

Why Are You Cast Down, O' My Soul?

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[0 : 00] Take out your Bibles with me, please, and turn to Psalm 42. Psalm 42. Actually, Psalm 42 and 43, they are listed as two psalms, but they are actually one psalm.

I got something in my throat. But Psalm 42 is a sacred place for me. I have lived here. And a year and a half ago when I was on sabbatical or when I was going on sabbatical, the elders tasked me with writing about my own experience of depression and what I had learned.

And so actually Psalm 42 and 43 are a chapter in that book, booklet, whatever it's called, pamphlet. Yeah.

It's, by the way, which is that focus on the family right now, we'll see what happens with that. So, Psalm 42 and 43.

We've been looking at laments. We looked at Psalm 13. How long, O Lord? Psalm 10. How long will the evil prosper?

[1 : 23] Now we look at Psalm 42. How long or why are you cast down, O my soul? So we're looking at four of the laments in the psalms, four questions, four struggles, four afflictions.

And then we will look at four answers from the psalms in the weeks ahead. We'll have answers to these dilemmas, these issues.

So we look at a heavy one today. Why are you cast down, O my soul? Why are you sunk down, O my soul? Literally, why are you depressed, O my soul?

So if you struggle with depression or you know people that struggle with depression, this relates to that very significantly. And it's dealing really with the subject of worship and depression, which is an interesting dilemma for a depressed Christian.

How do I worship when I don't feel like it? How do I deal with that? How do I go to God still? Okay, so we want to read Psalm 42 and 43, and then we will pray and then we'll dig into it as is our way.

[2 : 41] So if you're able, please stand as I read from Psalm 42 and 43. To the choir master, a maskil of or for or to the sons of Korah.

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.

Well, they say to me all 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?

[3 : 52] 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 will command his steadfast love. And at night, his song will be with me. A prayer to the God of my life.

I say to God, my rock. Why have you forsaken me? Why do I go mourning? Because of the oppression of the enemy.

[4 : 57] 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. Vindicate me, O God. And defend my cause against an ungodly people.

From the deceitful and unjust man, deliver me. For you are the God in whom I take refuge. Why have you forsaken me?

Why have you rejected me? Why do I go about mourning? Because of the oppression of the enemy. Send out your light and your truth.

[5 : 58] Let them lead me. Let them bring me to your holy hill. And to your dwelling. Then I will go to the altar of God.

To God, my exceeding joy. And I will praise you with the lyre. O God, my God. Why are you cast down, O my soul?

Why are you in turmoil within me? Wait for God. For I shall again praise him. My salvation and my God.

So reads the word. Let us pray. Father, we ask as always that you would send your spirit to give us enlightenment to make the word live.

This is the sword of the spirit. So take your sword, O Father, and teach us. Give us insight. Give us understanding. I pray especially, Father, for those whose soul is cast down.

[7 : 03] Who feel dry and in the dark and in turmoil. Father, speak to them.

Show them through this psalm a way to talk to you in the midst of that turmoil. Show us how the psalmist, Father, handled his depression.

How he brought it before you. And show us, O Father, hope. What it means to hope in you. Even in the dark times.

Even when we are hindered from coming to your public worship. Grant us hope. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated.

Amen. So how do you worship when you are in depression?

[8 : 09] When your tank is empty. When you don't feel it honestly.

When you are defeated and discouraged and sunk down. When your soul is disturbed.

When you genuinely cannot feel happy. How do you worship God then?

You want to be genuine. You don't want to be a pretender. You don't want to come to worship. To public worship in depression and fake it. You want to go through motions.

I don't want to be that kind of person. So how do you. How can you worship in spirit and truth. When. Your soul is.

[9 : 11] In the dark. Like the psalmist here. So. The first time I dealt with this. Was back in.

2000 or so. And the first time I experienced depression. Was when I was a pastor. In a. Another church. Long from here.

And it was. Especially difficult. So. You know. As pastor. People are looking. People are expecting. So.

I was faced with. And I hate. I hate hypocrisy. I hate being disingenuous. But I was forced. I was. Looking at possibly being the hypocrite. Because I was in a church at that time.

Not like this church. That would not. Have accepted. My non-worship. Or my. It took a while for me to get to that point.

[10:13] And this. Of course. Little log was a big. Healing part of that. But. So. So. It was hard. So. So. I'm faced with that dilemma. How do you do that?

How do you do that? And here's the. Here's the complicated part. Most churches sing upbeat songs. Most hymns and praise songs are upbeat songs.

There's not a lot of songs in our hymn book or praise music that are for depressed people. Because apparently you can't do that.

That's the message. And yet. As I look at the Psalter. Half of them. Are for depressed people. That tells me something. That tells me something's not quite right.

In our present. Worship. Now if you notice today. We sang some. Slower songs. Songs that. With the exception of one. Someone who's sad and could still sing.

[11:18] Could still sing with faith. We're going to close today with one especially for a depressed person. Be still my soul. I mean it's got Psalm 20.

42. Bleeding out of it. I remember when I first started to introduce. As a pastor. Introduce. What were called.

What I was told were the dark songs. You know. I was told. We can't sing that. I said. Why not? Because it'll depress people. I said.

What if they're already depressed? And it was just kind of a mindset. That is just. Hard. Hard. So.

I. Myself. Felt hindered. To worship. I felt excluded. By my own depression.

[12:17] I can't change my feelings. But I did learn. I can change my perspective. And I did learn. That worship is more than just joy. And upbeat songs.

That's how I grew up. That's what it was. I remember. Even when I went back to my home church. Back in California. And we were doing my dad's funeral.

I requested that we sing. Not be still my soul. What's the one with the waves? It is well with my soul.

Because it pours out. You know. When I've lost my loved ones. Right. And they cut out the hardest verses. I was like so angry. You're not letting me worship.

You're not letting me take my grief to God in public. How. Why are we afraid of that? Why do we think that's not Christian?

[13:17] Jesus. Jesus. Mourned. And wept. And struggled with his soul. Wake up. Maybe that's one reason people are disillusioned with Christian faith.

It seems superficial. So. I discovered worship means more than that. It's more than kind of just joy. The word worship in both Hebrew and Greek means to bow down.

You know. To kiss the feet. To acknowledge God. To surrender to God. It doesn't have it. Really have the impulse to be joyous.

That's part of it. Of course. But to acknowledge God. To acknowledge his truth. Worship is an act of faith sometimes. Especially if you're depressed. Worship is an act of faith. You don't feel it.

But you can still say. No that's true. That's true. Be still my soul. Your God is on your side.

[14 : 26] So I looked to the scriptures for help. As I was going through this back then. And I found in the Psalms there's full of depressed worship. In the Psalms. That's probably not the right way to say it.

Full of depressed worship. Full of worship for the depressed. Not depressed worship. But true worship. By those who are in reality struggling.

And in turmoil. So I landed here on Psalm 42 and 43. Because it specifically deals with depression. Involve.

That is struggling with public worship. Here is a psalmist who feels excluded. From worship. From praise.

Because he's depressed. So. Let's look at this. So. This is actually one psalm. It has three parts.

[15 : 27] And each part ends with a chorus. If you notice that as we're reading it. Right. Verses 42. One through four. He gives his complaint. Verse five. Is the chorus.

Why are you cast down on my soul? Why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God for I shall yet praise him. My salvation and my God. That phrase from that verse. That chorus.

From verse five. Is repeated in verse 11. And again it's repeated in 43. Five. So it's a chorus. So. Psalm 42 and 43. Are like one of our hymns. With three verses.

With a refrain. Or with a chorus. That ends. Okay. So he tells his problem. And then he. Sings the cure. Three different perspectives though.

Though the chorus is the same. The. The. The sections are each different. Now I want you to notice. The issue for this psalmist. What is. What is bothering him.

[16 : 22] And it is. His hindered worship. Look at 42. Verse two. My soul thirsts for God. For the living God.

When shall I come and appear before God. When can I come. When can I come back. Look at verse. Verse four. He's remembering better times.

These things I remember. As I pour out my soul. How. I would. Back in the past. Back in the good old days. How I would go with the throng. And lead them in procession.

To the house of God. So. Talking about public worship. Talking about public. With the throng. With glad shouts. And songs of praise.

Or joy. He had. Gladness. And thanksgiving. I could remember that. But that's not my present experience. I'm thinking back.

[17 : 19] I remember. And that kind of makes it worse. I wish I could have that again. I miss that. And then look at 43. Chapter 43. Verses three and four.

He says. Send out your light. And your truth. Let them lead me. Let them bring me. Where? To your holy hill. To your dwelling.

Then I will go to. What? The altar of God. I'll go back to the temple. Then I can go. To God my exceeding joy.

And I will praise you. I can't do that right now in depression. I don't have that joy. But I want that again. He misses public worship.

Right now. And there are people missing public worship right now. Because of what we're going through. I've heard people say it. I didn't know how much I would miss it.

[18 : 26] We get to do the live stream. We love that. Thank you for that. But we miss seeing people. We miss singing with other people. We miss the amens.

We miss the how you doing. We miss that. And so they're hindered. They're hindered.

They can't worship to the full. They can't worship in all its dimensions. Part of them is hindered. Over and over in this psalm, in these verses, he longs to come back to the house of God.

To worship with the throng of God's people. He feels left out. He's being hindered. And excluded. By his depression. And that rang with me.

I mean, when I was going through this stuff, it's like, yeah. That's what I feel. I've sung those joyous songs before.

[19 : 33] And I could do it with joy. And right now, I can't. I don't feel it. It doesn't feel real. It doesn't feel honest.

Because in worship, feelings are part of our worship. We're to lift up our soul to the Lord. So here is the psalmist.

Most scholars believe it to be David. Who wrote this psalm. Sounds like him, doesn't it? And he works out his depression before the Lord.

That's what he's doing. He's working out his depression before the Lord. He's talking to the Lord about it. He's telling the Lord how he feels. He's also talking to himself, we notice.

Right? He's talking to a wild soul. He's talking to himself. But he is doing all this before the Lord. He's not sitting somewhere in a hole.

[20 : 37] And just, you know how the most natural thing to do in depression is to go find a hole. And sit in it. And just, we don't even know what we're doing with that.

You know, just, and depression is one of those wicked things where it just spirals. It just spirals down. It feeds itself. And the more depressed, the more depressed. It's just a horrible experience.

And until I didn't, I never experienced it until I was 40. And so I used to make fun of, not fun of, but I didn't understand depressed people.

I'm like, what's the problem? Just snap out of it. Push through it. Yeah, everybody has a funk now and then. You know, you just push through. And a couple of months, you're better. And it, you know, and I used to have yearly funks.

And you just push through and you'd be fine a couple months later. And then the funk hit. And it didn't go away. Month after month. And then year after year.

[21 : 36] 12 years. And I don't make fun of depressed people. Now I know it's a real thing. And it's crippling and handicapping.

So here's David working it out. Let's look what he learns. He gives three perspectives and one cure. The cure is in the chorus. Hope in God.

For I shall worship him again. Right? He's saying, I shall praise him again. Right now I'm not. But hope in God. There will come a time when I can praise him again. So hope.

Wait for God. That will come. That will come. Okay? That's the cure. In a nutshell. We'll dig into it a little bit more.

But then three different perspectives. So in the first section, verses 42, 1 to 4. He talks about his hindered worship. And how his depression is keeping him away.

[22 : 41] And then in the second section, verses 6 through 11, he talks about a different perspective about God's hand in all of this. God has caused his depression as well.

It's God's waves. It sounds a little bit like Naomi and Jeremiah and a whole team of other people that blame God for their depression. Biblical people.

And then the third section in chapter 43, what we call 43, there, it's a different perspective. Again, now he's pleading with God.

He hasn't asked God for anything in chapter 42. Chapter 43, now he's going to have six requests. Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom. God, you got to act.

God, you got to act. God, you got to act. Okay, so now he's, and particularly he's asking for light. Because there's one thing that you experience in depression. It is darkness.

[23 : 43] Everything's dark and gloomy. You can't see. It's a big fog. Everything's murky. and what leads me out of depression is light.

That's interesting. That's what he prays for. He doesn't pray for revival like I did for a whole lot of years. There's nothing wrong with praying for revival. Revival, yeah, yeah, yeah. Psalm 119 does that, but here specifically was depression.

He says, give me light and truth because there's two things that hinder me in my depression. One in darkness and the other thing of the lies that I harbor because of my depression.

So give me light and truth. Okay, so let's look at the first section. Now there's three insights, I think, from this. Each section bringing out a different perspective, but here's what helped me and here's what I saw in these verses that significantly helped me make progress in my depression, specifically in relation to worship, but overall in terms of depression.

Insight number one in verses one through five. Recognize depression as a thirst for God. Recognize depression as a thirst for the Lord.

[25 : 07] Where do I get that? Well, look at verse one. He's panting. His soul is panting for God. Verse two, my soul is thirsting for God. That sounds positive, right?

That's God directed. I'm thirsting and I'm panting for God. I want God. That didn't sound like depression at all. And then he says in verse five, why are you cast down on my soul?

Why are you in turmoil within me? So at the same time that he's thirsting and panting for God, his soul is also cast down and depressed.

And what struck me was, how do those two things go on at the same time? How are you panting and thirsting for God and at the same time cast down and in turmoil? How do those go together?

Because they're the same thing. It's just a matter of perspective. Depression is the only one who can heal me.

[26 : 10] The only one who can revive me, the only one that can change my face is God. And so my dryness, it's one aspect of depression.

Sometimes it's described as a dryness of the soul. And so my dryness, I'm parched. I need water. I need living water. I need like a deer for the flowing stream.

I need water, which is God, which is Christ, is the living water.

So recognize depression as a thirst for God. He begins in verse one with a confession. He pours out his soul as the deer pants. For the flowing stream.

So my soul pants for thee. Oh God, I'm panting. I'm needing. I'm desperate for. A deer usually is panting after a stream when he's either being chased, he's a prey, and he hasn't been able to slow down and get rest.

[27 : 13] Or there's a drought. There's dryness, and he's panting for a stream that's dried up. Water's vital.

Have you ever gone to the doctor and the doctor says to you, you need to drink more water? How much water are you drinking? I don't know. I have some of my coffee. Does that count?

You need to drink more water. In fact, you need to drink about, I don't know, 400 liters or something. I don't know how much it is. It seems like a lot when you don't drink water. Because you're not healthy if you don't drink water.

I went to a survival thing, and they told me that you could go without food for several days, but you can't go without water for but maybe a couple days, maybe three, because the body will not make it without water.

Interesting thing, when we are dehydrated, we don't actually know that. Someone else has to say, I think you're dehydrated. You need to drink more water. We're kind of numb to it.

[28 : 20] It's kind of like depression. It's like, I don't know what I need. When I'm not getting enough of Jesus, I can actually get in the state where I don't really know that. I'm dehydrated. Spiritually dehydrated, I don't really know.

It just kind of gets numbing, right? Interesting. So water becomes a theme. Watch for it to recur. He's seeking refreshment that only God can give him to quench his dryness, to bring into his emptiness, into his spiritual parched soul, refreshment.

He's looking like a deer for a flowing stream. Interesting that Jesus said in John 7, on the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, if anyone thirsts, why does he use that picture?

Anyone thirsts, he's at a feast, they're drinking. If anybody thirsts, let him come to me and drink.

Why? You got some new wine, Jesus? I heard you make new wine. No, no, not wine. Come to me and drink. Come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, that's what he means by coming and drinking, believing.

[29 : 34] Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow what? Rivers of living water, moving water, living.

It's not just sitting in a pond, it's moving. It's a stream. Living water. And then John, the gospel writer says, who's commenting later after he gets understanding, he writes, Jesus said this about the spirit.

The streams of living water, that's the gift of the Holy Spirit. That's your refreshment. That's the promise for the Christian. That water I need, that's more of the spirit.

Jesus said, if you ask, what would God, the Father give to you? He'll give you the spirit because that's what you need. So, the cause.

Then we see, we notice this already in verse two through four, he complains about the cause. He feels excluded from worship. When can I come?

[30 : 43] Right? When can I appear again? Verse four, I remember, I miss the worship, I miss the joy and the thanks. And he's already said in verse one, I desire water, but what does he get instead in verse three?

What's his experience? I desire, I pant for the living water. What I experience is my tears all day long. So instead of the sweet, sweet drink of water, I get the salty, bitter taste of my own tears.

That's not real refreshing. See what he's saying? There's that theme of water. We're going to see it again. And then to add to that, I got the taunt of the enemy at the end of verse three.

Well, others say to me all day long, where's your God? Hey, where's your God? I thought you had a God that was all powerful. Where's your God, Christian? All this stuff going on, where's your God?

He's on his throne. Yeah, right. Where's your God? I can see you're not doing, you haven't been smiling for a long time, Christian.

[31 : 58] I saw that. What's going on? Where's your God? I thought your God makes you happy. Well, I'm learning. It's not about happy.

So where's your God? You know, they get the taunts. Oh, church, where's your God? How's that working out for you?

See, the world looks at it from one perspective. The Christian learns to look at it from another perspective because what's life about? It's not about your best life now. Another toss to my friend Joel.

It's not about that. So, he hears that. So he feels abandoned. He feels alone, cut off. God seems to be hidden.

Then he comes to the chorus. Verse 5. Here's the cure. Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you in turmoil within me? What's he doing?

[33 : 04] What's he doing? Who's he talking to? Oh, my soul. He's talking to his soul. You ever talk to your soul?

Is that weird? You ever talk to your soul? I know you all listen to your soul because that's what we hear when we get up in the morning. That's when we hear when things don't go well. It's also what we hear when, you know, Aaron Rodgers throws that ball and it's right there and if you're a Packers fan, where's Dan?

All right? So, you listen to your soul. What we need to learn is not to listen to our soul but to talk to our soul because sometimes our soul is very skewed.

Jesus even said, hate your soul in this world and you will save it. If you listen to your soul in this world, it will lead you off because your soul wants the short, easy fix.

It's just what it is. It has highs and it has lows. It's just my affections. So, he's talking to his soul.

[34 : 20] He's asking questions. Why are you sunk down? He's examining himself trying to get to the cause of this. What is going on?

Why are you disturbed? Literally, why are you murmuring? You know, that's what you do. You do that when you're depressed. You murmur. You know what murmur is? It's also can be talked about as sighing.

I used to do that a lot when I was depressed. Be this. Everything was heavy. Everything was. Getting up. Fixing breakfast.

I mean, everything was hard. I think that's ridiculous, but that's true. Murmuring. So, he urges himself to refocus.

Hope in God. For I shall, I will, again, praise him. It will come. And then he says, I shall again praise him.

[35 : 26] My salvation and my God. Can I give you a better translation of that? It's not my salvation. It's the salvation of his face in Hebrew. But that translates weird, I guess.

He says, my hope in God and praising him again, he calls that the salvation of his face. Like, what does that mean?

Face, face of God can mean his presence. It can mean his favor. It can mean his countenance. I'm saved by God's presence. Okay, that makes sense.

I'm saved by God's favor. Yeah, that's, if he's turning his face back to me. Or, or by his countenance of favor. That, that, I like that, that God looks at me again.

Hope in God. He will turn his face back to you. He will. That's the cure. So David, in Psalm 143, recognizes that soul depression is a thirst for God.

[36 : 33] It's a desperate need of God. He says, this almost same kind of wording in Psalm 143. He says, I stretch out my hands to you, O Lord. My soul thirsts for you like a parched land.

My soul thirsts for you when I'm in dryness. When I'm dry. That's what I need. Answer me quickly, O Lord.

My spirit fails. Hide not your face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the pit. In other words, Lord, if you don't look at me again, if you don't look at me again, I'm going to die.

I mean, this is serious. Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love. Because right now, I'm not hearing it. Let me hear. For in you, I trust.

Make me to know the way I should go. For to you, I lift up my soul. Deliver me from my enemies, O Lord. I have fled to you for refuge. Teach me to do your will.

[37 : 34] For you are my God. Let your, this is interesting, let your good spirit lead me on level ground. Oh, we're led by the spirit in the Old Testament.

Let your good spirit lead me on level ground. Because right now, I'm in the pits. I need to get up and level ground. So, insight number one. Recognize depression as a thirst for God.

That's a perspective thing. It's a, I can't change my feelings, but I can, but I can, change my perspective. Understand what I'm going through.

As you pour out your soul to God, you are worshiping depressed person. Say, how do I worship when I'm depressed?

Talk to God. That's worshiping. I'm going to Him. I'm thirsting for Him. I'm hoping in Him. I'm calling out to Him. That's worship. That's an act of faith.

[38 : 36] If I take my depression and I just kind of twirl into myself, that's the natural thing to do. That's what I want to do. I don't want to talk to people. I don't want to go to church.

I don't want to do anything. There's part of me that misses those things, but my feelings are overwhelming. And so, it's a big step for a depressed person to go talk to God.

Isn't that amazing? It was for me. It's not natural. I just want to go hide, bury, I don't know, watch the 49ers or something.

I don't know. Except lately, that's not very fun. That's not very joyful. But you Broncos fans understand that, don't you? I'm sorry.

I'm sorry. I understand. So, okay, now he goes further. So, in the next section, he goes further.

[39 : 43] So, he's talked about recognizing depression as a thirst for God. That's what that really is. That's God calling on you. Now, here's the second one. This is harder. This is harder.

This is not this. Let me just give it to you. His focus now is on God's hand in the midst of his struggle. So, here's the second insight.

Accept depression as by the hand of the Lord. Huh? Accept it. Accept depression as by his hand.

Now, I'm not saying God is the only cause of your depression. There's lots of things. It's very, very complicated. It can be lots of things. But ultimately, he is sovereign.

Ultimately, he is the almighty. Ultimately, he plans things. He doesn't just allow things. I don't think that's good theology. He plans, intends things to teach us, to test us.

[40 : 48] That's hard to hear. But one of the things, this insight, this perspective, when I came to terms with this, it made a difference in how I looked at it.

It made a huge difference in how, instead of fighting, accepting. It makes a huge difference.

Who wants to fight God? Do you want to fight God? Go for it. You don't have any success. You do a lot better just saying, okay, I accept it. It's like, when suffering comes, do I fight it?

Do I accept it? I get way further ahead if I accept it and move on. But we're rebellious, aren't we? So here's his view.

Verse 6, his complaint intensifies a little bit. He says, my soul is cast down within me, therefore I remember you. Now before he remembered public worship.

[41 : 49] Now he's remembering God. I remember God from the land of Jordan and Hermon from Mount Mizar, literally meaning the little mountain. So he's talking about Mount Hermon, which is the only real mountain in the promised land that's way up there, has snow, actual snow on the top.

It's also the headwaters of the Jordan. All that snow mounts from Mount Hermon down and becomes the headwaters of the Jordan that flows all the way down to the Dead Sea. So he mentions the Jordan, he mentions Mount Hermon, and he mentions Mount Little.

We don't know what Mount Little is, Mount Mizar. It's probably one of the foothills of Mount Hermon. So he's saying, that's how far away I feel from worship of God.

I feel like I'm way, that's the border of the promised land. That's, it may even be outside. He's feeling like a stranger in exile in terms of worship. That's, I remember you, I'm way over here.

I don't think he's physically over there. It might be, but I think it's more a metaphor. I feel far away. And then he says, verse seven, deep calls to deep, literally abyss calls to abyss, same word as in Genesis 1, 2, you know, the chaos of creation, right, before creation.

[43 : 08] Deep calls to deep at the roar of, what? Your waterfalls. All your breakers and your waves have gone over the rocks.

Right? No, all your, all your breakers and your waves have gone over me. You have sent your water.

I'm looking for gentle stream water. What you've sent, Lord, is a storm. What you've sent is a waterfall. And by the way, if you want to see a waterfall in Israel, you have to go up to the headwaters of the Jordan and go to Mount Hermon.

That's where you see real waterfalls. Okay, it's a beautiful little place. Beautiful little place. Of course, the pagans have taken it over, but it's beautiful. It's probably there where Jesus had his disciples up and they had the Mount Transfiguration and all that kind of stuff.

It's probably there. But they're looking at, so he's seeing waterfalls, he's seeing powerful water. Have you ever seen a powerful waterfall? I've never been to Niagara.

[44 : 16] I imagine that one's pretty amazing. But I've been to a few pretty good waterfalls, 100 foot or 200 foot, you know, out in Oregon and we have some here. Pretty cool.

It's a pretty cool thing. We love to see the moving water and the power of the water. He talks about waves and breakers. You've been to the ocean? The ocean is powerful.

Who can stand up to the waves of the ocean? Even big ships get tossed by the waves of the ocean. So much power. It's a picture of God's hand.

God's power. And he's saying, all of your breakers and all of your waves are on me. It's overwhelming. It's a metaphor that's about being overwhelming.

He's being crushed by God's storms. He's drowning. So he says, skip verse 8 for a second here.

[45 : 18] Verse 9, I say to my rock, God my rock, why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning? Literally, why do we go about in the dark? Because of the oppression of my enemy.

My enemies, my adversaries are taunting me. Where's your God? So again, repeating that sense of being forgotten by God, being left to his enemies and enemies taunting him.

But the point is, it's God causing it. He sees it's God causing it. It's your breakers rolling over me. Breaker after breaker.

Have you ever been out in the ocean and tried to swim against the breakers? Or tried to, I've never tried to surf. I wouldn't have a clue. I'd get killed. But you know, in California, I used to go to the beach a lot.

We'd go out in the breakers and they could really break you if you did them wrong. They're powerful. And the thing about breakers is there comes one and then, you know what, there's another one coming.

[46 : 22] If you wait long enough, there's another one coming. About every seven waves, something like that, the big breakers come. And he's saying, God has been treating me like that.

Okay, here comes one. Okay, I hope that's it. Oh, here comes another one. Here comes another one. Doesn't it feel like that? You ever been like that? Like God saying, okay, they come in threes, we joke about, right?

Well, sometimes they come in twelves, as in years. then, he sees a cure.

Interesting, in the middle of this complaining, verse 8, he interjects faith. By day, the Lord commands. Now, my text has commands. In the Hebrew, it's an imperfect action, which means it's not, it could be like a present tense, it could be like a future tense.

I think he's meaning, by day, you will, the Lord will command. command, his steadfast love, and at night, his song, will be with me.

[47 : 33] Because in the context, it's not there right now. So, I think he's saying, by faith, it will come. It will come back. It will come back. So, here is depression, that still has faith.

Here is worship, by a depressed individual, that is an act of faith. He doesn't feel like it. But he's still saying what's true. He's still pouring out his heart before the Lord.

That's worship. It's not pretty. It may not be something you want to display to others, but it's true.

In fact, it's really genuine worship. It's worship in spirit and in truth. Because here the psalmist is just laid bare. God already knows what he thinks, so he's not afraid to tell God what he thinks.

And part of his healing is getting that out before the Lord. When we pray, when we ask God for things, are we giving him any new information?

[48 : 42] Oh, by the way, Lord, just an update. You may not know this, right? It's like, come on, silly. God knows. Jesus said, he already knows what you need before you ask him. Well, then why pray?

Because it's about relationship. He wants us to come. He wants us to talk to him. And that's for our good. Because as we pray like this, we find healing.

We find something about getting it out before him. And being honest. And being desperate. And weaving in some hope in there.

Because hope comes after you've already kind of gotten some of the confession out. What's the promise? If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to, what?

Forgive us. And cleanse us. It's interesting. He not just forgives us, but he cleanses us. I think when we confess to God, whether we're confessing just the state of our soul, which may or may not have anything to do with sin, still confession is cleansing for my soul.

[49 : 54] It helps me make the next step. It starts to bring faith. It starts to bring hope. Or I don't really feel that at the beginning. So he urges himself, verse 11 again, hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

Now, last time in verse 5, that my salvation, my God was literally the salvation of his face. Now, this time in verse 11, it's literally the salvation of my face.

So it goes from his face to my face. So, so it's getting more personal. It's getting, you know, I'm looking for salvation from his face. Now it becomes salvation for my face, for my face.

My countenance changes. If you're depressed, do you know that it shows by the expression on your face? Unless you're faking it, right?

And I hate faking it. So mine showed a lot. And when he begins to heal us, it changes the expression. If I'm not a fake smile, but a real relief, a real peace.

[51 : 06] So he talks about God. That's the way Naomi complained about God, right? Remember that? Book of Ruth, chapter one, her husband and her sons die.

Naomi says, that's it. Don't call me Naomi. Call me Mara. Call me bitter because the almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went away full and the Lord has brought me back empty.

Why call me Naomi when the Lord has testified against me? See, he's against me and the almighty has brought calamity upon me. It's not just that God has allowed that.

God has brought it. This is a Jewish believer. She believes in God and she believes in God as a sovereign God.

He does not allow things. He commands things. He intends things. When Job went through what he went through, how did that start? Did he allow the devil to do what he did?

[52 : 09] He started it. Did you ever read Job one? Oh, have you looked at my servant Job? Oh yeah. You got all your production. Okay. Go for him. God started that.

Wasn't Job's idea. It wasn't the devil's idea. It was God's idea. Do you have a hard time with that? God planning hard things.

Remember Joseph said that. My brothers intended evil for me. God intended. Same word. Good. Good. So God, there is a difference. God does intend good through the evil.

God puts us through trials to test our heart, to test us, to reveal what's in us. Okay.

Do you accept depression as by the hand of God? Can you get there? It might take a while. It took me a while. But get there because it will lead to the next step.

[53 : 09] Finally, third insight in chapter 43 is wait for the Lord to answer your depression. Can I have a quick fix? No.

Wait for the Lord to handle your depression. We don't like that word wait. We go to waiting rooms and what do we do? We wait longer than we want to wait.

Don't you know how to set schedules? Yeah. We don't like waiting. So here, all of a sudden now he's asking for something for God.

So three quick ones in verse 1, chapter 43. Vindicate me, O God. Defend my cause against an ungodly people from the deceitful and unjust man. Deliver me. So three quick. Vindicate, defend, and deliver me.

Defend me, Lord, against my enemy, against the ungodly ones. Take my case against those who are unfair. So be my defense attorney. Be my advocate. Defend me.

[54 : 07] And then verse 2, for you are the God I take refuge in, which is, and then he follows that up with, why have you rejected me? I've taken, I've taken refuge in a God who right now, it feels like has rejected me, but I'm still taking refuge in him.

So please change your face to me. And again, why do I go about mourning? Why am I in the dark? Because of the oppression of my enemy.

Very interesting in Hebrew. So mourning, the word I go about mourning is in Hebrew means to go in the dark, to be in the dark. So what does he ask for? He's in the dark. What does he ask for?

Verse 3. Send the light. And that goes with our song today. I saw the light. Of course, he's not singing it like that right yet, quite yet, but he's looking for what he wants to.

Send the light. Send your light, because that's what I need. I need light. Because I'm in dark thoughts. And my feelings overwhelm me. I'm in turmoil within me.

[55 : 17] What do I do with that? Give me, I need light. I need light to dispel the darkness. I need light to expose and to reveal. Light's good.

Now, if you want to do evil, light's not good. Right? Jesus talked about that. Light, they hide from the light. They hate the light because it reveals. But those who come to the light, those who seek the light, oh, they're the ones that get the healing.

So he asked for light and truth. Interesting. He puts these two things together. Send out your light and your truth.

Why truth? Because when I'm in depression, I'm harboring lies. I may not admit that, but I'm thinking about them. I'm starting, I'm kind of, yeah, God's not with me.

Well, that's a lie. Jesus says, I'm always with you. I will never leave you. But I start to feel like he's not with me. That's a lie. That's what my enemy, big E enemy, tells me.

[56 : 20] He's not with you. He's left you. Yeah, and it's your fault too because you're so, you're such a jerk. I don't know.

What does God tell you? I don't think, I get the J word a lot. Truth. Or that God means evil toward me.

God doesn't mean good. And yet the promise is that he's always purposed good for us, even in the hard stuff. But I start to believe, no, he doesn't, there's no good.

I mean, 12 years of depression, it's hard to believe there's good. And I really struggled with, okay, is this God thing even real at times?

I mean, that's where it gets. And it scared me. But what it did was make me more desperate.

[57 : 24] And the hard, here's the anomaly. I'm a pastor at the time. I'm a pastor of this little church at the time and I'm praying, God, let me go. Let me go. Let me go do something else.

Give me something else. Because I'm so unworthy and I'm so inadequate and I, and he wouldn't let me go. Literally wouldn't let me go.

Now on the other side, I go, thank you. I'm really glad because this little church became part of that healing process. Men's group became part of the healing process. So send the light and the truth.

And what is the light and the truth in the New Testament? Jesus said, I am the light, right? I am the light. I am the way and the truth and the, so the light and the truth.

So as a Christian, I'm asking, send me Jesus. Send me more light from Jesus. Send me that bread. Send me that bread. Send me that truth. The truth of Jesus to pierce through my, what I'm harboring here, what I'm starting to think.

[58 : 33] I need light and truth. And then of course, the remedy, verse four, then, see it's that light and truth that will bring me back.

Let them bring me to your holy hill, to your dwelling. Then, when I have the light and the truth, then I will go to the altar of God. Then I can go back to worship. See, it's not a physical thing that's keeping him from worship.

It's his depression. He says, when I have light and truth, he's not, doesn't say, when I travel back or you lift the band or whatever. He says, when I have light and truth, that's when I can go worship again.

It's his depression that's kept him from worshipping. I need light and I need truth so that I can go to the altar. Now, as a Christian, right, we don't have to come to a physical place.

We can worship God anytime. We can worship all by ourselves. But there is something significant that Jesus has called us to do and that is to worship together. And that's why some folks are just having a hard time because it's like, I didn't know I'd miss it so much.

[59 : 38] There is something more dynamic being in present, being there in person and to see others, to hear others sing. Even if I'm depressed to hear others sing when I can't sing, that's good.

I need that too. So now I can go back. When I get light and truth, then I can go back.

And so he says what he said for three times. Why are you cast down on my soul? Why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God. Literally, wait for God.

For I shall again praise Him. That time will come. The salvation of my face. Hope in God. Wait for God.

Okay, here's where it comes down. This is the third insight, right? Wait for the Lord to answer your depression. Wait. Can I have something else?

[60 : 38] Is that really the Bible's answer? Wait? Well, you know, if you look up the word wait or hope in the Scriptures, it's over and over. Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait.

Abraham waited 25 years. Jacob waited 20 years. Joseph waited 20 years. Moses waited 40 and then 40, right? Israel waited 400 years.

Israel waited 2,000 years for Christ to come. We are waiting. Huh? It's God's pattern.

I don't like to wait. I don't like to wait. I've gotten used to getting things now. Modern life has taught us unfairly to expect things right away.

I don't have to put a stew on. I can just put it in the microwave for two and a half minutes and I'm good to go. That's how I cook, by the way. I don't cook. If I can't do it in the microwave, I can't do it.

[61 : 53] So we're trained to want everything now. I want it now. And this whole epidemic we're going through, it's, why isn't it fixed? Why isn't it fixed?

Why isn't it fixed? Why aren't we done? Well, lots of different answers to that. I understand. I'm not asking a real question. But we get impatient. Whatever the cause is. Whatever the cause is, we're impatient.

But God hasn't changed. God hasn't changed His ways. God's ways are always the same. You will wait. Hope in me, which means to wait. When we hope for something, it's something we're expecting.

And it is something we're waiting for. So it makes sense that hope means wait. Hebrew is more of a picture language. It's more of, okay, what's hope look like? It looks like this. Well, maybe not with arms crossed, but however you wait for the Lord.

And maybe it's on your knees. Maybe it's on your bed. Maybe it's on your walk. So let me give you one last example of somebody who really understood what it meant to wait for the Lord.

- [63 : 06] His name was Jeremiah. He's a prophet in the Old Testament. I don't know if you know this guy. I'm not sure there's anybody that has, outside of Christ, who has suffered more. There's certainly not anyone who weeped more. He was called the weeping prophet. Not only wrote down the book of Jeremiah, which is however many chapters long, pretty long, he was a pretty significant prophet.
- But he also wrote the book called Lamentations. You ever read Lamentations? It's really a downer. It's kind of like, man, what's this guy's problem? Well, that was Jeremiah. So he had his God ministry, right?
- Here's what I said to the nation Israel. Here's what God told me. And then he wrote Lamentations and said, this is how I feel about it. Okay, God, I just want you to know this is how I feel about you calling me and saying, okay, I'm calling you.
- No one's going to listen to you, but I'm calling you. Just know ahead, no one's going to listen to you. Thank you very much. Where's the success? So here's what you're, and I'm just powering it down.
- [64 : 12] You really need to read all of Lamentations chapter three. I'm cutting half of that off just for time. He talks about one thing after another that God has done to him.
- This is very personal. He, God, has filled me with bitterness. Not life. God has. He has sated me with wormwood.
- Yum, yum. He has made my teeth grind on gravel. He has made me cower in ashes.
- My soul is bereft of peace. I have forgotten what happiness is. So I say, my endurance has perished.
- So has my hope from the Lord. Oh my. His hope has perished. All is lost. This is how he feels.
- [65 : 15] Remember, God, remember my affliction and my wanderings. the wormwood and the gall that you gave me. My soul continually remembers it and is bowed down within me.
- Is depressed. You need 14 more verses before that of hearing all the complaints to kind of feel this change because the change is like sudden.
- All of a sudden, he says, but, but, but, but, but, this, I call to mind and therefore, I have hope.
- The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. His mercies never come to an end. How can he say that? Come on, Jeremiah, are you just being false here?
- No, I think he's a real, real guy. They are new every morning. What? You just listed off a huge list of complaints against God and you think there's mercy every morning?
- [66 : 28] Great is your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, says my soul. Therefore, I will hope in him. Watch this now.
- The Lord is good to those who, guess what word to use it? Wait. The Lord is good to those who wait for him.
- To the soul who seeks him. See, waiting isn't just passive, it's seeking him. It is good that the one should, oh, here we go, wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.
- Oh, come on. Waiting's one thing, but quiet? Come on. Yeah, no, it's good because the quietness of your soul shows some faith and hope and that your refuge is in God.
- Might take you a while to get there. Get it. I got it. Yeah. God's trials are exceedingly hard even for the believer.
- [67 : 35] Okay? Okay? How do you hope in the midst of that? If most people went through what Jeremiah went through, what would be their response?

I'm done. I'm done. I don't believe in that kind of God and if that's what God is, I don't want him. That's what most people would respond. Jeremiah does not respond like a natural person.

How is he so different? He's remarkable. Or his faith is remarkable. His God is remarkable. Whatever changes because what changes him?

He says this, but this I recall. This I call to mind. I remember something and that changes everything. I recall. I remember truth.

I remember God's promise and that changes everything. Doesn't matter how I feel. Doesn't matter what I've experienced. I trust the truth that I know.

[68 : 40] And the truth is that God's faithful love never ceases. His mercies never come to a stopping point.

There's still going to be more. In fact, every morning there's going to be something new. You've got to know how to look for it sometimes. Naomi, right?

Naomi's bitter. she couldn't see any good. What was going on behind her? Oh, Ruth was with her. Oh my, she didn't see, remember she didn't see that.

And they arrived, just happened to arrive at the time of the barley harvest. Certainly, we don't see everything, especially when we're in depression, we don't see. But Jeremiah says, no, no, no, no, no, no.

Faith is going to exert itself. I recall, I recall, I know what's true. He is good to those who wait, who seek him, who accept his way, who wait quietly for him.

[69 : 45] So, how do I end this? What do you believe about God? When you experience turmoil in your soul, when you are in dark days, what then do you believe about God?

When he crushes your dreams, okay, when he shatters your dreams, he shatters your dreams, what then do you believe about God?

When the TV preachers, what they preach doesn't come true for you, what do you believe about God? because what they say repeatedly does not come true.

Do you trust him in the dark? Do you recognize that your depression is actually a thirst for God?

Do you accept your depression as by the hand of God? and will you wait for God to answer your depression?

[71 : 01] Hope in God, for we shall yet praise him, the salvation of my face. Let us pray. Father, we thank you for your word.

We thank you for David or the psalmist whoever wrote this. Lord, we thank you for his honesty, for his insight, for his desperateness, his faith, his hope, and yet unveiling all those feelings.

Teach us through this. Help us to follow that kind of model of working out our soul trouble before you. Help us to believe what's true, what you've promised in the times when it seems dark and when it seems like things are going the other way.

This we ask in Christ's name. Amen.