by a traveler in Psalm 84:7. When a traveler sets out on foot, the arduousness of the journey and the obstacles along the path weary him. As the traveler meets each challenge and prevails, however, the very resistance he has met strengthens him and makes him more fit for the next step and the next step—growing stronger from each one. So it goes in our Christian journey. We face things we think we cannot prevail against, but through our appeal to and dependence on God, we become more than conquerors. We are surprised by what we can do through Christ who strengthens us. God's grace strengthens us, carries us through, and brings us the joy of the climb toward Zion, our Heavenly destination.

Matthew Henry says, "Those are truly happy, who go forth, and go on in the exercise of religion, in the strength of the grace of Jesus Christ, from whom all our sufficiency is. The pilgrims to the heavenly city may have to pass through many a valley of weeping, and many a thirsty desert; but wells of salvation shall be opened for them, and consolations sent for their support. Those that press forward in their Christian course, shall find God add grace to their graces. And those who grow in grace, shall be perfect in glory."

One revolutionary thought came to me as I read this verse: Every one of us who has accepted Jesus as our Savior and committed our lives to go on this journey will make it. Every one of us will "appear before God in Zion." It is up to us how much of His help we will seek and rely on. When the path is rocky and steep, will we focus on the path and circumstances in our life, or will we quickly abandon our fears and our machinations and say, "I need your grace to get through this?" If we do the steep climb and the hard places in complete trust that He will see us through to our ultimate destination, we will go from grace to grace through this life; and, in the process, we will go from strength to strength.

~ Casey Hawley

WEEK SIXTEEN
DAY FOUR

**They go from strength to strength;
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Those whose strength is in the Lord are blessed, because He is a faithful God; and, when our hearts are set on pilgrimage, we will go from strength to strength in God's strength, not our own. In other words, there is a progressive nature to the Christian's course.

Some signs of this progress are a growing sense of God, a growing dependence upon Christ, an increasing steadiness and success in the resistance of temptation, and a decreasing absorption in worldly objects and attractions, putting God and heaven before self and things of the world.

The Biblical Illustrator notes three things about the character of spiritual progress:

1. It is slow. From step to step, holiness and heaven are to be obtained slowly—little by little. If we cannot fly or run, we must be willing to climb and walk, thankful to go forward, though slowly.
2. It is toilsome, not only slow work, but hard work. The ascent is difficult and dangerous, like the ascent of some ice-bound mountains. Painfully does the traveler move upwards.
3. It is certain.

As we go through life and come nearer and nearer to the end of our sojourn, our strength, our passion, our firmness of purpose increases. We walk more cheerfully and triumphantly overcoming one difficulty and then the next.

The distance to Zion, our home above, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews 12:22) is constantly diminishing. We will soon see the towers and walls and the precious cornerstone... Christ (Isaiah 28:16).

Thank you, Father, that we can trust you to be faithful in promoting the growth of our souls. Jesus, we praise you for being a strong, loving magnet, drawing our gaze upward and God-ward toward the Father. We lean in with whole hearts upon you, Lord.

Jude 1: 24 – “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you unblemished in His glorious presence, with great joy—to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all time, and now, and for all eternity. Amen.”

~ Jeanine Dungan

WEEK SIXTEEN
DAY FIVE

**They go from strength to strength;
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Psalm 84:7**

How wonderful to go through life from strength to strength. That is our right, our inheritance, and our gift from God. When you leave the house each day, do you think, “I am going from one strength to the next to another,” and so on? Are you cognizant that He walks into every meeting, class, conversation, store, or errand that you walk through in your day? God and you. Going through your day, strength to strength.

The Hebrew word for strength is “chayil,” which connotes strength, efficiency, wealth, and an army. So, you go forth with wealth and an army around you. How efficient you have the potential to be if you are not accomplishing your to-do list in your own strength, but in His. Matthew Henry says, “Those that press forward in their Christian course, shall find God add grace to their graces.”

The psalmist is wistful, longing to meet God in his (probably David’s) daily life as well as in his tabernacle in Jerusalem. We need both. We need to reside closely with God in the living temple of our lives, but we also need to worship Him in His house. How easy it is to get out of the habit of doing one or both of these ways of meeting with Him.

David experienced times of banishment that kept him from God’s courts, and he yearned to worship corporately. Our father, like most earthly fathers, just wants us to come to his house sometimes. My earthly father enjoyed meeting me at restaurants or events, but that was no substitute for my coming to his house and sitting in his living room with him from time to time. He required it.

I also think of Christians who must worship underground, and how they would give anything to be able to meet as a group in a house of worship, something we take for granted.

Our Heavenly father has been very specific about visiting Him and worshipping Him by keeping the Sabbath.

But just as vital to our life with Him and in Him is our time alone with Him. It is when we block off time, clear every interruption and distraction, and spend quality time alone with Him that we are transformed into something more glorious than we ever imagined we could become. Paul puts it like this in 2 Corinthians 3:18:

“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into His image with intensifying glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

Where do you need to spend more time with Him—alone or in His house as you worship and fellowship with other believers? Put yourself out there regularly in both places. He shows up as we sing, read Scripture, and hear the Word in His house. And

in an equally wonderful way He will show up in your quiet time, your prayer closet, or your living room as you just hang out with Him and see the intimacy and friendship between the two of you grow throughout the years.

~ Casey Hawley

