

# HIGHER GROUND

Songs of Ascents



# Songs For The Road

Integrity's Hosanna



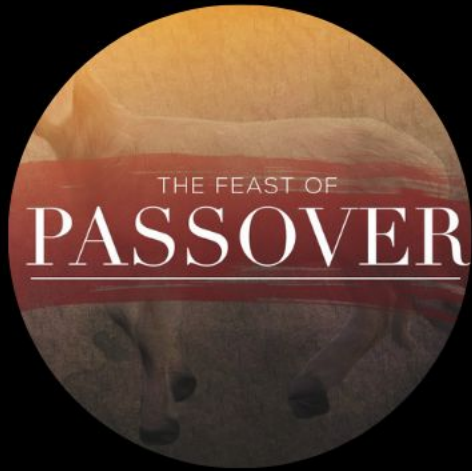


An aerial, black and white photograph of a winding road through a dense forest. Several cars are visible on the road, including a white car in the upper left and a white car in the lower right. The road curves through the trees, creating a sense of movement and journey. The entire image is framed by a solid orange border.

# SONGS FOR THE ROAD

The Psalms of Ascent





Pesach



Shavuoth



Sukkot

14 'Three times a year you are to celebrate a festival to me. 15 'Celebrate the Festival of Unleavened Bread; for seven days eat bread made without yeast, as I commanded you. Do this at the appointed time in the month of Aviv, for in that month you came out of Egypt.'No one is to appear before me empty-handed. 16 'Celebrate the Festival of Harvest with the firstfruits of the crops you sow in your field. 'Celebrate the Festival of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in your crops from the field. 17 'Three times a year all the men are to appear before the Sovereign Lord. (Exodus 23)

# An Old Dog-Eared Songbook

Three times a year faithful Hebrews made that trip. The Hebrews were a people whose salvation had been accomplished in the exodus, whose identity had been defined at Sinai and whose preservation had been assured in the forty years of wilderness wandering. As such a people, they regularly climbed the road to Jerusalem to worship. They refreshed their memories of God's saving ways at the Feast of Passover in the spring; they renewed their commitments as God's covenanted people at the Feast of Pentecost in early summer; they responded as a blessed community to the best that God had for them at the Feast of Tabernacles in the autumn. They were a redeemed people, a commanded people, a blessed people. These foundational realities were preached and taught and praised at the annual feasts. Between feasts the people lived these realities in daily discipleship until the time came to go up to the mountain city again as pilgrims to renew the covenant.







# SHIREI HA MA'A LOT

שִׁיר הַמַּצְלוֹת



LITERAL



METAPHORICAL



*Songs of Ascent*

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*Psalms 120-134*





# PILGRIMAGE

A FAITH JOURNEY WITH GOD TO GOD



## HEBREWS 11

13 All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. 14 People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. 15 If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 Instead, they were longing for a better country - a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

“We only have a visa for this life,  
but our passport is from another country.”

*W. H. Green*





# A TOURIST MINDSET

Religion in our time has been captured by the tourist mindset. Religion is understood as a visit to an attractive site to be made when we have adequate leisure. For some it is a weekly jaunt to church; for others, occasional visits to special services. Some, with a bent for religious entertainment and sacred diversion, plan their lives around special events like retreats, rallies and conferences. We go to see a new personality, to hear a new truth, to get a new experience and so somehow expand our otherwise humdrum lives. The religious life is defined as the latest and the newest. They have adopted the lifestyle of a tourist and only want the high points. The Christian life cannot mature under such conditions and in such ways. *(Eugene Peterson)*






Blessed

5 Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. 6 As they pass through the Valley of Baka, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. 7 They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion. *(Psalm 84)*



# BLESSED!

26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever. *(Psalm 73)*



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

Psalm 84:5

# Just Passing Through

This world is not my home, I'm just passing through  
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue  
The angels beckon me from Heaven's open door  
And I can't feel at home in this world anymore

## Psalm 73

25 Whom have I in heaven but you?  
And earth has nothing I desire  
besides you.





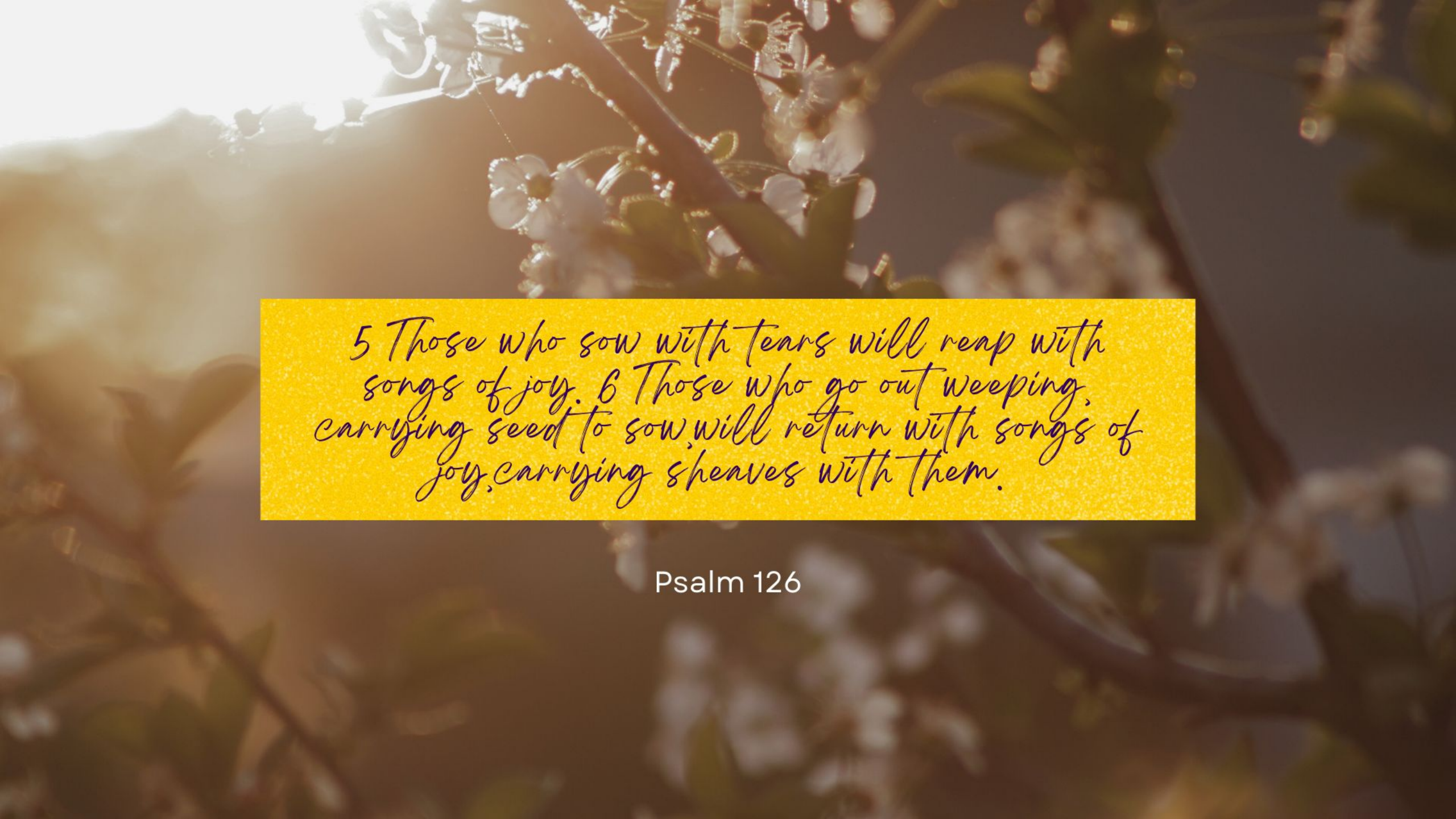


**"When they walk through the Valley of Weeping,  
it will become a place of refreshing springs.**

**The autumn rains will clothe it with blessings."**

**Psalm 84:6**





5 Those who sow with tears will reap with  
songs of joy. 6 Those who go out weeping,  
carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of  
joy, carrying sheaves with them.

Psalm 126





*They go from  
strength to strength*

Psalm 84:7a





# Faith Journey

Psalm 120

Distress

Psalm 123

Service

Psalm 126

Joy

Psalm 121

Providence

Psalm 124

Help

Psalm 127

Work

Psalm 122

Worship

Psalm 125

Security

Psalm 128

Wait





# Faith Journey

Psalm 129

Perseverance

Psalm 132

Obedience

Psalm 130

Hope

Psalm 133

Community

Psalm 131

Humility

Psalm 134

Blessing



# Matt Erikson



Attend to the ordinary as the place where God is burning in the bush, and see every hour and day as an opportunity to be shaped by the power of the Holy Spirit into Christlikeness. We are walking toward the destination, but we have not arrived yet.







**7 THEY GO FROM STRENGTH TO  
STRENGTH, TILL EACH APPEARS  
BEFORE GOD IN ZION.**

Psalm 84:7

## EUGENE PETERSON

While it is not difficult to get a person interested in the message of the gospel; it is very difficult to sustain interest. Many people make decisions for Christ, but there is a dreadful attrition rate. Many claim to have been born again, but the evidence for mature Christian discipleship is slim. There is a great market for religious experience; there is little enthusiasm for patient acquisition of virtue, little inclination to sign up for a long apprenticeship in what early Christians called holiness.



**A LONG  
OBEDIENCE IN  
THE SAME  
DIRECTION**





# FOLLOWING JESUS



Call To



DISCIPLESHIP



PILGRIMAGE



# Songs of Ascent

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SONGBOOK



ROADMAP