

Heart to Heart with the Living God

Psalms 42 and 43

*“Why are you downcast, O my soul...for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.” Psalm 42:11*

“... it is evident that the Psalmist was isolated from the temple worship. He may have been a refugee, but it is more likely that he had been exiled to Aram, Assyria, or Babylon and was in the hands of taunting captors.”¹

Day 1: Read Psalms 42 and 43.

1. What is the mood of the Psalmist?
 - a. Why is his soul “downcast” and “disturbed”?
 - b. What does he long for?
2. What is the Psalmist remembering and longing for?
3. How does the Psalmist challenge himself? (42:5, 11; 43:5)


How does the New Testament encourage us to do the same thing? (Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:1-3)

Day 2: Read Psalm 42.

4. How does the Psalmist describe his longing for God? (Ps. 42:1-2)

Under what circumstances have you “thirsted for God?”

5. What does the “house of God” (v.4), the Temple, mean to the people of Israel? (1 Kings 8:27-30, 33, 34)

What would it mean for them to be cut off from the Temple? (*  Ps. 137:1-6)

6. The Psalmist says he “thirsts for God” (v. 2); how did Jesus experience the ultimate thirst? (Mt. 27:45, 46; Jn. 19:28)

What does that mean for us? (Jn. 4:10-14; 14:16-18; Rev. 7:16-17)


* The  symbol identifies verses for further study.

¹ Gaebelein, Frank E., Expositors Bible Commentary: Zondervan, 1992, p. 330

Day 3: Read Psalms 42 and 43.

7. What words do the enemies use to taunt the Psalmist? (42:3, 10)
 - a. Why are these words so painful for the Psalmist? (Ps. 42:9; 43:2)
 - b. How do the taunts affect him physically and emotionally? (42:3, 9, 10; 43:2)
8. What does the Psalmist ask God to do for him? (43:1)
9. How will God answer the Psalmist's prayer for vindication? (43:1-5; compare Micah 7:8-10)
10. The taunts of the wicked reach their climax at the cross in Matthew 27:39-44. How was Jesus vindicated by God? (Acts 2:22-36)

Day 4: Read Psalm 43.

11. What does the Psalmist ask God to do in verse 3? Why?
12. How has God sent forth His light and truth to us? (Jn. 8:12; 14:6)
(*  Isa. 9:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:5, 6)
13. How does Jesus, God's light and truth, bring us to the place where God dwells (vv. 3, 4)?
(Heb. 10:19-23; 12:18, 22-24)

Day 5: Read Psalm 42 and 43.

14. No matter how he feels, what does the Psalmist really believe about God?
15. Even though God seems silent and distant, what is He doing for the Psalmist in the midst of his deepest darkness? (42:8)
16. How is the refrain of the Psalmist full of hope? (43:5)

How does this Psalm fill you with hope?