

Light in Our Darkness

Psalm 42

As a deer pants for flowing streams,
so pants my soul for you, O God.
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?
My tears have been my food day and night,
while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"
These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:
how I would go with the throng
and lead them in procession to the house of God
with glad shouts and songs of praise,
a multitude keeping festival.

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me?
***Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my salvation and my God.***

My soul is cast down within me;
therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon,
from Mount Mizar.

Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls;
all your breakers and your waves have gone over me.
By day the Lord commands his steadfast love,
and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.
I say to God, my rock:
"Why have you forgotten me?
Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?"
As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me all the day long,
"Where is your God?"

Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you in turmoil within me?
***Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my salvation and my God.***

Christians are always happy and cheerful, right? Anyone who thinks that hasn't read the Bible. Or the psalms. Christians have plenty of troubles. Christians can even have their souls cast down. When we see the sin and suffering in the world, our souls can be cast down. When we see the sin in our own lives that keeps popping back up, our souls can be cast down. Perhaps it is even God Himself who casts us down so that we will return to Him in repentance and faith. For maybe we have wandered, strayed into sin, become prideful and forgotten about Him . . .

In this psalm, David remembers the good ol' days. Oh, how He thirsts for them again! People are mocking him for his faith. Maybe you can relate. Mocking is hard, and maybe there are times you, too, wish for the good ol' days, rather than the way things are now. Especially in this time of Covid, racial unrest, political division, worldwide conflict, and more.

But at such times, what does David do? He remembers what God did in the past, how God was faithful to all His words and promises, even when things looked bleak and it looked like He had forgotten His people and let them down. No! He had not! God's time and ways may be different than ours, but His faithfulness never changes. And as He was faithful in the past, so will He be now and in the future.

For if there is one thing you can count on in this world, it is Him. If the Son of God kept His Word, came down from heaven, and died on the cross for you, then you can be sure He will do everything else He has promised for you too. For He has already done what you need the most, and the most important thing of all. So He will carry it to fulfillment - for you, in you, and through you for others.

Dark days are going to come. No ones life is all sunshine and rainbows. And some people have more than their share of troubles. But the God who loved you in Christ before you were even born, loves you now, and will love you to the end. He wants only to forgive you and have you live with Him forever. So that what David says in this psalm be true, in good times and in bad:

***Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my salvation and my God.***

Lord Jesus, my soul is sometimes cast down when I see all the sin and evil in the world and in me. There is so much pain and suffering, in my life and in others. Forgive me for the pain and suffering I have caused others, and help me endure what comes upon me, for I know that You are with me. When I am weak, You are strong. Help me learn and remember Your faithfulness that endures through all generations, and that You will keep each and every promise You have made. In my darkest days, let the light of Your mercy and grace enlighten my way, help me to pray, and keep me confident that the day is coming when there will be no darkness at all - only the light of Your love! Yes, why are you cast down, O my soul? You have a Saviour! Christ, the Lord. Amen.