

## "Lovely Tabernacles"

Psalm 84: 1

Sunday, June 26, 2005

### SERMON NOTES

A. "Lovely Tabernacles" . . . . . Psalm 84:1

1. Description of the construction of
  - a. the tabernacle is found in Exodus 25–30, 35–40
  - b. the temple is found in 2 Chronicles 3–4
2. "lovely"
  - a. in English means
    - b. but in describing God's tabernacle, the Hebrew word means
3. what made God's tabernacle this is
  - a. Exodus 33:7 that it was the place to
  - b. 1 Kings 9:3 that it was the place where

B. Meeting for Sustenance . . . . . Psalm 84:2

1. Blaise Pascal is reputed to say every man has
2. from Ephesians 3:19 we learn that Christians still need to be
3. God's promise through Jesus words in Matthew 5:6 is that

C. Meeting for Safety . . . . . Psalm 84:3

1. what did the swallows in God's sanctuary (and our barn)?
2. why do we need safety? ... how is it obtained?

D. Meeting for Strength . . . . . Psalm 84:5–7

1. Valley of Baca means
2. Believers go through the "Valley of Baca" when
3. they can find strength in these circumstances because

E. Meeting for Satisfaction . . . . . Psalm 84:10–11

1. satisfaction comes when we learn concerning our prayers
  - a. not just W\_\_\_\_ He has answered Yes, No, Wait
  - b. but also W\_\_\_\_
  - c. and example (2 Corinthians 12:6–9) is Paul and his asking God
2. satisfaction comes from deepened T\_\_\_\_\_ in God's . . .
  - a. Psalm 103:5, 107:9 ...
  - b. Romans 11:33 informs us concerning this that we may not
  - c. Yet we know, Philippians 4:9

F. How real is Jesus Christ to me? ... what am I going to do about this?

A. “Lovely Tabernacles”

1. our text today is the first verse Psalm 84 which we read earlier this morning
  - a. in the New King James Version, it reads this way: **How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts!**
  - b. in the King James or Authorised Version: **How amiable are thy tabernacles, O LORD of hosts!**
  
2. “lovely”?
  - a. this word, also translated “amiable” or “pleasant”, is a bit weak in English, especially the North American variety, where we are quite ready to exclaim
    - (A) “What a lovely view!”
    - (B) “What a pleasant day!”
    - (C) “She is a most amiable hostess!”
    - (D) for we use it to describe something pretty, something which satisfies our senses, something or someone that gives to us a sense of beauty, grace or rest
  - b. well, it is indeed true that the tabernacle along with its furnishings, was a thing of beauty
    - (A) its hanging walls were coloured white, blue and red
    - (B) the framework that was used to erect it had sockets of silver and of brass
    - (C) the cherubim, the mercy seat, the lamp, its stand, and other articles were made of pure gold
    - (D) the altar and the utensils used in worship were made of burnished brass
    - (E) it was truly a magnificent, beautiful spectacle
  - c. and the temple that followed it, being fixed permanently in Jerusalem, was no less striking in beauty
  - d. but the Hebrew word means more than the tabernacle being admirable for its beauty; its root meaning is not beauty but love; God’s tabernacles are lovely because they are beloved, they are worthy of being loved – and why?
  
3. let’s back track a moment, to look a “tabernacles”
  - a. why should it be that a building
    - (A) in one case a tent that was carried from place to place as the Israelites journeyed through the wilderness

- (B) and in the other, a building made of stone and timbers constructed in Zion, the city of David in Jerusalem
  - (C) should be beloved, should be worthy of love?
  - b. well, we are told in Exodus 33:7 (NKJV): *Moses took his tent and pitched it outside the camp, far from the camp, and called it the tabernacle of meeting. And it came to pass that everyone who sought the LORD went out to the tabernacle of meeting which was outside the camp.*
  - c. concerning the temple, later we read in 1 Kings 9:3 (NAS): *And the LORD said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your supplication, which you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built by putting My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually."*
  - d. so, in the Old Testament, the tabernacle and the temple, were the habitations of the Lord, places established where
    - (A) God placed His name
    - (B) God was present in a special way
    - (C) men could go and seek God
    - (D) men could go and meet God
4. the lovely tabernacles of which I wish to speak this morning, are those places and times that you set apart as your quiet time, your devotions, to go on a regular basis to meet with God. Let's learn a few things about them as found in Psalm 84

## B. Meeting for Sustenance

1. *"My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD; My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God."* (Psalms 84:2 NAS)
2. Christians have a deep-seated need to spend time with God
  - a. Blais Pascal is said to have described this as being the God-shaped vacuum or void that is in every soul
    - (A) when we come to accept Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour, we have taken the first step in filling that void
    - (B) but this is not the end of it; Paul prayed for the Ephesian Christians that they might *"... know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God."*

(Ephesians 3:19 NAS)

- b. now, this is in no way to disparage the blessings of
  - (A) meeting as a body of believers on Sunday to worship
  - (B) getting together for corporate prayer
  - (C) joining in a Bible study in a home
  - (D) examining God's word in our Adult & Teen Bible class
- c. but these are really just a start to strengthening the child-parent relationship with our Father God
  - (A) because prayer is not just presenting our current wish list of needs and cares to God
  - (B) no more than conversation between lovers is simply a means of acquiring data and information
  - (C) but in each case it is a way of getting to know a person better, of deepening our appreciation for one we love

- 3. at Communion, we sometimes sing "Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts" written by the 12<sup>th</sup> century Bernard of Clairvaux; the third verse describes this hunger and thirst for God

We taste Thee, O thou living Bread,  
And long to feast upon Thee still;  
We drink of Thee, the Fountainhead,  
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.

- 4. and this burning desire, a voracious appetite God has promised that He will satisfy, for Jesus said, Matthew 5:6 (NAS): "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied." — God's lovely tabernacles are there so that your spiritual appetite may be satisfied.

### C. Meetings for Safety

- 1. "The bird also has found a house, And the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, Even Thine altars, O LORD of hosts, My King and my God." (Psalms 84:3 NAS)
- 2. our barn
  - a. when we moved into our current home 20+ years ago
    - (A) we noticed that very first summer

- (B) the barn swallows that came in and nested in the barn
- (C) and, although there was a certain amount of cleaning up to be done at the end of the year
- (D) that was not much of a problem as the bottom part of the barn was laid out as stalls for horses with a clay coating on the floor to protect the horses' hooves
- b. later, I divided the bottom of the barn
  - (A) and put a workshop in front
  - (B) and still later, used the back half for storage
  - (C) I thought I would encourage the swallows to build their nests outside the barn rather than inside
  - (D) to cut down the cleaning up work needed
  - (E) so, I built a beautiful ledge under the eaves for nesting
  - (F) and closed the windows and doors in May when they returned each year
  - (G) but it didn't work; the swallows didn't care for my lovely ledge, but went and nested somewhere else
  - (H) because my ledge failed their inspection
- c. now, the swallows build their nests out of mud
  - (A) lined with feathers and other soft things
  - (B) on the side of the rafters that bear the floor above
  - (C) very close to the ceiling, so they are well protected
  - (D) and, in the view of the swallows, there was no safety nor security in my ledge
  - (E) I gave in, we reopened the windows and door, and the swallows returned in the following years
  - (F) so this morning there are 7 nestlings in our barn

3. In one of the hymns we sang this morning were these lines

"And oft escaped the tempter's snare  
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer." —{2}.

- a. you will find all sorts of people who will put up a ledge for you, assuring that it is safe and secure
  - (A) the book-stores are full of self-help books
  - (B) this is true in the spiritual realm as well
    - (1) "How to have Spiritual Success"
    - (2) "Gaining Spiritual Victory"

(C) but the answer is simple yet difficult

- b. like those swallows and our barn, go to the place which God has put in your heart, and spend time with Him
- c. God's lovely tabernacles are there so that you may find spiritual safety and security from all that the Enemy of your souls would hurl at you.

#### D. Meeting for Strength

1. "How blessed is the man whose strength is in Thee; In whose heart are the highways *to Zion!* Passing through the valley of Baca, they make it a spring, The early rain also covers it with blessings. They go from strength to strength, *Every one of them* appears before God in Zion." (Psalms 84:5-7 NAS)

#### 2. The Valley of Baca

- a. can mean either the "Valley of Weeping" or "The Valley of Dryness" – it doesn't matter really which, because the words are metaphorical.
- b. there is a picture is being drawn of a traveller
  - (A) and his route takes him into a place of distress
  - (B) but because in his heart
    - (1) are the highways of Zion
    - (2) are all the times he has gone to the meeting place to spend time with God
    - (3) are all of the refreshment that has strengthened him in those times with God
  - (C) this weary, weepy place is transformed into a place of springs, a place of refreshment
  - (D) and, in the midst of distress, he is found not only to be strong, but increasing in strength

#### 3. Every believer is going to spend times in the Valley of Baca

- a. it is inevitable in this life
  - (A) there will be times of weeping, of sorrow
  - (B) there will be times of dryness of soul
  - (C) this is the lot of mankind
- b. but it is the man, the woman, the child of God,
  - (A) who has spent time with Him in prayer and in His word

(B) in whose heart is

(1) the highways of Zion

(2) the Way of God, the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour

(3) the day by day ongoing relationship with His Father God and Creator

(C) that when the dry times come, the weeping times come

(D) is carried through because their strength is in God

c. so they can sing the words of the hymn

"Though my weary steps may falter,

And my soul athirst may be,

Gushing from the Rock before me,

Lo! a spring of joy I see." <sup>-{3}</sup>.

4. God's lovely tabernacles are there so that you may grow so accustomed to relying upon His strength that it becomes the natural response when you enter the valley of Baca, the time of trouble

## E. Meeting for Satisfaction

1. "For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand *outside*. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God, Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly." (Psalms 84:10-11 NAS)

2. The time spent in meeting God results in satisfying the believer

a. firstly, the time spent with the Father is one in which we learn about His answering our prayers

(A) not just that we learn WHEN He has answered "Yes," or "No," or "Wait"

(B) but that we begin to know the mind of Christ

(C) and begin to understand WHY He has answered "Yes," or "No," or "Wait"

(D) a good example of this is Paul (2 Corinthians 12:6ff)

(1) was beset with some weakness, "thorn in the flesh"

(2) asked God three times to have it removed

(3) but God's answer was no

- (4) but also Paul learned this was
  - (a) to keep him humble in his apostolic office
  - (b) so he would rely on Christ's grace & strength
- b. secondly, to gain trust in God's goodness and grace; who
  - (A) withholds nothing good from those walking with Him
  - (B) "... satisfies your years with good things, [So that] your youth is renewed like the eagle." (Psalms 103:5 NAS)
  - (C) "... has satisfied the thirsty soul, And the hungry soul He has filled with what is good." (Psalms 107:9 NAS)
  - (D) but you need to remember that this is Romans 11:33 prosperity that is promised "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!" (NAS) ... we may not understand what the "good things" are this side of eternity.

3. God's lovely tabernacles are there so that you may have the abiding satisfaction that comes with walking with the God who "... shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19 NAS)

F. There is much more in this Psalm about God's Lovely Tabernacles, but I will leave them for you to discover for yourself as you spend time with Him

#### G. Conclusion

1. During a revival meeting, George W. Truett, the famous pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, noticed that a particularly brilliant student from Baylor University had been attending and listening with great interest. Truett became greatly interested in the conversion of this young man, so he arranged for a private meeting. After Truett had spoken earnestly about the Saviour, the student asked Dr. Truett a simple question: "IS JESUS CHRIST REAL TO YOU?" He added, "Please don't give me a THEORETICAL or THEOLOGICAL answer." Tears came to Dr. Truett's eyes, and he replied, "Son, Jesus Christ is more real to me than the skin that covers my bones." <sup>-{4}</sup>.



2. What about you? Is Jesus Christ more real to you than the skin that covers your bones? If not, it could be that you spend more effort, energy and time with this world's concerns than God's. Won't you make the commitment this morning to be faithful in spending time with our wonderful Lord Jesus Christ?

1. © 2005 by Garth Hutchinson, Faith Fellowship Baptist Church of Aurora (Ontario): may be distributed or quoted freely, only let this be done to the glory “of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ” (Titus 2: 13).

Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, [www.holwick.com](http://www.holwick.com). Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick’s database are identified by “Kerux” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. “Sweet Hour of Prayer” by William W. Walford (1772–1850)
3. “All the Way My Saviour Leads Me” by Frances (Fanny) Jane Crosby, (1820–1915)
4. From “What is Greatest Desire” by Dr. James Merritt – Kerux sermons #180