

In Unison



The trumpeters and
singers joined in unison,
as with one voice, to
give praise and thanks
to the Lord.
2 Chronicles 5:13

A Longing to be Near Him

An Insatiable Passion

The sons of Korah were temple musicians, appointed by King David.

These are the men David put in charge of the music in the house of the LORD after the ark came to rest there. They ministered with music before the tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, until Solomon built the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem. They performed their duties according to the regulations laid down for them.

1 Chronicles 6:31-32 niv

The sanctuary of God was their place of work; they were there every day. How easy it would have been for their worship to become something commonplace, something performed mechanically.

But in their case, instead of familiarity breeding contempt, it bred an insatiable passion for the presence of God—a passion so eloquently expressed in the Psalter. What could have become something mundane, became something beautiful and pure. Their words speak of open, rapturous joy found only before the altar of the Lord.

Where has that passion gone?
Where did we lose that unabashed, un-

ashamed delight in communing with our God? *He* is eternally changeless; the object of our worship is the same as that worshiped by the sons of Korah. So if He is the same, it must be we who have become jaded and so casual with worship. We are the ones who, more often than not, approach our time of corporate worship as an unavoidable interruption of those things we'd rather be doing.

Those who lead the worship of others very often are the ones most guilty of indifference to the process. We perform our duties and feel that that service alone is sufficient. We show up on time, lead in the singing of the hymns, sing our anthem and come away thinking ourselves filled—when, in reality, we haven't even unstopped the jar of His riches.

Why do we worship? The sons of Korah knew. They knew God so well that they knew the unfathomable depths of His mercies and joy. They knew that time spent on one's knees before the Lord was time that would energize the spirit and restore the soul.

The sons of Korah knew. They knew what it was to yearn for God.

As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for Thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. *Psalms 42:1-2a nasb*

Has our worship become too organized, too mechanized, too programmed? Have we become so sophisticated in our worship that we are no longer excited by God's presence?

The sons of Korah knew the sheer joy of even *anticipating* time spent with the Lord.

How lovely are Thy dwelling places, O Lord of hosts! 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 84:1-2 nasb

Dear God,

Few things in this world are as dependable as the flurry of activity at the bird feeder when it snows. No matter the time of year, a fresh batch of seed will always attract some takers, and there seems to be a direct relationship between falling temperatures and rising interest in a handout. But like polite visitors during the first few minutes of a party, the birds are few in number and peck tentatively at the source of their nourishment.

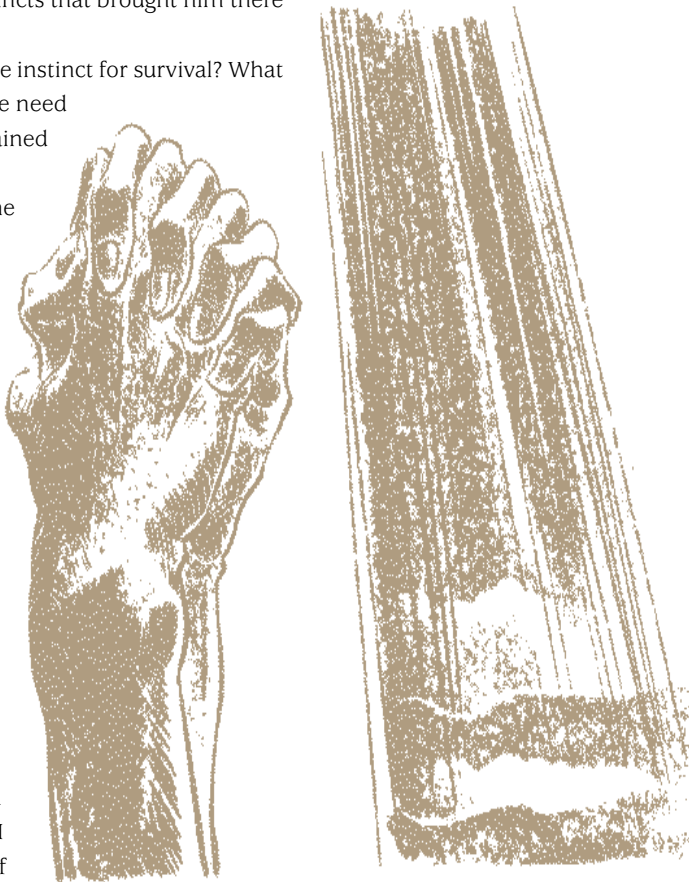
Let a few snowflakes fall from the sky, however, and quickly the area around the feeder becomes a Convention of the Winged. All good manners are tossed aside as the feeding frenzy begins. It's as if the snow reminds Your feathered creations that they are, indeed, hungry—and that they'd better be about the business of filling their bellies. What the snow has reminded them, of course, is not so much that they are hungry, but that in a very short time all their other sources of food will be covered over by a heavy, icy blanket. They feel the urgent call to fill their bellies to bursting, in case their next meal is some time off.

Man is such an odd creature, Father. Why have You made him this way? You've made man to strive toward something better, to improve himself, but then once he has bettered his situation, he forgets those instincts that brought him there in the first place!

What have we gained by rising above our primitive instinct for survival? What have we gained by acquiring such sophistication that we need no longer clamor and strive to be fed? What have we gained by losing our hunger for You?

In winter, even more than during the rest of the year, those living in the wild have one overriding purpose: to feed their hunger. They expend most of their energy in the singular pursuit of simply staying alive. But for modern man, life has become so easy that we've lost the instinct for hunger—the instinct to want something so badly that finding it becomes our passionate, single-minded pursuit. We build a big, beautiful church, a house of worship to honor Your name—but then we spend all our time gazing upon the expensive edifice instead of Your face. We pave its floor with thick, expensive carpet—but then we forget how to kneel upon it before Your throne. We carry under our arm the latest translation of Your Bible, thick, and bound in rich leather—but we don't take the time to read and learn what You've written there.

I don't want to live that way, Father. I want to keep my hunger. Even if my body has become fat and satisfied, I don't want my heart to forget its yearning. I don't want my mind to forget that You are the source of all it knows.



Scripture Regarding the Korahite Clan

The sons of Korah were Assir, Elkanah and Abiasaph. These were the Korahite clans. Exodus 6:24

and the sons of Eliab were Nemuel, Dathan and Abiram. The same Dathan and Abiram were the community officials who rebelled against Moses and Aaron and were among Korah's followers when they rebelled against the Lord. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them along with Korah, whose followers died when the fire devoured the 250 men. And they served as a warning sign. The line of Korah, however, did not die out. Numbers 26:9-11

These also were Levite clans:

the Libnite clan,
the Hebronite clan,
the Mahlite clan,
the Mushite clan,
the Korahite clan.

(Kohath was the forefather of Amram. Numbers 26:58

Shallum son of Kore, the son of Ebiasaph, the son of Korah, and his fellow gatekeepers from his family (the Korahites) were responsible for guarding the thresholds of the Tent just as their fathers had been responsible for guarding the entrance to the dwelling of the Lord. 1 Chronicles 9:19

Then some Levites from the Kohathites and Korahites stood up and praised the Lord, the God of Israel, with very loud voice. Early in the morning they left for the Desert of Tekoa. As they set out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Listen to me, Judah and people of Jerusalem! Have faith in the Lord your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will be successful!" 2 Chronicles 20:19-20

Psalms written by the sons of Korah

Psalm 42

For the director of music. A maskil of the Sons of Korah. As the deer pants for streams of water; so my soul pants for you, O God...

Psalm 44

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil. We have heard with our ears, O God; our fathers have told us what you did in their days, in days long ago...

Psalm 45

For the director of music. To the tune of "Lilies." Of the Sons of Korah. A maskil. A wedding song. My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer...

Psalm 46

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. According to alamoth. A song. God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble...

Psalm 47

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy...

Psalm 48

A song. A psalm of the Sons of Korah. Great is the Lord, and most worthy of praise, in the city of our God, his holy mountain...

Psalm 49

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. Hear this, all you peoples; listen, all who live in this world...

Psalm 84

For the director of music. According to gittith. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty...

Psalm 85

For the director of music. Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. You showed favor to your land, O Lord; you restored the fortunes of Jacob...

Psalm 87

Of the Sons of Korah. A psalm. A song. He has set his foundation on the holy mountain...

Psalm 88

A song. A psalm of the Sons of Korah. For the director of music. According to mahalath leannoth. A maskil of Heman the Ezrahite. O Lord, the God who saves me, day and night I cry out before you...

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