

A Psalm for the Sons of Korah (Part 3) – Psalm 84:9-12

I. Introduction:

- A. Every time I have read this Psalm over the last three weeks, I have seen new things.
1. We must never think that we have intellectually conquered any portion of the infinite Word of God.
 2. Perhaps one of our occupations in Heaven will be mastering new material from the scriptures, even as the angels of God, today, are learning more and more about their Master.
- B. Yesterday as I was re-reading this Psalm I was reminded of something which is both mystical and practical.
1. We see a blend of prayer & testimony – with one verse speaking **to God** & the next **to the people of God**.
 2. **Verse 11**, for example, is a word of testimony, not exactly prayer: *“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.”*
 3. But the Psalm definitely begins with prayer: *“How amiable are **THY** tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts.”*
 4. And the last verse seems to blend both prayer and instruction: *“O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.”*
 5. The Lord, of course, knows that He blesses faith, but the people of God need to be constantly reminded.
- C. And this **reminds ME** that as people of God, we are to live with one foot on earth and the other in heaven.
1. We are to keep one eye on our earthly responsibilities while, with the other eye, we steadfast look toward Jesus the author and finisher of our faith – *“spiritual extropia.”*
 2. The Lord should so occupy our minds that while we are talking to our neighbor we are at the same time talking to the Lord. Or at the very least, our Saviour should be only a breath away.
 3. Are these things possible? Apparently they are, or we wouldn't see it in the Word of God.
- D. Let's temporarily finish our consideration of the Psalmist's testimony and praise in **Psalm 84**.
1. I say, *“temporarily,”* because we could learn more again next week, if we looked at it.
 2. But I don't intend, at this point, to do that.

II. Verse 9 – *“Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.”*

- A. My first question arising from this statement involves the word *“anointed.”*
1. *“Anointed”* is the most common translation of the Hebrew word, but it is also sometimes rendered *“Messiah.”*
 2. There are several commentators who point out that this verse could be speaking of Christ Jesus.
 3. But despite what I just said about an eye on the Lord and on the earth, that doesn't make much sense.
 4. This is not a Messianic Psalm. It does not contain any prophetic material about the Lord Jesus.
 5. And if the Psalmist was David, it **could** be speaking about the anointed king of Israel.
 6. But there is a sense in which all of God's people are anointed. And that is the way I look at it here.
 7. As saved and sanctified people, I believe that we could, and should, insert our names into this verse.
 8. *“Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of thine anointed.”*
- B. Secondly in this verse, we should be struck with the boldness of the Psalmist.
1. Only a fool – or a man of great faith and confidence in the Lord's grace – would say to the infinite God – *“Hey, Lord, take a look at me.”* Yet that is what we have here, if my interpretation is correct.
 2. Should we be this bold before the Lord? Yes, sometimes we should.
 3. We should be bold in different ways – under the right circumstances and for the right reasons.
 4. *“Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy & find grace to help in time of need”*
- C. Then in this verse, we have two closely related words in *“behold”* and *“look.”*
1. Are they saying the same thing? Is there a difference, or is the poet only reiterating his plea?
 2. I can't answer the question, except to say that the prayer was in earnest.
 3. I can't find any significant difference between the two words.
 4. The Psalmist is simply saying, *“Lord please, look and study my face.”*

D. But what about that reference to the man's **face**?

1. At least in this Psalm, that saint of God didn't ask God to study his hands or his feet.
2. He wasn't asking to be judged for he was doing or where he was going – "*Consider my face, Lord.*"
3. I confess that I have never asked the Lord to do this sort of thing. Have you?
4. Obviously, we should from time to time, because we have the Biblical example.

E. But what is it about the face that makes it so special?

1. Certainly it is not the nose or the eyebrows, despite what some people think.
 - a. A nose is a nose, and there isn't very much we can do about the nose the Lord has given to us.
2. But then there *is* the **smile**.
 - a. I saw a man at the store Monday, standing in front of the flower display, but not looking at them.
 - b. He had smile on this face, but I would call it "*sardonic.*" There was a mockery or cynicism in it.
 - c. Was there a story in that smile or was that his usual smile?
 - d. I didn't ask him out fear of him damaging my smile.
3. It seems to me that in advertising there are so many fake smiles.
 - a. Advertising pictures often show people whose smiles seem to be applied like makeup.
 - b. Most of us can recognize a genuine smile, and certainly, so can the Lord.
 - c. "*Lord you know that my heart is filled with joy, and this smile you see is real.*"
4. Another important part of the face are the **eyes**.
 - a. At times they should be downcast. At other times there should be tears at the corners.
 - b. Sometimes our eyes should be dreamily looking toward the horizon, and at other times they should be focused on tiny details.
 - c. "*Lord, as you can see, I am looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*"

III. Verse 10:

A. "*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.*"

1. Remember that earlier, our writer **expressed** a **longing** for the courts of the Lord.
2. One of the threads running through this Psalm is this reference to the tabernacles and courts of the Lord.
3. They certainly have reference to Heaven, but they also point a finger to God's House here on earth.
 - a. And what should be taking place in courts of the House of God?
 - b. Service, praise, worship, fellowship and joy.
4. It should be our testimony before God and before men that a single day – a single hour – in the presence of the Lord is better than a thousand days anywhere else.
5. One day in the service of the Saviour is better than a million in the service of anyone else.
6. And for the child of God, we will experience that blessing throughout eternity.
7. But the Psalmist teaches us that this should be a part of our today, not just our eternity.

B. "*I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.*"

1. The word "*doorkeeper*" is found no where else in God's Word.
2. We don't have other verses shedding light on its meaning. So I get to use my imagination.
3. Isn't a doorkeeper someone who keeps the doors – in this case, the doors of the house of God?
4. What might a doorkeeper do? He might open and close the doors so that others might enter.
 - a. Shouldn't that be one of our privileges? Isn't it one of our responsibilities?
 - b. And at the same time, **keeping** that door, might mean keeping unworthy people out. Isn't that my job?
5. Recently I started the slow and meticulous process of painting the interior of the "*parsonage.*"
 - a. One of the best places to see my improvements is on the doors especially around the door handles and at the bottom where shoes sometimes leave their scuff marks.
 - b. What does a doorkeeper do? He keeps the door in good shape, dusting, cleaning and even painting.

- C. *"I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."*
1. There two comparisons given to us in this part of the verse.
 2. First, there is the difference between *"the house"* & *"the tents"* – the house of God & the tents of others.
 - a. The House of God is permanent, while the tents of the wicked are temporary.
 - b. The House of God is built on the rock – the chief cornerstone of which is the Lord Jesus.
 - c. But tents are made to come and go. They are relatively flimsy.
 3. Why spend a fortune decorating a tent which is going to be destroyed by the grizzly bear of God's judgment?
 4. **II Corinthians 5:1** reminds us – *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."*
 5. We should lay up for ourselves treasures in Heaven, behind the door we so carefully keep.
- D. The second comparison in this verse is between the owners of those residences – **the holy God** & the **wicked**
1. I mentioned on Sunday that I just finished reading two books dealing with some of the mining and logging communities here in the Northwest.
 2. In some places, as gold and silver were discovered, communities instantly developed.
 3. And some of the first structures were tents, some of which were where the wicked women plied their trade.
 4. And when a forest fire swept through the area, as they sometimes did, destroying everything in their paths, the tents of wickedness were often the first places to emerge out of the ashes.
 5. But of course, tents of ill repute are not the only places of wickedness – even church buildings can bear that title.
 6. *"I had rather be nothing but a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."*

IV. Verse 11.

- A. *"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."*
1. In **verse 9** the Psalmist had earlier addressed the Lord as his **shield**.
 2. This could be either the small buckler or the full body protection that poor, vulnerable Goliath needed.
 3. There is nothing I can say to enhance the image already contained in the thought of God as our shield.
 4. The Almighty God is all the protection the saint of God needs. The Lord cannot be defeated or overcome.
 5. We are safe under the shelter which the Lord provides. What we need to do is crawl under His wings.
- B. Furthermore, the Lord is our everlasting **sun**.
1. He provides us with all the light we need.
 2. Even in trying to read a good book to learn about our God, light is important – physically and spiritually.
 3. Of course, the sun is the best, and least expensive, source of light – a source of heat as well.
 4. And, of course, the sun is essential to life upon this planet.
 5. Our Lord God is a sun and shield. In Christ is life in every possible way.
- C. *"The LORD will give grace and glory."*
1. Of course grace and glory are God's to give as He sovereignly chooses to give them.
 2. On the other hand, the believer may have confidence that He **will** give that grace and glory, because we have a great many verses which promise such things.
 3. But notice the order – *"grace and glory"* – not *"glory and grace."*
 4. It is only through God's unmerited love and choice that we receive anything from His hand.
 5. Today, the saint of God enjoys the Lord's grace, but oh, what glory will be given to us soon.
 6. *"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him" – I Corinthians 2:9.*

D. “No good thing will (the Lord) withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

1. Of course, God isn't a debtor to those who walk uprightly.
2. If He gives good things, it is because of His grace.
3. And yet, we find promises like this throughout the Word of God.
 - a. Perhaps your favorite is **Romans 8:28** – *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”*
 - b. Or perhaps you like **Philippians 4:19** – *“My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”*
4. But remember, it is to them that walk *“uprightly.”*
 - a. Even though God's blessings flow out of His grace, there are prerequisites to those blessings today.
 - b. Christ Jesus said, *“seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”*
 - c. God owes us nothing. We should strive to walk uprightly, whether or not blessings follow.
 - d. To *“walk uprightly”* means that in God's sight we walk tall because we walk before the One who has been gracious toward us – there is no reason to stoop or drag ourselves.

V. Verse 12 – “O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.”

- A. Turning one eye back to the Lord, while still keeping the other on more earthly things, the Psalmist says, *“How supremely joyful is the soul who puts his trust in thee.”*
 1. I hope you can see the spiritual logic of the statement.
 2. When our trust is in the God who controls all circumstances, limits all enemies, and possesses all the resources of the universe and beyond, how could we not be joyful? We are blessed beyond measure.
- B. We should constantly tell the Lord that we are thankful in this.
 1. *“O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.”*
 2. And we should also be diligent in telling our neighbors as well.