

10.3.22 am

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Date: 10 April 2022

Preacher: Donald M Macleod

[0 : 00] Good morning, it's a joy and a privilege to join me this morning on his glorious Lord's Day. Let's sing to God's praising and worship, his name is singing from Psalm 42.

Psalm 42, we can sing verses 1 down to verse 4 of the psalm, Psalm 42 verses 1 down to verse 4. It's lovely isn't it to hear, we're so thankful for it, to hear the cries of the conversations of the Lord's little babies.

Lord we give you praise and give you thanks for them. Psalm 42, let's sing verse 1. Like as a heart for water brooks and first of Pantombury, so pants my longing soul, O God, that come to thee, I may. My soul for God, the living God, da first when shall I near, and to thy countenance approach, and in God's sight. Let's sing to God's praise. Let's sing verse 1.

Let's sing verse 1.

[1 : 59] Let's sing verse 1.

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Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1.

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[3 : 53] Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1.

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Let's sing verse 1. Let's sing verse 1. because of our efforts. We find ourselves gathered this day together because of the finished work of our beloved Saviour.

Help us this short time together. Help us even for this one day, this one day set aside by you, this one day given to us. Help us to focus our hearts and to focus our minds on your word, on you, on your great many promises made towards your people, on the love and the care you promised towards your people, on your loving kindness and your faithfulness, the many ways we see in your word that you've blessed and kept your people from century to century.

[5 : 15] We bring before you this day, Lord, the many burdens and worries, anxieties that press down on us outside of these walls, the worries and cares, the fears and burdens of this past week.

responsibilities of a week that lies ahead of us. Lord, help us to take these many things and to lay them down, Lord, at the foot of the throne of grace, that place where your word tells us we find grace and mercy in time of need.

Come before you this day, Lord, and we give you praise for the privilege we have of gathering like this, brothers and sisters and sons and daughters together, worshipping your holy name.

Lord, help us never to grow tired of this reality, grow tired of the privilege we have of worshipping you. We bring, Lord, to you this congregation just now.

We thank you for your people here. Thank you for this gathering. Lord, we ask you to bless this place, Lord. Bless your people here. We pray especially just now, Lord, for the pastor you have set over them.

[6 : 25] We pray for him and for his family. We pray for them just now as their time of holiday and their time of rest. We ask you to bless them. Bless them as a family. Bless them, Lord, as parents towards children or bless them as children to parents.

Bless them in all they do as a family. Encourage them and be with them. We also ask, Lord, you bless them in terms of ministry for all that's done publicly, the weekly services, the weekly outward

work.

We also pray, Lord, for the quiet work, the hours of prayer poured into the work, the hours of visiting, the hours of wrestling with your word, perhaps the many hours of tears and of pain, as it were, behind the scenes.

We ask, Lord, you bless this congregation. Bless the elders and the deacons. Bless those who work even today behind the scenes, Lord. Those involved in Sunday school and Sunday club, Lord, those involved in the production of putting this online, Lord, all those involved for your name's sake, all those seeking to further the kingdom, making use of the skill sets and the willingness that you've given them.

We ask that you bless them, that they would know that they are doing your kingdom's work. We ask for this place, we ask for this area, we ask for every part of this island which is represented here, we ask for this town, we ask that in the days and weeks to come we would see your word go out in power.

[7 : 58] We would hear and see of hearts of stone being turned to hearts of flesh. We would hear and see of those who once had no care for you, no love for you, come to know you, come to love you, come to call you their own.

I pray, Lord, for any here this day who love you and who know you, perhaps those even listening in at home just now to our suffering, Lord, those suffering both physical and mental pain, we ask you to be with them, Lord, be close to them, you would comfort them.

We ask for those who are grieving just now, perhaps recent loss, but even those grieving a loss of years, if not many years ago, we ask, Lord, you be close to them too. We confess that we are such poor comforters and we give you praise that the Holy Spirit, that he is the ultimate comforter, that he is able to comfort in ways at times where we cannot.

I pray indeed for any here today who are yours but who feel far away from you, perhaps those who have wondered, perhaps even just quietly to themselves in the quietness of their hearts and minds or they feel distant from you, we ask that even this day you would show them yourself once more as you have not changed, you have not moved, you're the God who knows them and who has promised to keep them until the very end.

We pray for any here today who as of yet don't know Jesus, who as of yet can't say they know him and they love him but who are interested, who want to know more about who he is, about what he has done.

[9 : 27] We ask, Lord, that even this day you would show them through your word, you would show them more of Jesus, you would help them to come to see who he is, that he has done all things that all who come to him, all who come to him crying out for salvation would be saved.

I pray, Lord, for those who are not here, those who have no desire to come near this place, those in our families, those who are dear friends, those who we love, who we care for so deeply, those who are, if not uncaring, at the very least, who at the worst perhaps are completely against the gospel, Lord, we bring them to you just now.

We confess that we are powerless to save them, that we are powerless to change any of how they are towards you, any part of how they are towards you, Lord. We give you praise that we bring these names and these people to you just now in our minds, Lord, knowing that you can change lives.

Each one of us, we stand before you today as evidence, as witnesses, that you are the God who doesn't see us as we see ourselves, who doesn't see others as we see them, but Lord, you are the one who changes, truly changes hearts of stone to hearts of flesh, who gives life, who gives sight, where once there was death and blindness.

We ask that it be the case for this area, Lord, for those who we love and those we care for. Help us, Lord, in this congregation, Lord, help your people here to be bold witnesses in these strange and confusing days help us to be brave as we share the gospel, to do so gently, but to do so clearly, that there is one, the Lord Jesus Christ, who would have love for his people, who would have obedience to the Father, that he came, that he lived that perfect life, that he died that necessary death, so that all, all who come to him, all who cry out to him, all who ask for his forgiveness, will be saved.

[11 : 26] Do you remember the one who came down? Do you want his shoulders who bore the full wrath of all the sins of all his people? Now, at this time of year, as we look forward in this coming week to remembering especially, perhaps, the work of our Savior, the fact that our Savior rose

again, that at this very moment we worship our risen Savior who is at your right hand, who is this very second, this very moment, making intercession for his people, who is carrying, as it were, our names and our prayers to you, a Savior who forgets none of his own, a Savior who promises never to leave nor forsake us, who promises to be with us to the very end of our days and then for all eternity thereafter.

Help us this time to have our minds and our hearts focused on you, focused on your word. We confess, Lord, that we are so easily distracted. We find our minds and our hearts so quickly and to our shame so willingly wandering away from you.

We confess our sin this day, our sin this past week, or perhaps even to our shame, Lord, our sin at this hour in our actions, in our words, in our thoughts.

We confess that we are so prone to going against your holy, perfect nature. We ask, Lord, you would remind us that if needed, Lord, you would remind us gently.

If needed, Lord, you would remind us clearly and firmly from your word that you are a holy God, a holy God who can see no sin, who can have sin nowhere near you, your holy God who has provided for us in our Saviour, an eternal Saviour who washes away the sins of his people so that we can this morning, we can even this very moment if we are yours, appear before you and know for certain that we are cleansed.

[13:26] You call us your own. You no longer look on us in wrath or in anger but now you see us cleansed, made perfect, made righteous in the finished work of our Saviour.

Lord, help us to cling on to these truths even when the world around us and our own minds perhaps, our own spirits perhaps, tell us otherwise to cling on to the reality that you are a God who holds on to your people never to let them go.

Thank you again for this gathering, Lord. Thank you for those gathered here. Thank you for the freedom we have to gather like this. We pray especially just now for our dear brothers and sisters across the world, many of whom we know by name, many of whom we don't.

Lord, you know their situations, you know their exact situations. We pray especially as we are minded to do so of our brothers and sisters suffering just now in Ukraine, Lord, those who find themselves even this morning worshipping you, gathering together to praise your name, doing so in situations which they themselves could not have predicted even a month ago.

We give you praise, Lord, you're still building your kingdom there. We hear accounts of people coming to know you and coming to love you even in the midst of that trying and troubling situation. Of course, we also pray, Lord, for our dear brothers and sisters in Russia too as they seek to serve you in a place and in a land which has no care for the gospel.

[14:51] We pray the same for every Christian, Lord, you know their names, who this very day are willing to lay on the line, Lord, their very lives for the sake of the gospel, who are willing to do all that's necessary so that those around them would know that there is a saviour, that there is one who has done all so that they may be saved, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Help us not to forget them in our prayers. Help us not to waste the freedom we have whilst you still allow us to have it, to make the most of this place, most of our freedom, where we can worship you publicly and having no fear for our safety and no fear for our lives.

Lord, help us this day to our minds and our hearts set on you. Ask all these things in and through and for Christ's prayer's name and for his sake. Amen. I see boys and girls but folks, come on, come gather.

Where are you? Any stragglers on that side? Come on. Come on. I'll perch so you get some knowledge.

I can sit. Give me some time. Hi. Hi. I get away.

[16:08] Thank you. Okay, so I'm driving down. I'm thinking, what do I tell the boys? What do I talk about? I'm driving down. And as I'm driving down, I saw a car park halfway down.

It has. Halfway down to the car park. A car park full of cars. What car park? A nice sunny day, like this, where is a car park full of cars? Beach.

Beach. I wish I was on beach, no. Coast. Higher beach. Big hill. That way. Big hill, I had to climb. A few years ago. Beach. It was jam-packed. There were cyclists at the beach. There were cars at the beach. Cars everywhere. I saw some people walking at the beach. Anyway, here's a secret. Don't tell anyone else.

I don't like climbing. I really don't like climbing. Walking's okay. I've never got uphill at all. I'm like, now my friends know I don't like climbing. But my friends like climbing an awful lot.

[17:10] I've got some friends who love climbing. Some friends who do rock climbing. Some friends who climb up big icy glaciers in cold places. Now these friends one day said, Donald, let's go to the beach.

I was like, yeah, I love Harris. Go to the beach. Go to the beach. Go to the beach. Just love life. Get some cake. No, no. My friends stopped halfway down to Tarbert.

They stopped out to jump car park. And this isn't a joke comes and does. My friends didn't tell me we were climbing a kusha. They said, wear trainers, wear shorts, and we've got wee walking hats. So my friends also told me they knew the way up the kusha. That was also not true. So we started. Have you guys been up the kusha? Have you been up the kusha? Good. This is not embarrassing for me. We started walking. My friends said, fine, three hours maybe, back home again.

Perfect. Started climbing. Kept climbing. Kept climbing. Halfway up. It's two hours. But the top of the kusha runs up there and we're somewhere down here. And we looked over, right? What do we see down here?

[18:14] We saw people going that way. We're going this way. We were following a sheep track. We were following a path the sheep took to do their eating and their sleeping and their living. We missed completely the track that was supposed to go on.

Well, I wasn't very happy. I was really tired at this point. I'd taken one banana, one bottle of water, a packet of the sheep. We started going about two hours ago. So I was there, halfway at the kusha, and it got worse and worse and worse.

The wind started picking up. The mist started coming down and we thought, when we stop, have a talk of the kusha? Anyway, it took us, in the end, five and a half hours to go to kusha, and up, and then again.

Because we had to go right back to the start and start all over again. Now, I've since realised that you can get something. You guys can see.

Close enough. A map. A map which, actually, I didn't realise, I grabbed it from the house, and this is not a rope, because girls, this is a hat. Adam's map. It's a map which gives you, a part of it, directions, how to find.

[19:29] Now, we, of course, don't have a map for life, do we? Do we? Maybe? Do we have a guide for life? How do we know, okay, how do you know what's, what God wants you to do, or not do?

Okay, and who does the Bible call the way? Which person? Jesus. Jesus says what?

Jesus says, he is the way. All right, thank you. Perfect. If I had followed, if my friends and me followed, a map, we'd have got all the way up to the gym.

Bad day, I'd be waiting for dinner. I miss my dinner too, my parents were unhappy, but that's a whole different story, not for today, I got around. But anyway, home or dinner time, follow the map, follow the way we were supposed to go.

And the thing is, sometimes, boys and girls, and mums and dads, sometimes life can be complicated, sometimes we don't know which way to go. The Bible tells us, and Jesus tells us, if we follow him, if we trust in him, he promises to lead us, to guide us, to show us the right way.

[20:47] And even if you follow the map properly, again, we'll all let the creature in the right way, it's still tiring. You still get tired at the top. Your legs still hurt. You still get, you're still hungry at the top.

But you get there safely, and you get home safely. Sometimes life, when you go to school, and you leave school, and perhaps go to work, or go to university, and grow up, and mums and dads know this too, sometimes life is hard.

It's complicated. It's as if we're lost sometimes. The Bible tells us, if we trust Jesus, and follow Jesus, life is still hard. He promises to, never forget us, never to leave us, to take us home, safely to be with himself.

He promises to lead us, and guide us, all the way throughout our lives. And the mums and dads here, at Grands and Grandads, can tell you that themselves. I won't look at faces, but some Christians here, have been on the walk, for a long time, some an awful long time, and they know Jesus, they love Jesus.

And for all the many, many years, mums and dads here, and the guys and Grandads, have learned, they've trusted Jesus. And Jesus has, kept them safe, and they're still here, still love him, he still loves him.

[21 : 55] Never forget, life's still hard sometimes, life can be very complicated sometimes. But if you know Jesus, if you love Jesus, he promises, not to leave you, he promises, to take you home, to himself, he promises, to go with you, every single step, of the way.

That person, so well. Now, the person's kind of up again. Maybe not. We pray, we go. Lord, thank you Lord, for our time together, thank you for the boys and girls here, and we ask that the boys and girls, would know Jesus, that they would know that, for all the days of their life, that they would follow Jesus, they would love Jesus, they would have him as their Lord, and as their Savior.

They would know that, in him, they have a perfect guide, someone who will not leave them, or forsake them, someone who will keep them safe, and keep them going, all the long days of their life. Bless them, bless the parents, Lord, we take them out, Lord, we ask you, bless the grandparents, and Lord, those who look after the boys and girls, we thank you for them, we also pray, Lord, for the Sunday school teachers, those who work hard, to teach, that the boys and girls, all about Jesus, and who he is.

I ask all these things, Jesus name. Amen. Thank you, boys and girls. As the boys and girls go out, we can sing, to, hymn of praise, hymn one, oh wait, I trust, in you, alone.

The Lord's my shepherd, I do not want, He makes me light, in pasture tree, He leads me by the still, still water, His goodness restores my soul, and I will trust in you alone, and I will trust in you alone, for your endless mercy follows me, your goodness will lead me whole.

[24 : 31] He guides my ways in righteousness, and he adjoins my head with oil, and my cup it overflows with joy, I face on its pure delights, and I will trust in you alone, and I will trust in you alone, for your endless mercy follows me, your goodness will lead me whole, and though I walk the darkest path, I will not fear the evil one, for you are with me, and you're on and staff, and comfort I need to know, and I will trust in you alone, and I will trust in you alone, for your endless mercy follows me, your goodness will lead me whole.

Let's now turn to reading God's word, reading from the book of Psalms, the book of Psalms, and read Psalm 42 and Psalm 43 together. The book of Psalms in Psalm 42 and Psalm 43.

Let's hear the word of God. As a deer pants for flowing streams, for water, so my soul pants for you, my God, my soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

When can I go and meet with God? My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, where is your God? These things I remember as I poured out my soul.

I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the mighty one, with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng. Why, my soul, are you downcast?

[27 : 03] Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God. My soul is downcast within me, therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan, the heights of Hermon, from Mount Miser.

Deep calls to deep, in the roar of your waterfalls. All your waves and breakers have swept over me. By day the Lord directs his love. 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 must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy? My bones suffer mortal agony, as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, where is your God?

Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God. Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause, against an unfaithful nation.

Rescue me from those who are deceitful and wicked. You are God, my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?

[28 : 18] Send me your light, and your faithful care. Let them lead me, let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. And I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight.

I will praise you of a liar, O God, my God. Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Saviour and my God.

Good praise to God for his holy and his perfect word. Let's again sing to God's praise, this time singing from Gaelic. Gaelic Psalm 103.

Let's sing verses 1 and verse 2 to God's praise. O man, CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS
CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS
CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS CHOIR SINGS Thank you.

[31 : 41] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

O God. Thank you.

I've covered this, I'm sure, plenty of times before, but just for summary, the sons of Korah were those who lived and who worked in the temple. The closest we have, I guess, is almost the deacons, but it's much more than that.

[33 : 53] They lived in the temple, they lived near the temple, they served in the temple, all the duties of the temple they attended to. We were those who lived in the temple, the place of God.

Of course, at this time, God's presence was made known, was there, was close to the temple.

God's people went towards the temple to get closer physically to God.

So the sons of Korah were those who spent day and night serving and living close to the temple.

Their whole life was one of those who lived and the temple.

We jump into these two psalms, we find that the writer of the psalm, a son of Korah, one of those who lived and worked in the temple, we see that for whatever reason, he's far from home.

Physically, he seems to be at a distance from the temple. We can't say why Scripture doesn't tell us. There's some thought and there's some theories as to why some say that the man who wrote this psalm was with David when David was forced to flee and so on.

[35 : 11] We can't say that for certainty. Whatever reason, we know that the man who wrote this psalm, he's far from home, he's far from the temple. Physically, but also we see as we go on, spiritually, he feels far from the temple.

He feels far from home. As we spend a short time going through these two psalms, that's our focus today. As we see these two psalms, we see reality, the symptoms, we could say, the symptoms of a downcast soul.

Many of these symptoms, much like the physical symptoms of a physical illness, but also at times the causes too. It's often hard to differentiate. We see the symptoms and the causes of a downcast soul.

But also in these two psalms, we see the reality and the hope we have of how a downcast soul is dealt with by God.

How God cares for and tends to a downcast soul. I'm going to say briefly today, I'm going to tell you we have six headings. Don't panic.

[36 : 21] Don't worry. I'm not making most of my time coming, obviously, down here. We have six headings, but there's no way we can be anything but brief and summarize these two psalms. In a way, that's good.

Because the truth is, brothers and sisters, isn't it, that we could go one to one to one. Go through every Christian here this morning. And I'm going to ask you, what's caused you in the past or causing you now, perhaps, to feel far away from God?

What issues arise or have arisen in your life to make you feel as if God, perhaps, has stopped listening to you, stopped caring for you, and so on and so on? And the reasons would be many.

Reasons of personal loss, perhaps.

Personal sin, perhaps. Reasons and situations outwith your control completely. And so on and so on. So look at these verses. This is a summary for us.

See yourself in this psalm. And you yourself know how you fit in to these situations. So first of all, we can look at the symptoms. The symptoms of a downcast soul.

[37 : 28] There's three main areas, three main symptoms, we could say, presented in these two psalms. And this is very general, of course. First of all, we see pain.

Someone who feels far away from God. Someone who feels down in their spirit. There is pain. We see this in the psalm. Of course, our first opening few verses. Verses one down to verse three.

Of course, the psalmist drops us straight in, doesn't he? Drops us straight in to the middle of the situation. For us is, of course, a beautiful image. But to the psalmist is one of pain. As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God.

So we hear that. And we, of course, think. And many of us, of course, have seen. And even yesterday, deer have invaded our village. So our village is covered, literally, in deer. And often, they're by the stream and they're by the loch. And they're drinking their fill. And we read verse one and we think, well, that's a beautiful image, isn't it? Just as a deer drinks from a stream. But what is the image of verse one?

[38 : 36] As a deer pants for flowing streams. See, the image here is not a deer at the stream. It's a deer longing to find a stream. The deer needs something.

It needs water. It needs that sustenance. But it's not getting it. As a deer pants for flowing streams. As a deer looks for those streams. But finds nothing.

So pants my soul for you, O God. We see that in verse two, don't we? My soul thirsts for God. For the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

Here we see the pain of spiritual drought. The pain of looking for something. Looking for that help. Looking for that encouragement. And finding nothing. Those days, or perhaps even those weeks. Those months, perhaps even for some of us.

[39 : 36] Where you're just plodding on. And perhaps you long. You think, well maybe when communion time comes around again. Maybe when fellowships come around again.

Maybe when COVID eases. And we can gather again together. Then I'll find my sustenance. Then I'll find my blessing. Then I'll find what I'm looking for. And the truth is, brother and dear sister. And we all know this. Those times of spiritual drought. It feels as if nothing will help. Nothing will help. You go from day to day.

Stream to stream. And find every stream. It's almost as if it's been dried up. This is painful. And we know it's not easy to talk about. But this is the reality. At times for us in our walk, isn't it?

The psalmist is honest. The psalmist is honest about how he is feeling. He knows the Lord. He loves the Lord. He serves the Lord. But yet, even despite all that, he's still going through a time.

[40 : 31] A period where he is far from God physically. Far from him spiritually. And it feels as if he's just drying up spiritually. There's nothing for him. It gets even worse than that, doesn't it?

In verse 3. He is getting some sustenance. Where does it come from? My tears have been my food day and night. My tears have been my food day and night.

But, brothers and sisters, do you know this pain? Do you know the reality of what it is to look, to find nothing at times? Those long days plodding on.

Perhaps even those even longer nights looking and praying and crying out. There seems to be silence, perhaps. If not silence, there seems to be great distance.

And you're spiritually dry. There's even more going on, isn't there? Not just spiritual dryness. There's spiritual turmoil.

[41 : 32] We see that at the start of verse 5 and then verse 7. The first half of verse 5. We see, of course, the psalmist crying out. We'll come back to this verse and this repeated phrase again and again.

But, verse 5, why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you in turmoil within me? Verse 7. We see this oppression he feels. Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls.

All your breakers and your waves have gone over me. We'll get back to that in a second. But there's this spiritual turmoil. Dryness is bad enough, yes. He feels far away. He feels dry. But even worse than that, all that he is, his whole life seems to be turned upside down.

There's turmoil. There's disruption. There's pain. There's agony. And this poor psalmist, this poor writer, this poor believer is feeling almost physical pain, we could say.

His first goes to turmoil. And he's feeling lost and confused. All he has known has now gone. And the question has to be, brothers and sisters, do you know that in your life?

[42 : 41] Perhaps this week. Perhaps just now. Perhaps in days gone by. Perhaps even in a week to come. Every Christian here knows what it is to feel that time is far from God. To feel that spiritual drought. To feel that turmoil.

That disruption. That confusion in your soul. As you think, what's going on? Once everything was so clear. Once everything was so close. And now all of a sudden. All of a sudden everything's just gone.

It's all gone wrong. Spiritually I'm dry. I'm doing the motions. I'm here. I'm looking good. I can put the suit on and get the Bible open and come to church and do all the actions. But spiritually. It's hard.

It's dry. There's hope to come. There's hope to come. Before we get there. We've got even deeper, don't we? Even deeper.

The psalmist doesn't stop there. He just keeps on going. Spiritual dryness. Spiritual turmoil. But even worse than that, then we see there is real attack.

[43 : 38] Real attack. Of course, for the psalmist, we said he was physically distanced from the temple. Facing, perhaps if we agree with those who say that the son of Korah was with David when he fled.

He was facing real physical danger. Armies were at the gate, quite literally. They were chasing him down with David. Either way, this man is facing real physical enemies.

And those around him are taunting him. We see that second half of verse 3. While they say to me all the day long, where is your God? In verse 10, we see the same idea again.

His adversaries are taunting him. They ask him again, where is your God? Enemies attack him. Adversaries go after him.

This man can get no rest, it seems, whatsoever from anyone, from any situation. Internal pain and external attack. Now, of course, we sit here comfortably today.

[44 : 46] And I don't know many faces, but we can say with confidence, I'm sure, that if not physical attack, no, we don't face that. But there may be some here who face a hard time at home.

A hard time for following Jesus. And we look to the world around and we say, well, it's not as bad as them, but it's still bad for you, perhaps. You get ridiculed. You get talked down to, perhaps, by friends and so on and so on.

You face not physical attack, but you face mental attack from those around you for following Jesus, for loving Jesus, for seeking to follow him. And that wears you down. But the truth is, for every Christian here today, we all know what it is, don't we, to face attack.

Not physical attack. Thankfully, we give the Lord praise for that, as we said. Our brothers and sisters across just now who are facing real physical attack for our beliefs. Physical attack for our love of our Saviour.

But we have a freedom so far. We have no worries of that just now. But we all know. We all know spiritual attack, don't we? The enemy attacking, attacking.

[45 : 54] Because look at the psalmist. What's a problem he has? Yes, they attack him. Yes, they taunt him. But what gets to him? What does the psalmist say that gets to him? It's when they say to him what?

Where is your God? Verse 10. Where is your God? Where is your God? Where is he? Where is he? You say God cares for you so much.

You say he loves you and protects you. Then why has he left you in this situation? Dear friends, if we're honest.

We've all felt the attack coming from the enemy. Or words to this effect. Those creeping thoughts. Those creeping worries. Those creeping perhaps even doubts, if we're honest. In times of trial. These hard days. These difficult days. When we think to ourselves. How can this be happening? Why is this happening? Yes, I love God. I trust in God.

[46 : 51] I believe his promises. But yet. The enemy creeps in. The questions arise. How? Why? The beauty is, of course, the Lord does not leave us with answers.

As Christians. I'm sure our minds first go. First go to reality that we have a savior. And we're here of this, God willing, this evening. We look to Hebrews 4 this evening. And in a sense, this sermon hopefully leads us to the evening service.

We see Jesus as the one who is the right hand of the Father. What it means for us as Christians. But before that, we have a savior who what?

Who knew exactly what it was to feel. Not just distant from God. But to feel as a way abandoned. By God. The harrowing, but the encouraging for us as Christians words.

Matthew 27. Verse 43. As the crowd around Jesus. What do they cry to him? What do the crowd say to Jesus?

[47 : 55] He hung on the cross. He trusts in God. Let God deliver him. If he desires him. For he said, I am the son of God. And the robbers who are crucified with him.

Also reviled him in the same way. Dear friends. You love a savior. And you follow a savior. Who knows what it is to feel that.

Hatred. That agony. That despising. Of those around him. I can't. And the minister can't. Enter into the reality of your suffering.

Come alongside you. Yes. Brothers and sisters. We can come alongside each other. Yes. We must come alongside each other. We must support one another. Yes. But only your savior can truly enter into the suffering. That you find yourself in.

Spiritual. Yes. Physical perhaps. Yes. But he knows it. He's been there before you. He's been where you are. Your suffering is not unknown to him.

[48 : 56] Where is your God? Your savior heard that exact same phrase. Leveled at him. As you feel that thought. Those doubts.

Those worries perhaps creeping into your mind. Don't be scared about them. Take them to him. He's heard them before. He's faced them before. Take them to him. He's ready to answer.

Able to answer to. Where is your God? They say. Dear friends. Our God. Our God. He heard the same things he hung on that cross for you and for I.

He's able to answer that question. Where is he? He is reigning supreme. Where is he? He's with his people. Where is he? He is exactly where he always is. Lovingly. Carefully. Working all things out. According to his perfect plan. For his glory. And for the good of his people. Attack.

[49 : 54] Pain. But also we see there's distance. There's that reality of distance. Like we said of course the psalmist had real distance. Had physical distance away from the temple. We give praise to God.

That God now of course has now made his home. He now dwells in us and through us. And again we'll see that. God willing this evening. In more detail. But there's distance. Verse 3 and verse 4 and verse 7.

We covered the verse before. The reality of the psalmist feels far from God. And the truth is that distance can affect our spiritual life. Can't it? That physical distance.

Perhaps some at home even just now. Who you've been away perhaps from the gathering.

Because of illness and other reasons. That you perhaps alone know. Even throughout COVID of course. We've had to be distant.

And it affects you spiritually doesn't it? We're built together. We're made to gather together. We can't do that. We feel it. And it shows itself. The psalmist has real distance.

[50 : 55] He longs to be back. Again and again. To be back to where he is supposed to be. Where he longs to be. We see that in verse 4 don't we? These things I remember.

As I pour out my soul. I'll go of the throng and lead them in possession to the house of God. So on and so on. He's looking back to the glory days. The good days. When he was able to worship with God's people.

Be with God's people. Lead God's people. For these days for him. Currently have gone. They've stopped. Even worse than physical distance.

We see the psalmist is facing a distance from God. Distance from God. The difficult and painful verse 7 we have here.

Deep calls to deep. At the roar of your waterfalls. All your breakers and your waves have gone over me. Then down to verse 9.

[51 : 58] I say to God my rock. Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning? Because of the oppression of the enemy. We'll come back to verse 8 in a second. We give praise to God for verse 8.

But verse 7 and verse 9 are still there. Your breakers. Your waves. They've gone over me. The beautiful poetry. But also the painful reality of verse 7. Deep calls to deep.

The reality of this man feels like he's just spiraling. Doesn't he? He's drowning. The waves of pain have gone over him. And he says to God. His honest.

Honest prayer. As Christians we must be honest to our Lord. Why? How? You've let this happen. This thing has happened in my life.

How is it happening? This thing has come perhaps from your sovereign hand. I understand that. I agree with that. But yet it's hard. It's hard. Dear friends.

[52 : 53] There's no shame in saying that. For our sisters. We can say that. We can say Lord. I trust in you. I love you. I have my whole faith and hope in you. But yet. This is hard. We echo don't we?

Somewhat. The words of a believer who knew hardship. Job. Job. 13 and verse 15. The painful words.

These are words that perhaps only those who have gone through tough situations can say honestly. Christians who know what it is to suffer. Job 13 and verse 15. Though he slay me.

I will hope in him. Though he slay me. I will hope in him. To the world that is nonsense. To the world that is craziness. To the believer here who knows suffering.

You know how precious these words actually are don't you? Though he slay me. I will trust in him. I will hope in him. Like a psalmist here. Even as it feels as if God has covered you in this situation.

[54 : 02] Whatever it may be for you. The waterfalls. Under roaring waves. Yet you cling on to hope. Yet you have that hope. He is sovereign.

He cares. Pain. Attack. And distance. We give praise to God of course.

That this psalm doesn't leave us there. We also see much hope in this psalm. Briefly we see just three ways the psalmist gives us hope. Hope for those just now who are downcast in your souls.

Brothers and sisters. Hope for you who as of yet haven't found that help in the weeks and months gone past. Perhaps for any here who as of yet don't know Jesus at all. Those here who are here.

And we give praise. We give praise to God that you're here. And we love you. We thank God that you are here. Perhaps those watching online. If as of yet you can't say that you know Jesus. That you love Jesus. Listen to what it is to know him.

[55 : 04] To love him. To have him as Lord and Savior. Listen to the hope that Christians have.

The hope that we have. Because we have a living Savior. Three ways in these psalms we see God's help and God's care for those who are downcast in their souls.

We see past faithfulness being reminded to us. Past faithfulness. We see that. Various parts of the psalm. But just looking just for text. Verse 4 and verse 6.

Verse 4 and verse 6. We see as we said already. He looks back. In a sense verse 4 is quite a sad verse or a sad tone to it. But also there's an encouraging tone. There was good days once.

And those days God blessed me and God was with me. I was there with God's people. Those days existed. God was with me then. He was good to me then. He was kind to me then. And the implication is we go through these psalms that he has not changed.

Yes just now there's dryness and so on. But the previous blessings came from a God who has not changed. So there's still hope for current if not future blessing once more from his hand.

[56 : 14] There was days before I was with the crowd. Days before I worshipped God. And those days are still there. Those days are still there. See in verse 6.

My soul is cast down within me yes. But then what? Therefore I remember you. That therefore is crucial isn't it? My soul is cast down. Honest. Truthful yes.

But therefore I remember you. And despite of his situation. Despite of his truthfulness. He can still say. But God. But God I still remember.

Who you are. What you have done. Therefore I remember you. From the land of Jordan. And of Hermon from Mount Miser. He uses here geography to bring to the reader's minds.

Where he is. Where he's looking from. His own as it were Mount Miser. A small hill. Below Mount Hermon. And from that hill you can look up and see the glory. Of Mount Hermon.

[57 : 13] Now Sam is here looking up. In his mind at least. Looking up to Mount Hermon. That place where blessing came. For the people of God. That place where we sing isn't it.

In Psalm 133. Of the dew of blessing. That comes down from Mount Hermon. The image here is clear. Even though he is in the depths. At least in his spirit.

He can sit. Or stand. On that wee hill. And look up. And think. There is blessing still in God. God still cares. God who took his people this far. God who took him this far.

They're still with him. Dear brother dear sister. God who took you this far. He hasn't forgotten you. He hasn't abandoned you. Now this is not.

This isn't. Don't want to shoot him from Graver saying this. My words take him or leave him. Word of God. We can't afford to take him or leave him. We read it here in front of us. Be like the psalmist. Be like him. Have that hope in your minds.

[58 : 10] That God has not forgotten you. He hasn't abandoned you. His blessing is still to come. Because he cares. And loves his people. We see that. Past hope. But also we see there's present hope.

In verse 8. The beautiful verse 8. Sandwiched between verse 7 and verse 9. Verses of distress and pain. Where's that verse of hope?

Verse 8. Present faithfulness. By day the Lord commands his steadfast love. And at night his song is with me. By day the Lord.

Capital L-O-R-D. Tells us of course it's Yahweh being used here. The covenantal name of God. The personal covenantal name. And the same word here. For steadfast love.

It's covenantal. It's ongoing love. The image of verse 8. At least the first half of verse 8. Is the covenant keeping God.

[59 : 09] Is commanding his covenant love. The God who does not change. Is commanding his unchanging faithfulness. Is unchanging love.

Dear friends. Like the psalmist. He doesn't feel this perhaps. He doesn't perceive this. But he knows it. He is living as it were by faith. Very much isn't he?

In these verses. In verse 8. How clearly we see ourselves in the Psalms. I'm sure we all can identify. Verse 7. We're distressed.

And we're praying. And Lord this is difficult. Verse 8. We have that clarity. Don't we? That moment of saying. Yet I trust in God. Yet I believe in his faithfulness. And back in verse 9. We're straight back into pain and misery.

And that is life. And we know that ourselves. Verse 8. There shines out to us. We have a God. And we worship a God. Who is a covenant keeping God. Who has not filled a single one of his people.

[60 : 08] And will not fill any of his people. Promises to keep and to love his people. To be with him for all the days of our life. All to eternity. By day.

Yahweh. The covenant God commands his covenant. Steadfast love and faithfulness. And at night. His song. Is with me.

Those long nights of tears. Those long nights of pain. God is still with his people. Isn't he? Day and night. Doesn't forget them.

Doesn't leave them. So there's past faithfulness for us to look back to. Times of past blessing.

There's present hope. Day and night.

God is with you. Dear Christian. Hasn't forgotten you. He knows you. Finally we see. There is future certainty. Future certainty.

[61 : 08] For that again. It's a theme that runs throughout both these psalms. We can look. To the last verse. Psalm 43. We see this. Repeated phrase. Repeated phrase.

Again. And again. It ends with this final phrase. Why are you cast down? Oh my soul. And why are you in turmoil within me?

Hope. In. God. For I shall again praise him. My salvation. And. My God. Dear friends.

Dear brothers. Dear sisters. Be honest. We must be honest. We'll walk us hard at times. Psalm is honest. He doesn't stop there. He doesn't stop by feeling sorry for his situation.

And he's sorry for himself in a respectful way. But he carries on. His final words are words of hope. Pained yes. But still words of hope. Hope in God.

[62 : 08] It's almost like he's talking to himself here. He's talking to his soul. And here we see the reality. That when it comes to. The daily slog. The daily walk. Of our lives at times. We must speak God's truth.

And God's promises. To our feelings. And to how we. See the world. Our feelings. Dear Christian. Your feelings and my feelings. Are tainted by sin. Same as the rest of us.

Our perception of the world. Is tainted by sin. God's truth. God's promises. Only stand sure. So like a psalmist. We must be like him. He sees the reality of the situation.

Yes. But he speaks to himself. He speaks to his soul. He speaks to. To who he is. And he uses God's promises. Hope in God. Hope in God. I shall again praise him.

My salvation. And my God. It's hard just now. But the day is coming. Because God is good. God is loving. God is faithful to his people. The day is coming. I will again praise him. I will again worship him.

[63 : 07] I will again join with people. I will again know him. And love him as I once did. Again. This is not just a pep talk. Is it for us to. To get through this week.

This is not a motivational speech. This is God's living word. To us this day. This is the tried. As it were. And proven reality. Not just the psalmist. But of course.

Of every Christian. Who has gone before us. Of many Christians here. God is faithful to his people. God cares for his people. God holds his people. You hear this day.

And you are thinking to yourself. Well that's fine and well. But. I can't say that I know Jesus yet. I can't say that I love. Jesus yet. God. The glorious.

Wonderful gospel truth is. The promises. God gives to his. Struggling. People. The same promises. The same hope he gives to those.

[64 : 02] Who come to him for the first time. God promises. To give you hope. Right now. To be with you. Right now. But more than that.

He promises. To be your God. For all time. Dear friends. Christians and non-Christians. Those of us who know Jesus. And those of us who as of yet.

Don't know Jesus. Truth is. We all go through much. If not the same. Almost the same trials. And problems. And worries in life. Same situations arise. The same confusions. The same darkness. And so on and so on. What's the difference? What's the difference? The Christian knows. That despite what may be happening. Around them. Or in them.

That God reigns. That God is faithful. That God has been faithful to them before. He has shown that faithfulness to them. That God is still with them presently. But also. Like a psalmist.

[64 : 57] There's a future day. When God will not leave. Or forsake them. A day is coming. When God will take him home. Take you home. Take the Christian home. To be with himself. Till that day comes.

Help us to. Walk faithfully. He helps us to keep on going. We must be rooted in his word. Not going by the feelings. And the worries. Of our daily.

Situations. But to find ourselves. Rooted. Like a psalmist. Rooted in God's word. Rooted in God's promises. We can close this with a final. Few verses of.

Of that wonderful chapter. Romans. Romans 8. Verses. Of course. We all know so well. And I've heard so often. Verses. Which. To the struggling. Downcast souls.

Speak so much hope to us. Don't they? So much. Wonder. And so much. Love. To. The struggling Christian. Romans 8. Verse 35. I've got ESV here.

[65 : 53] Who shall separate us. From the love. Of Christ. Shall tribulations. Or distress. Persecutions. Famine.

Nakedness. Or danger. Or sword. As it's written. For your sake. We're being killed all the day long. We're regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. No.

In all these things. We are more than conquerors. Through him who loved us. For I am sure. That neither death. Nor life. Nor angels. Nor rulers.

Nor things present. Nor things to come. Nor powers. Nor height. Nor depth. Nor anything else. In all creation. Will be able. To separate us. From the love of God.

In Christ Jesus. Our Lord. Friends. The psalmist had hope. And he has yet. Had hope. Of a coming saviour. That saviour's come.

[66 : 46] How much more hope should we have. As we know. Our risen saviour. Goes before us. Ere to leave us. Or forsake us. Let's bow our heads. In a quick word of prayer. Lord God.

We thank you Lord. For your word. And. For the truths. And the promises we have in it. We ask that. As we find ourselves. At times far away from you. You would. Use your word. To bring us back home. To yourself.

To stir up in our hearts. And our souls. That desire. To be closer to you. That desire. To be close. Or to a place. Where we can find that blessing. And that hope. And that mercy. We pray for any here today.

Who know you. And who love you. But who do feel. Perhaps even. In this very moment. Far away from you. Who are struggling. We ask that through your word. You would bring them closer to yourself. Once more. We pray again for any here.

As of yet. Are so far away from you. That they have no care. Or no love for you. Those who are your enemies still. Those who still. Lord. In their actions. And in their words.

[67 : 42] Have no care for you. We ask that you would. Even this day. Come into our lives. Lord. You would take away their hatred. For you. And their despising of you. You give them that new heart.

You bring them into your kingdom. Asking them. Ask all these things. Laying them. The foot. Lord of that. For no grace. Ask all these things. Christ's name. For his sake. Amen. Let's conclude.

By singing again. The verses. That we have. From Psalm 42. Psalm 42. And we can sing. From verses 5. Down.

To verse 9. Of the psalm. Why art thou cast down my soul? Why in me so dismayed? Trust God. For I shall praise him yet. His countenance is.

Mine. Let's sing together. To God's grace. OOC. Why I are.

[68 : 40] And I as is. Let's sing together. For I have seen. Christ. What is buried in my soul?

God bless you.

God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you.

[70 : 52] God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. Why be forgetst thou so?

Why for my forced oppression? God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. I know. Let's close in prayer. Lord, go before us the rest of this day. Take us home in safety, we ask.

And if it's your will, or help us together again, together this evening, around your word. Give you praise, Lord, for the truth and the mercy and the faithfulness you show to your people. Give you praise for these things, in and through, and for Christ's pleasure to be in the name of you.

Amen.