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Psalm 42

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Psalm 42.

Topics.

- As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.
- Why are you cast down, o my soul, I shall again praise my God.
- Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls.
- Why have you forgotten me? Why do I mourn as with a deadly wound.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

BOOK TWO (PSALM 42-72)

PSALM 42:1-4

1

To the Choirmaster. A Maskil of the Sons of Korah.

As a Deer Pants for Streams, so Pants my Soul for You, O God.

- **Psalm 42:1-4:** As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.
²My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?
³My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me continually, "Where is your God?" ⁴These 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.

This Psalm is a great encouragement to anyone who suffers depression or is suffering at the moment. It shows that even those who God's loves do not always ride the high mountains of joy and laughter. Even those the LORD cherishes fall victims to despair and depression at certain moments of their spiritual journey with Him.

As the deer pants: (v1) carries the idea of looking for, longing for, desiring, it expresses that eagerness and fervency of desire, which extreme thirst raises in an animal almost spent in its flight from wild animals seeking to devour it. Nothing can give us a higher idea of David's passion and inexpressible longing to attend the public worship of God than the burning thirst of such a hunted creature for a cooling and refreshing drink of water."

For the living God: (v2) carries the idea of the only true and living God, who was his life, his passion and hearts-desire. It means the God who communions with him who fills him with love and joy in contrast to idols which are simply man-made gods of wood and stone that cannot speak, see or hear.

How I long to led the throng in procession to the house of God (v4)

David at this time is not only deeply depressed, but the final verses show that his enemies are oppressing and mocking him saying, "Where is your God?" In these verses he is reflecting upon what we would call "the good old days" when peace was in the land and he could with glad shouts and songs of praise lead the congregation of God to the Temple and longs for those days to return.

PSALM 42:5-6

Why are you Cast Down, O My Soul, I shall Again Praise My God.

- **Psalm 42:5-6:** 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 ⁶and my God. My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

Why are you cast down, O my soul: (v5) This is the utterance of a heart and mind in depression and anguish, David's troubles come rushing over him all at once; he condemns his depression and sadness and confess that he should instead be cheerful and wishes to be so, yet his sorrows get the mastery over his desire, and return like a flood, sweeping all his good feelings away for the time and filling his heart and mind once again with anguish, and the cycle is repeat over and over again, driving him each time afresh to God's throne of grace, to beat back the returning tide of grief, and to bring calmness and peace to his mind and heart.

NOTICE: how David treats his feeling of depression, it's as though he views them separate to himself even though they do affect him. His higher-self (where God's Spirit and love dwells) rises above them and speaks down to his lower-self (where the depression is coming from) telling it to put its trust in God and stop fretting.

Therefore I remember you from Jordan, Hermon and Mizar (v6)

prior to this David states that his soul is in turmoil, but he will praise and hope in God again so the words, "I will remember you from the land of Jordan, of Hermon and from Mount Mizar," (v6) most likely carry the following idea, "Though I am in a place of darkness at this time I will remember the good times I had in the past while I was in the land of Jordan, the land of Hermon and in Mount Mizar." It means while in my current place of darkness and depression and in the midst of these troubles and sorrows and while I am surrounded as I am by taunting foes, and have no place or source of comfort here, I will remember my God and recall His former merciful visitations and the times of praise and worship I enjoyed with Him in the land of Jordan, the land of Hermon and from Mount Mizar. If we have made God's mercy, truth, and power, our refuge and troubles and unbelieving doubts and fears follow hard after each other and they all seem to combine for our ruin, we should never think that God and the Rock of our salvation, has forgotten us.

David's Psalms and prayers clearly show that he perceived God's great love regardless of his circumstances (good or bad) this is why he could be openly and sometimes brutally honest before God in prayer. To have the steadfast love of God dwelling in his heart was his greatest treasure. Sadly, some today do not perceive the love of God as David did and because of this lack of perception of God's love and grace tend to determine whether God loves them by their good or bad circumstances. They feel if life is charmed and blessed God loves them, but if it suddenly takes a turn for the worse and trouble comes, they feel God has withdrawn his love, but this is superstition and judging God according to the fickle circumstances of this world. When anyone today who believes in Christ doubts God's love all we have to do is look back to the bloodstained cross and see what it cost the heart of the Father to save us and how much his Son suffered to redeem us and spiritually crown and cloth us with his royal and majestic robe of righteous so that we could be justified and granted

eternal life in everlasting glory apart from self-effort and strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days or keeping religious customs and traditions. This truth should comfort every faithful brother and sister in Christ since it is certain if God was prepared to sacrifice his Son for us, while we were indifferent and apathetic toward Him and uninterested and unconcerned about what honoured Him and what didn't He will with great joy do everything to keep us for eternal life now we love His Son. (He does this by daily lavishing us with grace)

PSALM 42:7

Deep calls to Deep at the Roar of your Waterfalls.

- **Psalm 42:7:** Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me.

The King James Bible says:

- Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. (Psalm 42:7).

These verses do not have to apply to literal places David is using common poetic language, even today we speak of floods of grief; floods of tears; oceans of sorrows and of being drowned in grief and drowned in tears as if waves and billows swept over us. The following verses use similar language:

- Day unto day utters speech, and night unto night shows knowledge. (Psalm 19:2).
- Save me (David), O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. (Psalm 69:1).
- Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: ⁵Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. (Psalm 124:4-5).

3

The, picture presented in the words, "Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls," can carry the following ideas:

- The winding rapids of the rivers flowing from the deep lakes flowing with fierce rapids toward the deep of the oceans.
- Waves of the sea as they continually crash upon one another as David's troubles seem to be crashing upon him.

The noise of the water-spouts most likely refers to the literal water spouts which are frequent on the Syrian and Jewish coasts and would be known to David and the Israelites.

The symbolism: regardless of which of these David had in mind the violent water spouts, the deep floods and rolling waves and the rushing and heaving rapids of waters are an illustration of the deep sorrows and anguish of David's heart and mind it is a symbolic picture of affliction pouring down one after another, upon David and as soon as one affliction is over, another follows it as if it were called for and invited by the previous affliction.

PSALM 42:8-11

Why have you Forgotten Me? I Mourn as with a Deadly Wound.

- **Psalm 42:8-11:** By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. ⁹I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" ¹⁰As with a deadly

wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me continually, "Where is your God?" ¹¹Why 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.

David's words, "Why have you forgotten me?" Carry the idea, "Why are you not favouring me?" And not the thought that God has actually forgotten David or that David actually thinks God has forgotten him. We know this is the case because David says, "God is his Rock and His steadfast love, and at night his song is with him." One of the reasons David feels depressed is because his enemies are like a serious wound in his bones that could take him to the grave, and are mocking him saying, where is your God, because they had power over him. Naturally David would hate the idea that his enemies would think that the God he exalts and has given him many victories not only has no power, but has also forsaken him.

A practical application today: most faithful Christians who do not deny their faith will come across certain people who will not only aggressively mock their faith, but will also mock the Scriptures, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Lord Jesus Christ. We are not called to retaliate or even attempt to defend God to those whose only interest is to mock and scorn God and ridicule those who believe in Him. It should always be kept uppermost in the mind, God and His word has survived from the beginning of time against extremely aggressive persecution, lies, deceit, crooked and false prophets, corrupt kings and deceitful teachers, multitudes of wars and amidst a corrupt and fallen world and will continue to do so until the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth. Mankind with all his chemical and nuclear weapons of mass destruction, his incredible intellectual knowledge and power to control nations will never be able to push a delete button that will hinder or stop the eternal plan of God that He set in motion before time began.

Enduring faith: even though in deep sorrow and despair David proclaims the LORD is his rock, his hope, his salvation and the God of his life, by day the LORD covers him with His steadfast love, and at night His song is with him. His hope is in God and even though he is in sorrow at the moment he knows that he will rise in joy and rejoicing and praise God in better circumstances again.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
