

In God's [Not Yet Perfect] House, Psalm 27:4

by Rabbi Debra Robbins

*One thing have I sought from Adonai—how I long for it:
That I may live in the House of Adonai all the days of my life;
That I may look upon the sweetness of Adonai,
And spend time in the Palace;*

The boots scoot, the hats ride high, the beer flows,
guitars twang, harmony rings loud.
Here in God's country house
the story is always bittersweet:
love then loss pain then healing,
doubt then faith, then doubt again.

This is God's house, but is God home?
Some say, no.
Thousands plan to party while one has other plans.
Ten minutes of sheer terror.
Shots. Bullets. Blood. Final breath.
Fear. Horror. The dread of death.

This is God's house, but is God home?
Some say, maybe.
He uses his body as a human shield.
She grasps a stranger's hand
while the life force ceases.
They hold each other and move silently toward the exit.

Note: This poem, included in Rabbi Debra Robbins' book, "Opening the Heart With Psalm 27," was written in honor of those who survived and in memory of those who were murdered at the Route 91 Harvest Festival in Las Vegas in October 2017. It continues to have resonance as we respond to the brutal attacks of civilians in southern Israel by Hamas.

This is God's house, but is God home?
I say, yes.
This house of God, where we live,
where we gamble
with our money, with our values,
with our own lives and the lives of others,
is not yet perfect.

But God is always home.
Rescuers. First responders.
Kind people with holy instincts
doing God's work,
singing melodies of courage,
in God's not yet perfect house.