

## Desiring God in Difficult Times

### Opening text: Psalms 42

This is a Psalm about *distress* and about *desire*. David speaks of his distress. However, that distress didn't cause him to be offended at God or to even doubt Him but in fact awakened a deep desire for God:

*As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. <sup>2</sup> My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?*

David is in a dry place, in a difficult spot, he is depleted and tired. His body is tired, and his soul is tired. However, he knows where to come to be satisfied.

**Psalms 107:9** - *<sup>9</sup>For He satisfies the longing soul and fills the hungry soul with goodness.*

This is how you get replenished and filled: desiring God, longing, being hungry for Him.

#### 1. David's distress

- a) Why am I down?, what happened to my joy?, why I am being attacked and mocked by the enemy?

**V.10** – *“as with a breaking of my bones, my enemies reproach me all day long, ‘where is your God?’”*

Have you ever been there? Have you been in distress and had questions? There are a lot of ‘Whys’ in this psalm but God is never offended by honesty. If anything, this psalm shows us God as the focus of all hope and the *‘help of our countenance’*.

- b) **V.3** *“My tears have been my food day and night”*

What an interesting expression. With no other resource David fed on his own grief.

#### 2. David's distance

He is not only distressed but by his own words, he feels distant from God.

**V.2b** - *When shall I come and appear before God?*

David wants to come to where he once was with God. Maybe something in his own relationship with God had changed or had been lost. Perhaps David felt that he wasn't quite where he should be with God.

We get a bit more insight in **verse 4**:

- a) *When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For **I used to go** with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.*

Perhaps David drifted. For whatever reasons, he stopped doing things *he used to do* - like going to the temple

**“I used to go with the multitude”** – the right crowd, people of faith and worshipers of God. However, now he finds himself among mockers who say, “*where is your God?*”

- b) I think of what Jesus said to the church of the Ephesians (a church that had lost their first love):

**Revelation 2:5** - *Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works,*

*Do the first works* – in other words, do what you ‘used to do’

- If you used to go to church, then go to church,
- If you used to sing, sing,
- If you used to serve, serve
- If you used to desire God, then desire again

- c) **verse 4a:** *When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me*

David remembered how things used to be! In order to awaken desire, it is so important to remember!

**Verse 6b** says, *I will remember You from the land of the Jordan, and from the heights of Hermon, from the Hill Mizar.*

**Revelation 2:5** says, *remember from where you have fallen*

**Psalms 77:10-12** - *And I said, “This is my anguish; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High.” <sup>11</sup> I will remember the works of the Lord; surely I will remember Your wonders of old. <sup>12</sup> I will also meditate on all Your work, And talk of Your deeds.*

David was in distress, he was distant, but he had a desire to return to where he once was, he had a desire to love like He once loved, to pray like once prayed. He knew the way back, He knew God, he kept telling his soul, “*Hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance*”

### **3. David’s desire**

**Psalms 42:1 TPT** (Passion Translation) - *I long to drink of you, O God, to drink deeply from the streams of pleasure flowing from your presence. My longings overwhelm me for more of you! My soul thirsts, pants, and longs for the living God. I want to come and see the face of God.*

- a) ***I want to come***– As we saw last week, there is an open invitation to those who desire to come and drink:

**Revelation 22:17** - *and the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever **desires**, let him take the water of life freely.*

- b) It is interesting how **Verse 1** starts with the imagery of a deer in a dry place panting for water but verse 7 speaks of waterfalls and waves going over David.

*Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterfalls; all Your waves and billows have gone over me.*

### **Deserts become cascading waterfalls when we desire God!**

**Psalms 107:35-36** *He turns a wilderness into pools of water, and dry land into watersprings. <sup>36</sup> There He makes the hungry dwell, that they may establish a city for a dwelling place,*

### **Conclusion**

We read in this psalm about the distress of David and how he felt distant from God. But above all this is the story of a man with a great desire for God, pouring out his soul to Him and reaching out to God with faith, believing that waterfalls would again cascade over him, and that he would again have a song of victory in his lips.