

I WILL REMEMBER

Psalm 42

"Why are you cast down, O my Soul? And why are you disquieted within me?" (v. 5)

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In this Psalm, we see that the Psalmist is depressed. Ever been depressed or anxious? Let us ponder on what David did about it at this time.

In Psalm 42:1-2, we read, "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God."

Those words graphically express David's yearnings to know God more, to be in increasingly intimate communion with Him. Only then does he go on to speak honestly and openly of his own depressed state. Firstly, he looks to the fact that he, himself, must do something about it; that the responsibility rests with him.

As we read on in this Psalm, we see that he makes the choice to focus, or rather refocus on the goodness and faithfulness of God that he had consistently experienced.

"Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance" he instructs himself in verse 6, reminding himself that God is, indeed, his help.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble".
(Psalm 46:1)

It seems that he first recognises and faces up to what he has been doing, which was dwelling on his anxieties and, as a result, becoming depressed.

Secondly, he recognises what he should be doing, and, thirdly, he decides to do it, emphatically proclaiming:

"Oh my God, my soul is cast down within me; therefore I will remember You from the Land of the Jordan, and from the heights of Hermon..." (Psalm 42:6)

He declares 'I WILL REMEMBER' choosing to recall the comfort, guidance, protection, provision, and immeasurable mercies he had experienced and to remember that God's faithfulness to His word is unfailing and His promises sure.

Many times, God's word exhorts us to REMEMBER and He desires our remembrance to be a faith declaration that upholds and strengthens us.

"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." (Isaiah 26:3)

The word 'stayed' is a strong word, meaning 'leans upon', 'takes hold of, stands fast in', 'occupied with'. We, too are called to make the choice of having our heart and mind 'stayed' on Him.

We see from David's experience that he:

- first ***recognised*** what he was doing;
- then, what he ***should*** be doing;
- then he ***acted*** upon that choice

Maybe our experience has been that sometimes we have said, "Lord, I will give my burden to You and leave it there" only to catch ourselves

slipping back into the same anxious thought pattern and taking the load back upon ourselves!

Psalms 42:11 shows that he reiterates his instruction to himself to "*hope in God*", and to praise Him", speaking out to himself faith words that God is "*the health of MY countenance and MY God*".

It is encouraging to see that David experiences the same struggles that we ourselves experience and that his faith was strengthened as he moved on from the grip of depression and discouragement to the experience of putting into practice the remembrance of God's dependability and faithfulness.

There are many instances of the need of the Psalmist to repeat this refocussing knowing in his heart that "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear...*" (Psalm 46:1)

A 'refuge' is a place of safe keeping. Many times the Psalmist speaks of his refuge in God.

Psalm 7:1: "*O Lord my God, in You I put my trust*"

Psalm 59:16: "*You have been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble*".

Psalm 62:7: "*In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge is in God.*"

Psalm 142:5: "*I cried out to You, O Lord; I said, 'You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.'*"

How uplifting is the realisation that God's word is for each of us personally. May His words of encouragement bless our day and bring forth praise and thanks in the peace that is ours in the assurance of His steadfast love.

"Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness, the LORD is my portion, says my soul, therefore I hope in Him!" (Lamentations 3:22-24)