



THE CROSS *and* CROWN

“No Cross, No Crown”

a publication of Highway Mission Tabernacle and Resurrection Life Church, Philadelphia, PA

Edition LVII | March 24, 2024 copyright ©2024, Highway Mission Tabernacle

Our Breakfast with Jesus Bible study recently looked at the Ezra’s account of the rebuilding of the temple. The foundation was laid to a clash of emotions, with some people shouting in praise while the elders among them, thinking back to the glory of the former temple, wept out loud. The



sound, Ezra tells us, could be heard from far away, and it was impossible to distinguish the weeping from the shouts of joy.

I can relate to the weeping elders, who, in the middle of an occasion of great rejoicing, were overcome by painful memories of all that was lost when the temple was torn down to its foundations. It was more than the destruction of a grand building; it represented the loss of their freedom and way of life – and their separation from God. I, too, have found myself mourning (if only on the inside) over the past, while those around me were rejoicing over the promise of the future.

I cannot find fault with those who were rejoicing or with those who wept. As Solomon reminds us, there is “a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance.”

(Ecclesiastes 3:3,4) We cannot take up permanent residence in either of those camps, though. They are only for a time. How often have we overlooked the blessings of the present because we were too busy either pining for the past or racing blindly towards the future?

It’s an odd quirk of human nature that we invest our hopes in the future – things will be better after I graduate, or move out on my own, or get a job – while at the same time lamenting how much better the “good old days” were. Wherever we find ourselves in life, let’s do our best to be *present*; to enjoy God’s blessings today.

I know that many of you who are reading this remember Highway in its heyday, while a new generation stands in anticipation of the building whose foundation is now being relaid. For the leadership team, the focus is, by necessity, on being faithful in the present. Thank you for rebuilding alongside us!

(By the way, the image above was created by a computer, from the prompt, “Painting of a crowd of people mourning over the ruins of an ancient Hebrew temple.”)

Do not say, “Why were the old days better than these?” For it is not wise to ask such questions.

(Ecclesiastes 7:10)

Thanks for Praying!

Your prayers make the difference! Thank you!
Please continue praying with us for:

- two in our church/school family who need housing,
- people to be called to missions during April's missions convention, and
- our upcoming mini-musical and fundraiser.







Our faithful team of volunteers installs a new stage!

We're praying with you!

If you're on our mailing list*, you're on our prayer list! If there's anything specific that we can join with you in praying for, please let us know. (We will only publish your requests in this newsletter with your permission.)

We really do love hearing from you! Your notes and phone calls make our day!

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* **Important:** If you'd rather not be on our mailing list, we won't be offended! Just call or write us, and we'll remove you. (We'll still keep you on our prayer list!)

If you'd rather receive this letter via e-mail, please let us know, or subscribe to at crossandcrown.online/subscribe !

Did you know?

Pythons can survive for about one year without eating. They can get enough water for the day simply by drinking the dew that forms on their scales overnight. People who have eaten them say that they taste like chicken – and they're much cheaper and more sustainable to raise.

**Is tasteless food eaten without salt, or is there flavor in the sap of the mallow?
I refuse to touch it; such food makes me ill. (Job 6:6,7)**



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