

WEEK 40 — OUTLINE

The Three Tabernacles

Scripture Reading: Exo. 25:9; 40:34; Psa. 84:1-11; John 1:14; 2:19-21; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; Rev. 21:3, 22

« DAY 1 »

I. The three tabernacles in the Holy Scriptures—the type of the tabernacle, the reality of the tabernacle, and the consummation of the tabernacle—reveal the goal of God’s economy to have a corporate people to be His dwelling place for His expression and representation in eternity (Gen. 1:26; Exo. 40:34; Rev. 21:2-3, 10-11; 22:1, 5):

- A. The type of the tabernacle in the Old Testament is a full and complete revelation of the individual Christ as the Head and the corporate Christ as the Body, the church, including many details of the experience of Christ for the church life (as God’s dwelling place, the tabernacle and the temple were one) (Exo. 25:9; 1 Kings 8:1-11; Heb. 9:4).
- B. The reality of the tabernacle in the New Testament is the incarnated Christ, the individual Christ, and the corporate Christ, the Body of Christ; through His death and resurrection the individual Christ was enlarged to be the corporate Christ, the church, composed of the New Testament believers as the temple, the house of God, and the Body of Christ (John 1:14; 2:19-21; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:6; 1 Cor. 12:12).
- C. The consummation of the tabernacle as the conclusion of the complete Bible is the New Jerusalem, a great corporate God-man as the eternal, enlarged, universal, divine-human incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God with His regenerated, transformed, and glorified tripartite people (Rev. 21:3, 22; 22:17a).

« DAY 2 »

II. Psalm 84 is the secret revelation of the enjoyment of Christ as the fulfillment of the type of the tabernacle so that we may be incorporated into Him to become the reality and consummation of the tabernacle (vv. 1-11):

- A. The deeper love and sweeter experience of the house of God in Psalm 84 comes after the experience of God’s dealing and stripping and is recovered by the experience of God as our unique portion and by Christ’s being given the unique position (73:17, 25-26; 80:15, 17; Col. 1:17b, 18b).

- B. God's purpose in dealing with His holy people is that they would be emptied of everything to receive only God as their gain and be rebuilt with the Divine Trinity to become the masterpiece of God, fulfilling God's eternal economy for His expression (Job 10:13; Eph. 3:9-11; 2:10).
- C. God is faithful to take away all our idols and to lead us into His economy for us to enjoy Christ so that He may have a recovery purely and wholly of the person of Christ (1 Cor. 1:9; 1 John 5:21; cf. Jer. 2:13; Lam. 3:22-24).

III. The intrinsic content of Psalm 84 is the secret revelation concerning the enjoyment of Christ as the incarnated Triune God, the God-man (Col. 2:9; 1:12):

- A. The center of this secret revelation is the house of God (Psa. 84:4, 10a), typified by the tabernacle (Exo. 40:2-8) and by the temple (1 Kings 6:1-3; 8:3-11).
- B. Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9) is the fulfillment of the types of the tabernacle and the temple:
 1. This fulfillment commenced in His incarnation as the individual Christ (John 1:14; 2:21) and will continue (1 Tim. 3:15-16) until it consummates in the New Jerusalem as the corporate Christ, the great God-man (Rev. 21:2-3, 22).
 2. The New Testament, from Matthew through Revelation, covers the entire span of the incarnation of the Triune God and is a record of the divine incarnation.
 3. The enjoyment of Christ as the incarnated Triune God in God's house is portrayed by the arrangement of the tabernacle and its furnishings (see diagram).

IV. The psalmist's longing and even fainting to be in God's tabernacles indicate to what extent the psalmist loved God's tabernacles; this love was matured through many trials (Psa. 84:2).

<< DAY 3 & DAY 4 >>

V. "At Your two altars even the sparrow has found a home; / And the swallow, a nest for herself, / Where she may lay her young, / O Jehovah of hosts, my King and my God" (v. 3):

- A. The two altars—the bronze altar for the sacrifices and the golden altar of incense—are the leading consummations of the work of the incarnated Triune God, who is Christ as the embodiment of God for His increase (Exo. 40:5-6):
 1. At the bronze altar, a type of the cross of Christ, our problems before God are solved through the crucified Christ as the sacrifices; this qualifies us to enter into the tabernacle, a type of Christ as the incarnated and enterable Triune God, and to contact God at the incense altar.
 2. At the golden altar of incense in front of the Holy of Holies (Heb. 9:4), the resurrected

Christ in His ascension is the incense for us to be accepted by God in peace; through our prayer at the incense altar, we enter into the Holy of Holies—our spirit (10:19)—where we experience Christ as the Ark of the Testimony with its contents.

3. Through such an experience of Christ we are incorporated into the tabernacle, the incarnated Triune God, to become a part of the corporate Christ (1 Cor. 12:12) as God's testimony for His manifestation:
 - a. The bronze altar for the sacrifices is related to God's judicial redemption accomplished in the physical realm by Christ in His earthly ministry (Rom. 5:10a; 8:3; Heb. 9:14; 7:27; 10:10).
 - b. The golden altar of incense is related to God's organic salvation carried out in the divine and mystical realm by Christ in His heavenly ministry (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 9:24).
- B. Through these two altars God's redeemed, the "sparrows" and "swallows," can find a nest as their refuge and a home with God in rest (cf. Psa. 90:1; 91:1):
 1. The cross of Christ, typified by the bronze altar, is our "nest," our refuge, where we are saved from our troubles and where we "lay" our young, that is, produce new believers through the preaching of the gospel.
 2. When we experience the resurrected Christ in His ascension, typified by the golden altar of incense, we are accepted by God in such a Christ and find a home, a place of rest, in the house of God.
 3. This house is the processed and consummated Triune God united, mingled, and incorporated with all His redeemed, regenerated, and transformed elect (John 14:1-23) to be the Body of Christ in the present age and the New Jerusalem as the mutual dwelling place of God and His redeemed in eternity (Rev. 21:3, 22).

« DAY 5 »

VI. "Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; / They will yet be praising You. Selah.../ O Jehovah of hosts, blessed is the man / Who trusts in You" (Psa. 84:4, 12):

- A. In type, the house is the church as a totality (1 Tim. 3:15), and the tabernacles (Psa. 84:1) are the local churches (Rev. 1:11).
- B. Praising the Lord should be our living, and our church life should be a life of praising (Psa. 22:3; 50:23; 1 Thes. 5:16-19; Phil. 4:4, 11-13).
- C. In the church life we trust in God, not in ourselves or in our natural human ability, to work out a solution to our difficult situations (2 Cor. 1:8-9, 12).

VII. "Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, / In whose heart are the highways to Zion" (Psa. 84:5; cf. Phil. 4:13; John 15:5):

- A. The highways to Zion signify our intention to enter into the church as the

house of God and are the blessed highways for seeking the incarnated Triune God in His consummations, typified by the furniture in the tabernacle (Heb. 10:19-22).

- B. On the one hand, we have entered into God; on the other hand, we are still on the highways to enter into God.
- C. The highways to Zion in our heart mean that we need to take the way of the church internally, not externally; when we are deeply in the inner life, we will certainly be in the way of the church; the highways to Zion will be within our heart (cf. 1 John 1:3-4).
- D. Zion is the very spot where God is, the Holy of Holies; the overcomers become Zion, and the Lord's recovery is to build up Zion (Rev. 21:16; cf. Exo. 26:2-8; 1 Kings 6:20; cf. Rev. 2:7).

« DAY 6 »

VIII. “Passing through the valley of Baca, / They make it a spring; / Indeed the early rain covers it with blessings” (Psa. 84:6):

- A. Baca means “weeping”; on the one hand, those on the highways to Zion are strengthened in God (v. 5); on the other hand, they are opposed by Satan, who causes them to suffer persecution.
- B. The trouble and persecution caused by Satan can make the highways a valley of weeping; this special term indicates that the psalmist had been disciplined by God and had been stripped by Him.
- C. The highways to Zion are not external, superficial, or cheap; we must pay a price to take the way of the church (Phil. 3:7-8; Matt. 25:9; Rev. 3:18; Acts 20:19, 31; Psa. 56:8).
- D. When we pass through the valley of Baca, God makes this valley a spring (cf. Col. 1:24; Heb. 10:34); this spring is the Spirit (John 4:14; 7:38-39).
- E. The more we weep on the highways to Zion, the more we receive the Spirit; while we are weeping, we are being filled with the Spirit, and the Spirit becomes our spring.
- F. Those who come into the church life by passing through the valley of weeping find that this weeping eventually becomes a great blessing to them; this blessing is the Spirit.
- G. The tears they shed are their own, but these tears issue in a spring, which becomes the early rain, the Spirit as the blessing (Zech. 10:1; Gal. 3:14; Eph. 1:3).

IX. “They go from strength to strength; / Each appears before God in Zion.../ For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand; / I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God / Than dwell in the tents of the wicked. / For Jehovah God is a sun and a shield; / Jehovah gives grace and glory” (Psa. 84:7, 10-11a):

- A. The more we go on in the church life, the more strength we will gain (cf. Prov. 4:18; 2 Cor. 3:18).
- B. If our service is intrinsically according to God’s will in the church life, each day will be worth many days in God’s eyes (Joel 2:25a).
- C. The blessings of dwelling in the house of God are our enjoyment of the incarnated and consummated Triune God as our sun to supply us with life (John 1:4; 8:12), as our shield to protect us from God’s enemy (Eph. 6:11-17), as grace for our inward enjoyment (John 1:14, 17), and as glory for the outward manifestation of God in splendor (Rev. 21:11, 23).

« WEEK 40 — DAY 1 »

Morning Nourishment

Exo. 25:9 “According to all that I show you, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, even so shall you make it.”

1 Kings 8:4 “...They brought up the Ark of Jehovah and the Tent of Meeting and all the holy vessels that were in the tent...”

Rev. 21:3 “...The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.”

The pattern of the tabernacle and all its furnishings is a full and complete type of both the individual Christ as the Head and the corporate Christ as the Body, the church, including many details of the experience of Christ for the church life. (Exo. 25:9, footnote 1)

The physical tabernacle (and later the temple) as God’s dwelling place in the Old Testament was actually a symbol of a corporate people, the children of Israel as the house of God (see footnote 1 on Heb. 3:6). At the beginning of the New Testament age the incarnated Christ as God’s embodiment was both the tabernacle and the temple of God (John 1:14; 2:19-21). Through His death and resurrection the individual Christ was enlarged to be the corporate Christ, the church composed of the New Testament believers as the temple, the house of God, and the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 3:6; 1 Cor. 12:12). Ultimately, the tabernacle and the temple will consummate in the New Jerusalem—the Triune God mingled with His redeemed people of both the Old Testament and the New Testament—as God’s eternal dwelling place (Rev. 21:3, 22). (Exo. 25:9, footnote 2)

Today’s Reading

1 Kings 8:1-11 shows that the tabernacle was merged with the temple. The contents of the tabernacle were placed in the temple, indicating that as God’s dwelling place the tabernacle and the temple were one. The tabernacle was a portable precursor moving through the wilderness, whereas the temple was a consummation of God’s building in typology. (1 Kings 8:4, footnote 1)

For the meeting of God’s people with God, the tabernacle was called the Tent of Meeting (Num. 1:1); for the testimony of God, it was called the Tabernacle of the Testimony (vv. 50, 53). In the New Testament both Christ and the church, the enlargement of Christ, are the reality of the tabernacle in these two aspects. (Num. 1:50, footnote 1)

Abraham first pitched his tent between Bethel and Ai and built an altar there (Gen. 12:8). His tent there was a testimony of God to the world (see footnote 2 on 12:8). At Hebron Abraham’s tent became a place where he had fellowship with God. By Abraham’s pitching a tent at Hebron, God had a place on earth where He could communicate and fellowship with man (cf. ch. 18). Abraham’s tent with the altar built by him was a prefigure of the tabernacle with the altar built by the children of Israel after the exodus from Egypt (Exo. 40). That tabernacle was God’s testimony (Exo. 38:21) and the place where God and His people could dwell and fellowship together. The ultimate consummation of the tabernacle will be the New Jerusalem, the testimony, the expression, of God in eternity and the eternal dwelling place of God and all His called ones (Rev. 21:2-3 and footnote 1 on v. 3; 21:22 and footnote 2). (Gen. 13:18, footnote 1)

As God’s habitation, the New Jerusalem will be the tabernacle of God with men for eternity. The tabernacle made by Moses was a type of this tabernacle (Exo. 25:8-9; Lev. 26:11). That type was first fulfilled in Christ as God’s tabernacle among men (John 1:14) and will eventually be fulfilled in the fullest way in the New Jerusalem, which will be the enlargement of Christ as God’s dwelling place. This tabernacle will also be the eternal dwelling place of God’s redeemed people. God will overshadow us with Christ....Hence, the New Jerusalem will be a mutual habitation for both God and us. (Rev. 21:3, footnote 1)

Further Reading: HWMR: Jeremiah, pp. 6-7; HWMR: Job, pp. 14-19

<< WEEK 40 — DAY 2 >>

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 84:1-2 “How lovely are Your tabernacles, O Jehovah of hosts! My soul longs, indeed even faints, for the courts of Jehovah; my heart and my flesh cry out to the living God.”

Psalm 84, concerning the psalmist’s love for the house of God with Christ, follows the psalms on the stripping of God’s seekers and the desolation of God’s house, beginning with Psalm 73. In the recovery and restoration (Psa. 80) the loveliness and sweetness of God’s house is intensified.

The intrinsic content of Psalm 84 is the secret revelation concerning the enjoyment of Christ as the incarnated Triune God, the God-man. The center of this secret revelation is the house of God (vv. 4, 10), typified by the tabernacle (Exo. 40:2-8) and the temple (1 Kings 6:1-3; 8:3-11). Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God (Col. 2:9) is the fulfillment of the types of the tabernacle and the temple. This fulfillment commenced in His incarnation as the individual Christ (John 1:14; 2:21) and will continue until it consummates in the New Jerusalem as the corporate Christ, the great God-man (Rev. 21:2-3, 22)...The enjoyment of Christ as the incarnated Triune God in God’s house is portrayed by the arrangement of the tabernacle and its furnishings. (Psa. 84:1, footnote 1)

Today’s Reading

Psalm 84...depicts how the saints love the house of God and desire to dwell therein. Surely by now we can say with the psalmist in verse 1, “How lovely are Your tabernacles!” There is not only one tabernacle but many tabernacles. No doubt these tabernacles signify the local churches. The local churches can be so lovely to us; we can even be homesick for them. Many of you have been in the local churches for only a short time, perhaps not more than a year or two. This is a honeymoon. The honeymoon will not last too long. But after all the desolation and negative experiences are past, you will sense that the house of God is much more lovely than it ever was when you first came into it.

Psalm 84 does not precede the stripping and the desolation of God’s house, but follows it. After the stripping and desolation, in the recovery and restoration, the house of God is sweeter than ever before. How lovely are the tabernacles of God! Young brothers and sisters, keep this in mind: if the Lord delays, you will see ten years from now how much sweeter the local churches are to you than they are today. I cannot tell you how lovely they are to me. In John 2 we read about the best wine. But, I tell you, in my experience the local churches are better and sweeter than the very best wine.

If I could check with the sisters concerning the love they have for their husbands, I believe many would testify that the love they now have, after going through many trials and experiences together, is stronger, deeper, and sweeter than the love of their honeymoon. Over the years and through many trials they have built up a love so strong that nothing can break it.

The love in Psalm 84 is not a honeymoon love; it is a love which follows many trials. It is not the love of Psalm 26:8, “O Jehovah, I love the habitation of Your house, / And the place where Your glory abides,” nor is it the love of Psalm 27:4, “One thing I have asked from Jehovah; / That do I seek: / To dwell in the house of Jehovah / All the days of my life, / To behold the beauty of Jehovah, / And to inquire in His temple.” In the church life there is a honeymoon period, and there is a period following many experiences and trials. In Psalm 84 we have a hint of the trials: “Passing through the valley of Baca [which means “weeping”], / They make it a spring” (v. 6). This is not initial love; this is love matured through many trials. It requires some years to come to this point. Keep in mind that Psalm 84 is not in the first book of the Psalms but in the third book. It is long after the honeymoon and even follows an extended time of “married life.” After a certain period of trials, we can testify how lovely the local churches are. (CWWL, 1969, vol. 3, pp. 128-129)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1969, vol. 3, “Christ and the Church Revealed and Typified in the Psalms,” ch. 14

« WEEK 40 — DAY 3 »

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 84:3-4 “At Your two altars even the sparrow has found a home; and the swallow, a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, O Jehovah of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they will yet be praising You. Selah”

[The two altars in Psalm 84:3 are] the bronze altar for the sacrifices and the golden altar of incense. The two altars signify the leading consummations of the work of the incarnated Triune God, who is Christ as the embodiment of God for His increase. The mentioning of these two altars together in Exodus 40:5-6 indicates that they are closely related in our spiritual experience. At the bronze altar, a type of the cross of Christ, our problems before God are solved through the crucified Christ as the sacrifices. This qualifies us to enter into the tabernacle, a type of Christ as the incarnated and enterable Triune God, and to contact God at the incense altar. At the golden altar of incense in front of the Holy of Holies..., the resurrected Christ in His ascension is the incense for us to be accepted by God in peace. Through our prayer at the incense altar we enter into the Holy of Holies—our spirit (Heb. 10:19)—where we experience Christ as the Ark of the Testimony with its contents. Through such an experience of Christ we are incorporated into the tabernacle, the incarnated Triune God, to become a part of the corporate Christ (1 Cor. 12:12) as God’s testimony for His manifestation. (Psa. 84:3, footnote 1)

Today’s Reading

Through these two altars God’s redeemed can find their home with God in rest. Psalm 84:3 speaks both of a home and of a nest. What is the difference between a home and a nest? Whereas a home is a place of rest, a nest is a place of refuge. For us today, the bronze altar is a refuge. We hide ourselves under the cross, escaping our troubles, and thus we are covered and have refuge. Then at the golden altar we contact our Christ in the heavens. This contact is not for refuge—it is for rest.

A swallow is small and weak and is troubled by storms and by many other things. But a swallow has a nest, a refuge. Like a swallow coming to the nest where she may lay her young, we may come to the cross of Christ as our refuge. Here we may bring our “young,” those whom we contact in our preaching of the gospel. Spiritually speaking, at the “nest” of the cross we should “lay” our young, our spiritual children. To lay the young is to produce them through the preaching of the gospel. To do this we need to bring sinners to the cross of Christ. It is here, at the cross, that we have our nest, our refuge, and it is here that we “lay our young,” that is, produce our spiritual children. Before contacting the cross they were sinners, but by contacting the cross they become believers, young children in the Lord. As we teach our young to call on the Lord, they will learn to offer prayer to God at the altar of incense. Then in their experience these two altars will be closely related.

At the bronze altar we meet the crucified Christ, but at the golden altar the crucified Christ becomes the ascended Christ. In His ascension Christ becomes our acceptance. No matter how good or pure we may seem to be in ourselves, we cannot be acceptable to God apart from Christ. We can be acceptable to God only in Christ. This is what it means for Christ to become our incense.

In the church we first find a refuge, and then we find a home. Before we were saved and came into the church, we not only were wandering and homeless, but we were also without any safeguard, protection, or hiding place. When we came to the church, we came immediately to the bronze altar, the cross of Christ, and there, having the solution to our problems, we found a hiding place, a refuge. We hid ourselves in the cross. Then as we went on to contact God, praying at the incense altar, we had the sense that we were resting at home. (Life-study of the Psalms, pp. 371-373)

Further Reading: The Issue of Christ Being Glorified by the Father with the Divine Glory, ch. 4

« WEEK 40 — DAY 4 »

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 84:1-3 “How lovely are Your tabernacles, O Jehovah of hosts! My soul longs, indeed even faints, for the courts of Jehovah; my heart and my flesh cry out to the living God. At Your two altars even the sparrow has found a home; and the swallow, a nest for herself...”

The intrinsic content of Psalm 84 is the secret revelation concerning the enjoyment of the incarnated Triune God.

The Old Testament indicates that God is triune (Gen. 1:1, 26; Isa. 6:1-3, 8), but the God unveiled in the Old Testament is not the incarnated Triune God. In the Old Testament the incarnation of the Triune God was a hidden mystery. However, the very first chapter of the New Testament, a chapter on the genealogy of Christ, speaks of God being born into a virgin to become a man in the flesh (Matt. 1:20). This is the Triune God coming into man to make Himself one with man, to make Himself humanly divine as the God-man named Jesus (vv. 21, 23).

The Lord Jesus lived and walked on earth in a divine-human way for thirty-three and a half years, and then He died on the cross to consummate an all-inclusive, vicarious death, a death that solved all the problems between God and man. His death on the cross is signified by the first of the two altars mentioned in Psalm 84. This altar is the bronze altar for the offering of the sacrifices. (Life-study of the Psalms, p. 379)

Today's Reading

After Christ passed through death, He entered into resurrection. In resurrection He was born to be the firstborn Son of God (Acts 13:33; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:29). Prior to that time He was the only begotten Son of God (John 1:18; 3:16). As the only begotten Son, Christ had divinity, but He did not have humanity. However, as the firstborn Son of God, begotten in resurrection, He has humanity as well as divinity, the human nature as well as the divine nature.

Furthermore, in His wonderful resurrection Christ became the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). The Spirit of God was there in the Old Testament, but at that time the Spirit of God did not have the capacity to give the divine life to humanity. For this reason, certain ones of the descendants of Adam received the power of God but not the life of God. Samson is a typical example of one who received the power of God from the Spirit of God but did not have anything related to God's life. Many others in the Old Testament, such as Job, were quite godly and pious, but we cannot say that they were spiritual, that they were filled with the spiritual, divine life. It was only since the resurrection of Christ, who is the incarnated Triune God, that the Spirit of God began to have the capacity to give the divine life to human beings, for it was in resurrection that Christ Himself became the life-giving Spirit. Also, in the resurrection of Christ all of God's chosen people were regenerated, born again (1 Pet. 1:3). In the resurrected Christ, who is the firstborn Son of God and the life-giving Spirit, we, God's chosen people, were regenerated to become the new creation, the new man.

Following His resurrection, Christ ascended. When He ascended to the heavens, another altar was established, the golden altar of incense for God to accept what Christ has brought to Him. The two altars—the bronze altar for the sacrifices and the golden altar of incense—are the leading consummations of the work of the incarnated Triune God, who is Christ as the embodiment of God for His increase. This is the intrinsic content of Psalm 84.

Psalm 84 bears four aspects. The first aspect is the loveliness of the house of God (v. 1). The second aspect is the longing of the psalmist to enter into God's house (v. 2). Third, there is the aspect of the highways to the house of God (v. 5b). The fourth aspect consists of the blessings of dwelling in the house of God to enjoy God as the sun, the shield, the grace, and the glory. In such a house we enjoy the incarnated and consummated Triune God as our sun to supply us with life, as our shield to protect us from God's enemy, as grace for our enjoyment, and as glory for the manifestation of God. (Life-study of the Psalms, pp. 379-381)

Further Reading: The Issue of Christ Being Glorified by the Father with the Divine Glory, ch. 5

<< WEEK 40 — DAY 5 >>

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 84:4-5 “Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they will yet be praising You. Selah. Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, in whose heart are the highways to Zion.”

10 “For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand; I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.”

Psalm 84:4 says, “Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; / They will yet be praising You.” To dwell in God’s house is to praise Him. Quite often, however, we are lacking in praise. Our vital groups should be full of praising. Not to praise the Lord is to be dormant, but to praise Him is to be vital. Praising the Lord should be our living, and our church life should be a life of praising.

[Verse 10 says], “For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand; / I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God / Than dwell in the tents of the wicked” (cf. Ezek. 47:3-5; Rev. 20:4-6). Here the psalmist speaks of one who stands at the threshold, which is the dividing line between the inside and the outside. I surely would like to be one who stands at the threshold of the house of God....It is better to stand at this threshold than to dwell in the tents of the wicked. However, we should not be satisfied to stay at the threshold of the house of God but should enter into His house. (Life-study of the Psalms, pp. 373-374, 386)

Today’s Reading

Psalm 84:5-7 reveals that the one is blessed whose heart is on the highways to Zion. To be on the highways to Zion means that we intend to come into the church. Actually, our intention to be in the church life is a highway for us to come into the church.

Verse 5a says, “Blessed is the man whose strength is in You.” This indicates that on the highways to Zion we have strength in God. Many of us can testify that before we came into the church we were weak and hesitant, but once we made the decision to come to the church, we were strengthened in God.

The highways to Zion [in verse 5b] are the blessed highways for seeking the incarnated Triune God in His consummations (comprising the washing laver, the showbread table, the lampstand, and the Ark of the Testimony). From our spiritual experiences we have learned that, on the one hand, we have entered into God, but, on the other hand, we are still on the way to enter into God. None of us can say that our entering into God has been completed. For many of us, the entering into God has only begun. We are in God, yet we are still on the highways to enter into God.

Regarding the incarnated Triune God, there are two main consummations....The first consummation is the first altar—the bronze altar for the offering of all the sacrifices (Christ in His crucifixion) to solve all the problems of man before God....Our refuge is the first altar, which signifies the cross of Christ. At the cross of Christ we are saved, and here we have our nest. Actually, our nest is the cross of Christ itself. In this nest we may lay our young, that is, produce new believers.

The [second consummation is the] second altar, [which] is the golden altar of incense (Christ in His ascension) for God’s acceptance of the redeemed sinners (v. 3). When we experience Christ in His ascension, we have a place of rest, and we sense that we are at home. At the first altar we have a nest, and at the second altar we have a resting place in the house of God. (Life-study of the Psalms, pp. 374, 385, 384-385)

The highways to Zion signify our intention to enter into the church as the house of God and to seek the incarnated Triune God in His consummations, typified by the furniture in the tabernacle....On the one hand, we have entered into God; on the other hand, we are still on the highways to enter into God. That the highways are in our heart means that we need to take the way of the church internally, not merely externally. (Psa. 84:5, footnote 1)

Further Reading: Life-study of the Psalms, msg. 32

« WEEK 40 — DAY 6 »

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 84:6-7 “Passing through the valley of Baca, they make it a spring; indeed the early rain covers it with blessings. They go from strength to strength; each appears before God in Zion.”

11 “For Jehovah God is a sun and a shield; Jehovah gives grace and glory; He does not withhold anything good from those who walk uprightly.”

Psalm 84:6a speaks of passing through the valley of Baca....Baca means “weeping.” On the one hand, when we had the intention to come into the church life, we were strengthened in God; on the other hand, we were opposed by Satan, who has caused many saints to suffer persecution. The trouble and persecution caused by Satan can make our highway a valley of weeping.

When we pass through the valley of Baca, God makes this valley a spring (v. 6b). If we take the highway to go to God’s house, trouble and persecution will come to us, and such things will cause us to weep. But God will turn our tears into a spring. Only those who weep will have a spring. The more tears we shed, the greater will be the spring.

Verse 6c says, “Indeed the early rain covers it with blessings.” According to our experience, this means that our tears become a spring and that this spring becomes the early rain that covers the valley with blessings. This early rain is the Spirit, and the Spirit is our blessing.

Those who come into the church life by passing through the valley of weeping will find that this weeping eventually becomes a great blessing to them. This blessing is the Spirit. The tears they shed are their own, but these tears become a spring, which becomes the early rain, the Spirit as the blessing. (Life-study of the Psalms, pp. 374-375)

Today’s Reading

Those on the highways to Zion make the valley of weeping a spring (Psa. 84:6b). This spring is just the Spirit. How wonderful!

The early rain [in verse 6c] signifies the Spirit. This indicates that the more we weep on the highways to Zion, the more of the Spirit we receive. While we are weeping, we are being filled with the Spirit, and the Spirit becomes our spring.

“They go from strength to strength” in verse 7a indicates that as we are walking on the blessed highways to seek the incarnated Triune God, we go from strength to strength. As a result, no one can turn us aside....Strength is added to strength. Those who take the highway to Zion already have strength in God, and now they are strengthened further and thus go from strength to strength.

Verse 7b says, “Each appears before God in Zion.” The issue of the foregoing is that we appear before God in Zion. We treasure God’s habitation because Zion is here. We treasure the church life because here we are in Zion. Even though we are on earth, we are nonetheless in the heavenly Zion (Heb. 12:22).

Psalm 84:8, 9, 11, and 12 are the psalmist’s prayer. “Behold our shield, O God; / And look upon the face of Your anointed” (v. 9). The “shield” in this verse refers to David the king, and the “anointed” refers also to David the king, typifying Christ. Here the psalmist prayed concerning David, saying that he was the shield to protect them and that he was God’s anointed. In typology, however, this anointed one is Christ. In our prayer we may say, “O God, look upon the face of Christ, Your anointed One, who is our Savior.”

Verse 11a says, “Jehovah God is a sun and a shield.” The sun is the source of light, and light gives life. Plants, animals, and human beings all need sunlight in order to live and grow. In our spiritual life, we also need sunlight, and for this we have Christ as our source of light and life.

In type, Psalm 84 shows us how excellent the church life is and how we should treasure it. Here we enjoy the cross of Christ, and here we enjoy Christ Himself. We all should take the highway to come to the church and then dwell here. Here we enjoy our David, our anointed One, our Christ, who is our sun, our shield, our grace, and our glory. (Life-study of the Psalms, pp. 386, 375-377)

Further Reading: Life-study of the Psalms, msg. 33

How lovely is Thy dwelling place

The Church — Her Attraction

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F B \flat C F B \flat /D C/E
1. How love-ly is Thy dwell-ing place! With-in Thy courts I long to be;
C C 7 /E F F/A B \flat C C 7 /B \flat F/A C 7 /G F B \flat F/C C 7 F
7 Thy presence, Lord, my spir-it craves, For this my heart cries out to Thee.

2. At Thy burnt-offering altar, Lord,
And at Thine incense altar blest,
Even the sparrow finds a home,
And swallow there prepares her nest.

3. Men, as the sparrow, frail and small,
When living in Thy house find rest,
Relying on the altar's blood,
Enjoying there the incense blest.

4. How blessed are those men indeed!
Trusting in Thee they are made strong;
Highways to Zion in their hearts,
The way they care not, rough or long.

5. Passing the weeping valley they
Make it a place of springing wells;
The rain with blessings covers it
And in the way God's mercy tells.

6. From strength to strength they go, and all
Before the Lord in Zion meet;
Thus ever seeking Thine own self,
They need Thy care and grace replete.

7. Better a day within Thy courts
Than days a thousand I would tell;
I'd rather at Thy threshold stand
Than in the wicked's tents to dwell.

8. Thou art a sun, Thou art a shield,
Thou grace and glory wilt supply;
Thy presence and Thy very self
My need in fulness satisfy.

9. Not one good thing wilt Thou withhold
From those who walk in uprightness;
Bless'd is the man that trusts in Thee
With grace and glory measureless.