

Psalm 42

by Henry Law

The sermon explores the theme of rejection and hope in Psalm 42, encouraging believers to look to God for comfort and strength in times of distress.

Scripture: Psalm 42:3

Topics: "Spiritual Sorrow", "Gods Faithfulness"

Description

Henry Law preaches about the theme of rejection and distress in the hymn, emphasizing the longing for God's presence and the joy found in worship. The believer is encouraged to seek God in times of sorrow and to find hope and strength in Him despite taunts from enemies. The sermon highlights the importance of chiding the soul from being cast down, remembering God's faithfulness, and trusting in His unfailing love and provision even in the midst of trials.

Transcript

Rejection is the pervading note of this hymn. The joys of the sanctuary are forbidden. Insulting foes augment distress. In conclusion, the soul is chided for yielding to despondency.

1, 2. "As the deer pants after the water-brooks, so pants my soul after You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?"

A tender and expressive image meets us. The deer, exhausted by long flight beneath the scorching sun, or in the dusty plain, pants for the cooling stream in which to quench the pangs of thirst. How eagerly relief is sought! Here is the believer banished from the sweet refreshments of the sanctuary. It is not so much the outward form which is the object of desire, but the intimate communion with God, to which the services, when duly used, would surely raise. In true worship God's presence is sought and found, and thoroughly enjoyed.

3, 4. Day and night, I have only tears for food, while my enemies continually taunt me, saying, "Where is this God of yours?" My heart is breaking as I remember how it used to be: I walked among the crowds of worshipers, leading a great procession to the house of God, singing for joy and giving thanks--it was the sound of a great celebration!

Fast flowing tears testified the deep sorrows of the Redeemer's heart, when He heard the revilings of His foes. They taunted Him with the sneer, that surely His banishment from holy service was proof that God

had forsaken Him. He remembered the happy seasons when, in happy company, He sought the sanctuary, and joined His praises to those of the multitude of fellow-worshippers. It is the very foretaste of heaven, with one mind, and one mouth, to unite in public adoration.

5. "Why are you cast down, O my soul? and why are you disturbed in me? hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance."

Too much depression is a sign of weak faith--anxiety should never occupy a godly heart. It is well to chide the soul, and rouse it from its downcast state. Hope should go forth in lively exercise. In darkest days it should look to Jesus, and take courage. Nothing should weaken the assurance that the outcome of the most grievous trials will be increased thanksgiving to our God.

6. "O my God, my soul is cast down within me; therefore will I remember You from the land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar."

Its consolation is not easily eradicated. Like the noxious weed again and again it reappears. But thoughts of God will still revive in the faithful breast. Though God may be apparently far distant, the eye of faith will turn towards Him. Though driven beyond Jordan, the Psalmist still remembers Zion, and the tabernacles of his God.

7, 8. "I hear the tumult of the raging seas as your waves and surging tides sweep over me. Through each day the Lord pours his unending love upon me, and through each night I sing his songs, praying to God who gives me life."

As wave upon wave, distress will sometimes follow distress. As descending rain swells the streams, and floods overwhelm the plains, so torrents of sorrow will oppress the heart. Yet the believer is sustained by undoubting trust. He knows that lovingkindness has received a mandate to visit him throughout the day, and to cheer him with songs in the night season, and to strengthen him to wrestle with God in prayer, as the God who maintains his life.

9, 10. "I will say to God my rock, Why have You forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones, my enemies reproach me; while they say daily to me, Where is your God?"

When the believer can realize that God is his rock, he is bold to expostulate, and thinks it no presumption to implore attention to his suffering case. He states as the extremity of his anguish, that he is pierced to the quick by the impious insolence of cruel mockers, who reiterate the taunt, that God has forsaken him, and is indifferent to his woe. He appeals to God, Why am I thus afflicted?

11. "Why are you cast down, O my soul? and why are you disturbed within me? hope in God; for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

Admonition with the soul is repeated. Trials will return; and they must be met with renewal of spiritual reasoning. The covenant is forever settled in heaven. Hope, therefore, should never fail. Deliverance will surely come. The voice of praise will again shout, "He is the health of my countenance, and my God."

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