

Psalm 43. Hope in God

Introduction

Title: Continued hope in God

Theme: Continued hope in God is the only answer for the soul-searching questions of the isolated believer. We also see alternating dark moods (2b,5a) and affirmative praying (2a,5b).

Background: The psalmist is in exile. This psalm is a continuation of Psalm 42.

Questions: (i) Why Psalm 42 and 43 is considered as a single unit? (ii) Who would ask 'where is your God?' (iii) What will be your response? (iv) How can you help someone facing doubts about God in personal difficulties?

Exposition

Vindication from enemies

43:1 Vindicate me, O God,
And plead my cause against an ungodly nation;
Oh, deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!

The psalmist ask the Lord to defend him like an advocate against all those who are opposing due to his faith. The words vindicate and plead are legal languages. God is a right judge who sees the wickedness as is.

43:2 For You are the God of my strength;
Why do You cast me off?
Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

Life is tough and problems come unexpectedly. We doubt whether we have offended God or violated his law resulting in judgment of God?

While the psalmist acknowledges the strength of his God (or God as his refuge), his personal experience is opposite (though temporary).

43:3 Oh, send out Your light and Your truth!
Let them lead me;
Let them bring me to Your holy hill
And to Your tabernacle.

The longing of the Psalmist for dwelling with a holy God is seen here.

43:4 Then I will go to the altar of God,
To God my exceeding joy;
And on the harp I will praise You,
O God, my God.

Psalmist is assured of the exceeding joy in the presence of the Lord. The joy that that Lord is able to give is able to offset all the trouble the Psalmist is facing. Oh that we realize that joy that this world is giving is nothing compared to what the Lord is able to give.

43:5 Why are you cast down, O my soul?
And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God;
For I shall yet praise Him,
The help of my countenance and my God.

The self-communing shows two aspects of a believer: on one hand he has a heavenly calling for eternity with God, but on the other hand, he is facing immense pressure on the earth.

Application

Nature of our enemy: They are ungodly, deceitful, unjust, and oppressors.

Questions of the Psalmist: Why God cast him off, why does he mourn due to enemy, why is cast down, and why he is disquieted inside?

Character and actions of God: He defends us, He pleads our case, He is our strength, He is holy, He wants to dwell with us, He give great joy, He gives hope, and He helps us.

Commitments of the psalmist: He will go to the alter of God, he will praise God with songs, and he put his hope in God (i.e. he refuses to be discouraged and give up).

Additional Notes

Rumbling in the North (Phillips)

I. The Adversary He Fought (1-2)

- A. Desire (1a)
- B. Danger (1b)
- C. Discernment (2a)
- D. Doubt (2b)

II. The Advance He Sought (3-4)

A. In His Personal Motivation (3)

- 1. To Apprehend the Truth
- 2. To Appropriate the Truth

B. In His Public Ministry (4)

- 1. To Lead the People in Sacrifice
- 2. To Lead the People in Song

III. The Advice He Bought (5)

- A. Why I Am Sad
- B. Why I Am Safe
- C. Why I Am Sure