

A photograph of a long, straight asphalt road with a yellow dashed center line, receding into the distance. The road is flanked by dense evergreen forests. In the far distance, a mountain range is visible under a cloudy, overcast sky. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

The Hard Road Home

*Summertime
in the*

PSALMS





Worship and Joy?

Psalm 84 calls us to re-center our lives around pursuing God—and to learn how everyday worship flows out of gathered worship

This psalm shows us someone who met God in a concentrated, intentional way... and was never the same afterward

This psalm is often read as a desire to go to the temple. But it's a longing to remain in God's presence





“How Lovely”

***How lovely is your dwelling
place, Lord Almighty!***

v. 1

**“Lovely” sounds mild to us:
pleasant, quaint, charming**

It’s closer to beloved

This is not polite admiration, it is affection

**The psalmist is saying: Oh, how
I love this place. It is dear to me.
It matters to me**





“Longing and Yearning”

*My soul yearns, even faints, for the
courts of the Lord; my heart and my
flesh cry out for the living God.*

v. 2

**The psalmist is saying: I wanted to come
here more than I could express. And now
that I'm here it's even better than I imagined.**

He didn't come when it was convenient

**He worked to be here and it was
worth it.**





“Longing and Yearning”

Notice what he longs for:

“My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.”

He is not obsessed with or impressed by the building

**This is not a tourist stop or sightseeing experience,
he is focused on the Person**

**The psalmist came to meet the living
God who promised to be present there**





“How Blessed”

**“Blessed are those who
dwell in Your house, ever
singing Your praise.”**



v. 4

**It's time for him to leave,
but he doesn't want to**

He did not come to a service, he met with God

**He can't stay, so he turns toward the
road that leads away from the temple**

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“Highways in the Heart”

Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage.

**He is leaving the temple but
not the presence of God**

v. 5

His body is full of God's strength

**His mind is full of
God's faithfulness**





“Through the Valley of Baka”

**As they pass through the Valley of Baka,
they make it a place of springs; the
autumn rains also cover it with pools.**

**Baka may refer to: A dry, desert shrub or the
word weeping, probably both**

v. 6

The road away from worship can feel dry and sad



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“Strength to Strength”

**They go from strength to strength, till
each appears before God in Zion.**

Literally: from stronghold to stronghold

v. 7

**Even in wilderness, the psalmist feels protected
because he remembers God’s past faithfulness**

It creates longing to go back





“Longing to Go Back!”

Look on our shield, O God; look with favor on your anointed one.

v. 9

He's not saying, Watch me

**He's saying: I am looking at You. Please look back.
Never let me leave Your attention**

Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

v. 10





“Complete Trust”

For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. LORD Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you.

v.11-12

The psalm ends with confidence, not complaint

God hasn't withheld the temple because He is cruel

God has work for him to do

And God does not withhold good from those who walk uprightly







There and Back

The psalmist doesn't get to stay in the temple, but the temple doesn't stay behind

Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your bodies.

The road home still has valleys, still has dryness, still has moments of weeping

But now, there are springs where there weren't any before

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

PSALMS

*Better is one day in
His presence than
a thousand
anywhere else*

