

Home (a response to Psalm 126), Rebecca Josephson

What is as wonderful as coming home, O Lord?

The home that raises our hearts and confirms our being, That inspires our smiles and opens our eyes,
That turns our hearts toward others.

So often we feel lost, exiled:

Fleeing violence and war,
Hungry, exhausted by trudging

Flying from judgment and misprision, Lonely, unsettled everywhere,

Avoiding our own pain and guilt and ambition, Downcast,

We cannot see that you are always present, real, ready - Our home.

O, What is like coming home, Lord?

The heart knows when we arrive;

The light changes, and time slows to a walking pace.

The ground is smooth underfoot, and ferns make a pillow for our heads. Every sky perfects each day, and the
wind and stars ring each night

like a perfumed crown.

In a welcoming word, a kindly touch, we come home.

In a shared meal, our tears turn to tenderness.

We throw down our hasty baggage and wipe the dust from our faces, And with shouts of joy we turn to those
that follow.

They are standing in the door, hungry and thirsty.

“Now you are home!” we laugh and greet them,

And the temple of our hearts echoes your steadfast love.

All of creation is at home in you, O Lord!

Like rain in dry creek-beds, we flow to you.

Like birds in morning sunlight, we sing to you Like buds on the high branches we swell with you. Like
fiddleheads in March mud we rise to you,

We rest and rise in you.

A Path in the Wilderness, Mary Jo Alibrio

Lord, your mighty waterworks overcame the enemy their chariots and horses, too.

Such a satisfying victory!

Now you say to let it go for something new –

water springs forth in deserts of loss and fear

tears stream down the dusty cheeks of refugees

cool liquid quenches the parched throats of illegals.

But, something here bothers, needles me, disturbs the scene.

Wild things like jackals and ostriches get to drink from sacred rivers, too? These characters will honor you?

Ostriches, huge, odd birds wandering the African savannas

legs powerful enough to kill a lion with a single kick.

The jackals are even more troubling

gangs of ferocious dogs all pointy ears, sharp teeth

and any movie villain named “The Jackal” is bad, bad news.

It feels so. . . unsafe.

Yet, I can be kicking, sharp-edged, odd and troubling.

What’s required when

rivers spring up my own wild, over-heated heart?

Maybe, just kneel

cup water in my outstretched hands and simply

drink deeply.

Gift, Carlos Jauhola-Straight

Tears of pain, tears of sadness, tears of regret

Tears that betray the hidden secrets – kept locked away

Tears of release and of wordless joy

These wash the dust of many miles from the feet of one

who traveled the uncharted terrain of life, love and forgiveness

Tears – a simple gift

The cost of life made blest and vulnerable

Nard: perfumed – costly -- extravagant

Used to sooth the tired feet of one - who - himself was

balm for the weary soul

Did she consider the cost?

Enough to feed the poor

Did she weigh the price?

A pound of nard versus a life offered in love for all

Oil – a generous gift

shared by one willing to risk all in this act of love and compassion

Many tears I have shed

The love of Christ washing over me

Cleansing my soul, melting away layers of pain

Leaving droplets of forgiveness and redemption

Tears poured out -- for and with others

Joining the many tears of a broken world,

creating a river where all may gather together

and ask for God's grace

But have I been as daring to offer the costly gift?

The gift of faithful and bold discipleship

The gift of risking my own sense of comfort to do the work

of being the Body of Christ

Too long I have calculated the cost and fearfully held back

O God, Accept the gift of my tears and my tentative opening of my "costly" treasures.

Bless me to a bolder generosity