



## Welcome to Thin Within!

### Weekly Summary Thought

*Our hearts are set on pilgrimage!*

**W**e rejoice that you have joined us for this journey! The road stretches before us long and winding. Many adventures lay ahead and many wondrous discoveries. Before we get started, we want to give you a chance to take the time to get acquainted with the Thin Within book, this study guide, and, if applicable, the other members of your group.

If you are with a group, your leader will give you time to browse through the book and the study guide at this time.

As soon as you are ready, let's get started! The road awaits! If you are in a group, you will have a chance to work together through this introductory lesson. However, in the future, you will want to work through the material during the week and come with your lesson all completed! It will be exciting to share with your group members what God has been doing in your life during the week!

Are you ready? Then let's get started together!

- **Scriptural Focus: We have a wonderful journey ahead!**


#### **For the Leader:**

During today's meeting, you will distribute materials and get to know one another. This week will be unlike future weeks, as you will all complete the work in today's lesson together. Be sure to see the sample schedule in the leader section at the front of the Study Guide.

Perhaps the most valuable asset during your time over the next six weeks with your group will be prayer. Commit to praying for your group members and, if possible, to contact each at least once during the time you are together.

Thank you for having the courage and desire to shepherd others on this journey!


# Intro Thin Within Study Guide

 **For the Leader:**  
Ask for a volunteer in your group to read the scripture focus passage out loud for the group.

*Blessed are those whose strength is in You,  
who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.  
As they pass through the Valley of Baca,  
they make it a place of springs;  
the autumn rains also cover it with pools.  
They go from strength to strength,  
till each appears before God in Zion.*  
  
- Psalm 84:5-7

- **Scriptural Focus Questions**

1. We have joined together with God on a pilgrimage. We press on from where we find ourselves in this present moment and yearn for a future that God has for us. We have our hearts set on pilgrimage or we wouldn't be studying Thin Within! Describe where you currently find yourself—that place from which you wish to depart. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

 **For the Leader:**  
Give your group members a chance to write their own answers in the space provided. Then ask if anyone would *like* to share. This may be personal and some may be eager to share, while others would like the chance to wait before being that vulnerable. You will want both groups of people to know that they are safe in your wonderful group!

2. What does God's Word say about the person who sets their heart on moving forward with God? \_\_\_\_\_

*The word "blessed" is a wonderful word! It actually can be translated "happy!" Did you know that God desires for you to have a happiness that bubbles up from deep within you?  
Consider this as we study this passage briefly! God loves His*

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*people to be happy! If you focus on Him and His strength,  
blessedness or happiness will be the result!*

3. In the past, you may have focused on garnering up self-control or self-discipline to get your weight controlled. You may have even focused on bible verses to help you with this, such as “God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power, love and self-discipline!” This is wonderfully true, however, the one who is blessed, made happy in the Lord is finds their strength elsewhere. According to Psalm 84:5-7, Who is the source of your strength for this journey? \_\_\_\_\_

*Let's look at the word translated “strength” in Psalm 84:5-7.  
We see the word “strength” in this passage three times. The  
first time it is used to refer to strength that is found in the Lord.  
This is the Hebrew Word, oz, meaning “strength, might,  
fortress, stronghold.”<sup>1</sup> Dear, traveler! Now that you are on  
this road, you will discover yourself hiding in your wonderful  
Lord for protection, for refreshment, for nourishment! You will  
find yourself shedding any other strongholds in favor of your  
Hero, our Lord Almighty! He is your strength!*

4. Psalm 84:5-7 speaks of a journey, a pilgrimage. We aren't sure of the departure point that the Psalmist speaks of, though we have defined our own. However, we have some indication of stepping stones along the way. Identify any that you see in the passage:

Pass through the \_\_\_\_\_

They make it a place of \_\_\_\_\_

They go from \_\_\_\_\_

And what is the destination? \_\_\_\_\_

5. The Valley of Baca may be literally translated “Valley of weeping.” In what way can you foresee this pilgrimage as leading you past or through a “Valley of Weeping? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Note what the Valley of Weeping becomes when our strength is found in the Lord God.

What significance do you find in the fact that the Valley of Weeping is made a place of “springs” or “pools” (which can also be translated “blessings!”)? \_\_\_\_\_

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7. Read Isaiah 41:18-20. What is the result of pools in the wasteland or springs in the desert?

How might this apply to your life as you sojourn toward that which God has for you in the areas of food, eating, and your body? \_\_\_\_\_

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8. According to Isaiah 41:18-20, for what purpose will God accomplish this? \_\_\_\_\_

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*Do you see it, fellow traveler? Our God is going to use the wonderful work He is performing in your life to testify of His greatness to an onlooking world! He will be exalted in your life as you walk this path. He will be esteemed and many will see and know that the Lord is present in your life. Your joy will be made full and you will experience that abundant life that Christ came to so blessedly give us! And happy! Oh! He will make you happy as He fills you up with Himself!*

9. Reread again the passage we began with as our focus scripture for today’s lesson. Fill in the blanks accordingly: “They go from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.”

*This word for “strength” found twice in verse 7, doesn’t mean the same thing as “strength” in verse five. It refers to the Hebrew word, chayil, which means: “Strength,*



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*We look forward to the next six weeks together! Oh, precious Sojourner, find your strength in our Lord God Almighty this week! Only He can turn any tears shed along the way into verdant pools springing up, giving life and nourishment to the parched heart! Let us fix our hearts on pilgrimage and set off!*

### Footnotes:

1. New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, © 1981 the Lockman Foundation
2. Ibid