

Lent Devotional March 30, 2025

Scripture

Psalm 84

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

*2 My soul longs, indeed it faints
for the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh sing for joy
to the living God.*

*3 Even the sparrow finds a home,
and the swallow a nest for herself,
where she may lay her young,
at your altars, O Lord of hosts,
my King and my God.*

*4 Happy are those who live in your house,
ever singing your praise.*

Selah

*5 Happy are those whose strength is in you,
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.*

*6 As they go through the valley of Baca
they make it a place of springs;
the early rain also covers it with pools.*

*7 They go from strength to strength;
the God of gods will be seen in Zion.*

*8 O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer;
give ear, O God of Jacob!*

Selah

*9 Behold our shield, O God;
look on the face of your anointed.*

*10 For a day in your courts is better
than a thousand elsewhere.*

*I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than live in the tents of wickedness.*

*11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield;
he bestows favor and honor.*

*No good thing does the Lord withhold
from those who walk uprightly.*

*12 O Lord of hosts,
happy is everyone who trusts in you.*

Devotion

The Rev. Sara Lawson '18

Several months back, I started praying for a house. I wanted a place where people would gather and I could offer them hospitality. It would have a front house that a family I know could rent and a little cottage in the back for me. In the spacious backyard between the two houses, we could plant a church.

Weather is nice in Southern California, so meeting outside would typically be a pleasant experience, but we could move inside if it rained or on scorching hot days. Maybe we could even plant a garden to give back to the community and steward the resources God gave us.

While that house hasn't materialized, Psalm 84 reminds us of a different house, one in which we are not the hosts, but the guests. The psalmist longed for such a house, longed to dwell in God's house. Similar to my dream, it's a house of hospitality and blessing. "Blessed are those who dwell in your house" (Ps. 84:4).

But the psalm also reminds us that we are on a pilgrimage. We're caught in the tension between what we hope for and where we find ourselves. A longing for something better, something more, something dreamed of, and something that is still not yet. The journey is often challenging—treacherous, even. And as much as we long to be at the destination, or even a rest stop, we must continue on, relying on God alone to sustain us. "Blessed are those whose strength is in you" (Ps. 84:5).

I don't know what the future holds—if God will give me the house of my dreams or if he will reveal other, better dreams. But I pray that my deepest desire will be not for the house—even the house of God—but for God himself.

Prayer

Lord God, in you I place my hope and all my trust. I surrender the dreams that are too small to be worthy of you. Help me to be faithful on this journey and to place my trust in you that I may one day dwell in your house and gaze upon your face.