

## Lent Devotional April 7, 2019

### SCRIPTURE

#### Psalm 84

- <sup>1</sup> How lovely is your dwelling place,  
O LORD of hosts!
- <sup>2</sup> My soul longs, indeed it faints  
for the courts of the LORD;  
my heart and my flesh sing for joy  
to the living God.
- <sup>3</sup> 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.
- <sup>4</sup> Happy are those who live in your house,  
ever singing your praise. *Selah*
- <sup>5</sup> Happy are those whose strength is in you,  
in whose heart are the highways to Zion.
- <sup>6</sup> As they go through the valley of Baca  
they make it a place of springs;  
the early rain also covers it with pools.
- <sup>7</sup> They go from strength to strength;  
the God of gods will be seen in Zion.
- <sup>8</sup> O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;  
give ear, O God of Jacob! *Selah*
- <sup>9</sup> Behold our shield, O God;  
look on the face of your anointed.
- <sup>10</sup> 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.
- <sup>11</sup> 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.
- <sup>12</sup> O LORD of hosts,  
happy is everyone who trusts in you.

### DEVOTIONAL

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As God's people we face many difficult challenges, both personal and political, and we continue journeying through them in Lent. At this time of the season, we may feel exhausted in our Christian faith. Looking to the cross of Christ before us, we may be thinking, "Lord, how can I find the energy to go on?" And that is where we must stop, because living a life in faith is not about our finding anything. It is about receiving! As the psalmist says, "Happy are those whose strength is in you."

We have no strength but God's. We need no strength but God's. If the many challenges of the world have caused you to begin depending on yourself to overcome them, stop for a moment. Recognize that you are walking a more difficult path—a human path—than the one God intends for you. Behold your shield once more. Humbly bow your head in acknowledgement of your straying and *receive* the strength of God, through the empowering of the Holy Spirit. Know that you are able, once more, to lift your head, follow your heart, and continue your journey through your own valley of Baca with the cross of Christ as your guiding light, not your immediate goal.

**PRAYER**

Loving God, in our faith we know that You are always with us; yet the world tries to shield us from You, and we have become downcast. We pray that Your power and strength would overcome our human frailty, so that we may continue our journey through this pilgrimage of Lent until we can lift our heads upward to see the glory of Your risen and ascended presence. Amen.