



e have thought on  
your steadfast love, O God,  
in the midst of your temple.

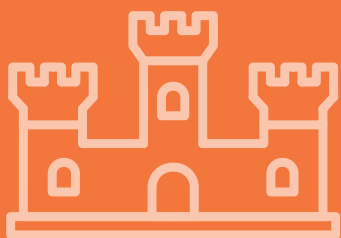
(PSALM 48)

## STRUCTURE

**v. 1-3** God dwells in a fortress.

**v. 4-8** Earthly armies are no match for God's fortress.

**v. 9-14** The righteous know that God's fortress is actually a temple.



## AT A GLANCE

**AUTHOR** This psalm was composed by the Sons of Korah, who also wrote Psalms 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 84, 85, 87 and 88.

**MORE TO THE STORY** The mention of Tarshish in verse 7 may refer to 1 Kings 22, in which we learn that Jehoshaphat's ships were destroyed when he tried to mimic Solomon.

**THIS SOUNDS FAMILIAR** Though the hymn is based on Psalm 46 (another psalm of the Sons of Korah), "A Mighty Fortress" contains similar language about the dwelling of God.

## CHRIST IS HERE

Zion is imagined as not only the earthly dwelling of God, but also a proclamation of the goodness of the Lord to the next generation. The psalm concludes with the statement "He will guide us forever," which points to Christ as the eternal heir of the throne of David's and the Lord's.



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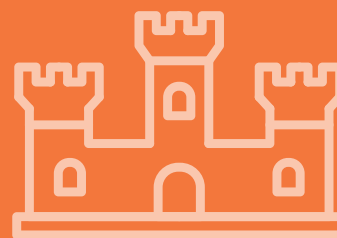
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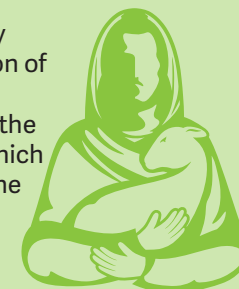
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**The break (Selah) after verse 8** marks a sharp shift in tone of this psalm. While the first two sections focus on the might and fearsome majesty of God, the concluding verses focus on the praise of God. As this is a psalm of the Sons of Korah, we should read it as a liturgical one. The meditation is shaped first by acknowledging who God is (akin to confessing the Creed) and then by calling the congregation to consider and praise this God of salvation (akin to a sermon or a hymn). The natural conclusion to this meditation on the steadfast love of God is to consider His temple — that is to say, His physical, earthly dwelling. In days of old, the Sons of Korah taught the people of Israel about thir physical access to God's presence in His temple; in these last days, God guides us forever through the physical presence of His Son in the Blessed Sacrament.



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## USE IN THE CHURCH

**Antiphon:** v. 1a ("Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised")

**In the Daily Office:** Tuesdays at Matins; Matins on Christmas Day and Pentecost

**At the Divine Service:**

Introit (ant: v. 9) and Gradual (v. 1, 8a, 9) for Purification  
Gradual for Reformation (v. 1a, 12–14a)

**One-Year:**

Introit for Trinity 8 (ant: v. 9–10); introit antiphon for Trinity 19 (v. 14a); introit verses for Trinity 20 (v. 1, 9–11)

**Three-Year:**

Introit for Pentecost Monday (ant: v. 8); introit antiphon for Proper 23C (v. 1a); introit verses for Proper 28B (v. 11–14)

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- Before worship.
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- When Christians suffer.
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## PSALM PRAYER

O God, You are worthy to be praised and greatly to be feared. You are the King of glory, reigning in the heavenly Zion. Establish Your throne within our hearts, dwell within us and give us spiritual understanding through Your Word, that we may declare Your praise to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

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