

Worship Like the Sons of Korah Psalm 84

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“How lovely are Thy Dwelling Places...” These words paint a beautiful picture of joy and yearning to see the beauty of the Lord. This is how the Sons of Korah felt about worship. Have you ever felt that way? Has the presence of God ever been so compelling that you simply could not wait to worship Him. This is what the sons of Korah were expressing in Ps 84.

These worshipers were the descendants of Korah, who died because of his rebellion against God. Apparently, his sons made a spiritual turn-around and one part of the family became the temple doorkeepers and guardians (I Chronicles 9:17), Psalm 84:10), while another part became musicians, singers, and choristers of the temple. Psalms 84-87 and 42-49 were penned by this family. They wrote such powerful passages as,

“As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for Thee, O God” (Ps 42:1)

Relating to “the living God”, (v2) is what brought these feelings out. It was not the place or the atmosphere. It was God’s living presence that made all the difference.

It is only when He is the supreme focus of our gathering that people begin to feel this way about the corporate worship experience.

In life, there is nothing more helpful than the power of a good example. The sons of Korah show us how one can approach worship. Emulating them, is important.

Notice their thoughts toward worship,

1. The strong desire to worship, v1-2

1 To the Chief Musician. On an instrument of Gath. A Psalm of the sons of Korah. How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts! 2 My soul longs, yes, even faints For the courts of the Lord; My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Notice the strong and tender feelings they had. Their souls longed, even fainted and cried out for these times. The sons of Korah understood the settled well-being which resulted from temple worship. They must have had a unique grasp of worship. While some people simply went through the drab, routine motions, the sons of Korah knew the emotions of the presence of God

2. The Refuge experienced, v3-4

3 Even the sparrow has found a home, And the swallow a nest for herself, Where she may lay her young-- Even Your altars, O Lord of hosts, My King and my God. 4 Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; They will still be praising You. Selah

The sparrow here is picture of the psalmist himself. He flits here and there, but in the temple he is secure and at home. It is an environment adequate for his young, his most precious possession. He takes joy in the thought of raising them in this kind of atmosphere.

In scripture, the sparrow represents insignificance and smallness. This is why Jesus said,

“Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But the very hairs on your head are numbered. Therefore do not fear; you are of more value than many sparrows. (Matthew 10:29-31)

The writer is telling us that the temple is a refuge for one who feels small and insignificant. God is always coming alongside all who feel this way. We come to Him with our fears and insecurities and He comes to us as King and Refuge and God. This results in happiness. He says, “Blessed are those who dwell in your house”. His house is the household of happiness.

How wonderful it is when the small and insignificant enter into worship, but they depart with a renewed sense of who they are and who protects them. Their insecurities are overwhelmed by thoughts of God.

Like the sons of Korah, we should be taking deep sighs of relief, nestling into His great and loving arms of refuge.

3. The Strength Received, v5-9

5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, Whose heart is set on pilgrimage. 6 As they pass through the Valley of Baca, They make it a spring; The rain also covers it with pools. 7 They go from strength to strength; Each one appears before God in Zion. 8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah 9 O God, behold our shield, And look upon the face of Your anointed.

The theme of happiness of the people of God runs through every book of the Bible and here we encounter it with the testimony of the sons of Korah. God allows us to draw from his strength when we have none, and the strength courses through our souls. When we get to the end of our resources, we have only God. Then we can be happy.

The sons of Korah knew the happiness of the heart when one trusts in God’s strength.

4. The High Value Given to Worship, v9-12

10 For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord will give grace and glory; No good thing will He withhold From those who walk uprightly. 12 O Lord of hosts, Blessed is the man who trusts in You!

These verses chronicle for us how important worship had become to these people. To the sons of Korah, worship is more important than any position they could hold. They would rather be doorkeepers in God's house than have important positions and security in the world.

The sons of Korah were indeed a happy ("blessed", v5) group. They understood the beauty and power of corporate worship. They longed for it and had tender feelings in anticipation of the event. They saw worship as a place of refuge and they used it as an opportunity to draw from the limitless resources of God's strength.

Ah yes, How lovely are Thy dwelling places, O Lord, and how happy are those whose sole satisfaction is in You.