

How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place?

Scripture: Psalm 84

Date: March 10, 2021

Message:

How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Psalm 84:1-2

Most musicians who have sung classical choral music, are familiar with the first verse of this Psalm as being the text of the central movement of Johannes Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem* (A German Requiem). The movement, "How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place (Wie lieblich sind deine Wohnungen)," depicts a peaceful contemplation of heaven, for which the believer longs.

God's people show their deep commitment to Him by longing to be with Him, and today's passage provides us with such an example. Author King David begins with a declaration of the exquisiteness of God's dwelling place, in which many scholars believe he is referring to the first temple. From descriptions in the Old Testament books of Exodus (36:1) and 1 Kings (5-7), we learn that the sanctuaries within the temple were absolutely stunning. This shows us that God has a love for beauty to make the places where we gather breathtaking.

We would be naive however, to consider David's reference to the loveliness of God's dwelling place as referring to only the temple. We must also think of God's creation of Earth and life upon it; how beautiful it is! We are so fortunate to live in such a place that we can look out our windows and see God's beauty everywhere. Children often ask adults how they can see God. The answer frequently given is that they can see God in the flowers, the mountains, the beauty of each and every person, and the beauty of this world that He created. Since God lives within us and among us, His world would have to be beautiful, and we are the ones who benefit from seeing this beauty every day. If God's temple and creation were (and are) so beautiful, imagine what Heaven will be like, and even more so, when we will be in God's presence! Oh, what beauty to behold, and oh, what it will be like when we are ultimately with Him, in a new heaven and a new Earth!

Prayer: *Father God, we thank you for the beauty of your dwelling places here on earth, the dwelling place in our hearts, and the dwelling place that we ultimately seek with You, in heaven. Be with us as we look to you for strength, joy and peace, so that we may share with others the beauty that You show within us. Amen.*

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