

HOPE IN GOD
Psalm 42

Psalm 42

For the director of music. A maskil of the Sons of Korah.

*1 As the deer pants for streams of water,
so my soul pants for you, my God.*

*2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When can I go and meet with God?*

*3 My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”*

*4 These things I remember
as I pour out my soul:
how 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.*

*5 Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?*

*Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.*

*6 My soul is downcast within me;
therefore I will remember you
from the land of the Jordan,
the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.*

*7 Deep calls to deep
in the roar of your waterfalls;
all your waves and breakers
have swept over me.*

*8 By day the Lord directs his love,
at night his song is with me—
a prayer to the God of my life.*

*9 I say to God my Rock,
“Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I go about mourning,
oppressed by the enemy?”*

*10 My bones suffer mortal agony
as my foes taunt me,
saying to me all day long,
“Where is your God?”*

*11 Why, my soul, are you downcast?
Why so disturbed within me?
Put your hope in God,
for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.*

INTRODUCTION :

I was supposed to preach a different sermon today. But I learned that one FCC's brother in Christ went home to the Lord.

*His name is Nathaniel Bulanadi.

He has moved forward ahead of his wife Cherylene, his children (the twins) Timothy, Eliana and Andrew are here. I may not know Nathaniel deeply as some of you here but our Lord says to "mourn with those who mourn." (Romans 12:15)

The shortest verse in the Bible in the English translation is in

**John 11:35 Jesus wept.*

Etymology : wept "dakruo", the only time it was used in the Bible and it is with our Lord.

Even if Jesus knew that He would raise Lazarus from the dead when He saw Mary weeping and the people around Him was weeping the Bible said,

**John 11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.*

Interestingly enough, the word that was used for "deeply moved" and "troubled"

Etymology : deeply moved "em-bri-ma-omai" which means angered

Troubled "tarrazo", his calmness of mind was taken away

Of course, it's NOT because He was troubled and angered that people were crying. He was angry on why death has to happen. It's because God never designed people to die.

But because of sin, death has come into this world. (Romans 6:23)

Jesus wept because as God, He knows both the pain and anger of being separated from the people He loves.

Note : When we hear the word "death", it means "separation"

Illustration: We all know that. We always hear that. I've seen and heard it in funeral services when a wife or husband is weeping and saying to the person who passed away, "Bakit mo kami iniwanan?" "Why did you leave me?"

Grief is a combination of anger, pain, sadness and desperation and NO WORDS could express that.

It is during those times, **we do not even know what to pray for...** God knows that.

***That's why the Bible says in Romans**

Romans 8: 26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

You know that's the kind of grief, that you are just crying and wailing and we don't even know what to say to God.

Sometimes, there are many trials in life that are so heavy that no amount of encouragement and no amount of counseling from other people can comfort you.

When that happens, what shall we do?

This is the reason by God's grace, I'm preaching about Psalm 42 today.

Background of Psalm 42

- **Written by the Sons of Korah** : Korah was a Levite who was assigned during the time of Moses and Aaron for full time service to God. Now since this is the time of David...these are Korah's sons. Korah's sons were assigned by David to lead songs and instrumental music.
- This Psalm was written apparently during the time when David was driven away from Jerusalem by his own son Absalom who rebelled against David.

This Psalm is about desperation and depression.

Please note also that this Psalm doesn't have a logical pattern of practical advice to follow.

It's like any other time in our lives, especially when we are under grief or trials. Sometimes, we are overwhelmed by our emotions and then we find comfort in God when we really think about it.

And that's why I love God's Word.

It's not expecting us to be ok every time we have problems but by His grace, in the midst of the roller coaster, we remember who He is.

And the thing that the Psalmist reminds Himself in the midst of trials is verse 5 and and 11

***Note :** We know this is the central passage because you can see it in verse 5 and see it again in verse 11.

Why, my soul, are you downcast?

Why so disturbed within me?

Put your hope in God,

*for I will yet praise him,
my Savior and my God.*

Since remember, Psalms are meant to be sung, it's like a refrain of the song.

Example : **Blessed Be Your Name** refrain “Every blessing you pour out Lord, I'll turn back to praise, when the darkness closes in Lord still I will say, Blessed be the name of the Lord.”

You know it's desperation and it's really deep desperation because it's a Psalm that's talking to himself.

**Why, my soul*

Etymology : soul “nepes” that's the inner being of a person, that's your emotion, your passion, your will, how you think.

So what is happening deep within him?

**Why, my soul, are you downcast?*

Why so disturbed within me?

Etymology:

Downcast: “shawkakh” it's like you're sinking

Disturbed: “hama” disquieted (KJV) turbulent, there's an uproar...**to murmur, mourn, rage, sound, turbulent**

We have a term in tagalog “Hindi mapakali”... something is disturbing you, you are sinking that you feel like shouting, crying

But look at what the Psalmist is doing here?

**Put your hope in God,*

for I will yet praise him,

my Savior and my God.

He is preaching to himself. It's like his having a dialogue within him. He's talking to his own self...to his own soul... and telling him to put his hope in God.

And this is what we need to do when we are undergoing trials... Look at the trials here...

***We hope in God because trials can be relentless, emotionally draining and overwhelming.**

1. Relentless (walang katapusang)

**1 As the deer pants for streams of water,*

so my soul pants for you, my God.

You have to see the word picture here and the context :

Deer pants for water - panting, it means, it's really thirsty...why would a deer pant for water...when it's being hunted, pursued and then it goes so tired, it needs water.

Remember from a Biblical context, David is being pursued by his own son Absalom in order for Absalom to kill his own father.

Aren't our trials like that sometimes, it's relentless, it looks like it's never-ending AND IT'S OUT TO GET YOU.

In short, **nakakapagod na. IT'S TIRING!**

Illustration : There was this movie in 1998 called Saving Private Ryan where a group of soldiers were sent in the heart of Nazi territory to save a certain soldier named Private Ryan. In one of the scenes where they were in the middle of the battleground in the city, there were two soldiers who were fighting hand to hand combat (and this is not your typical thing that you watch in the movies), it was raw hand to hand combat where the Nazi soldier was on top of Private Mellish and he was slowly putting the knife into the heart of the Mellish. Mellish was almost saying, "Stop..stop..." but that knife slowly found its way into the heart of Mellish.

***Show video : Saving Private Ryan Stabbing Scene**

Isn't this sometimes what grief and trials are all about. You want it to stop or just even say, can I rest and yet it just keeps on coming.

***Where can we find rest from our trials?**

so my soul pants for you, my God.

2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

When can I go and meet with God?

You see this? If streams of water, can give rest and strength to the deer that is being pursued and hunted...**the Psalmist knows that it is only in God he can find rest.**

This is the natural reaction of a follower of Christ in times of trial. He wants to rest and knows that the real "rest" and "strength" of his soul will only come from God.

That's the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ.

****'Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.***

John 7:38 Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."

***Quote :** "You, that are lying on hospital beds, you that are suffering bereavement because of the loss of a loved one – Christ can give you rest – in the midst of adversity and trial and suffering. This is the rest that He gives." - Billy Graham

2. *Emotionally draining

And look at this, the trial is so relentless, that you can't do anything but cry.

In Tagalog : iniiyak mo na lang.

****3 My tears have been my food***

day and night,

while people say to me all day long,

“Where is your God?”

Isn’t this the temptation coming from the enemy? If God is real, then why are these things happening to you? Why did He let this happen? Isn’t he supposed to be a God who loves us?

**4 These things I remember*

*as I pour out my soul:
how 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.*

Context : The Psalmist is remembering the normal days when they weren’t being pursued by Absalom. (The main job of the Sons of Korah was to lead the music and the festivals)

Application : Isn’t this what happens when we are in the middle of trials, we mourn the things that we have lost, we mourn the things that we used to do before....**WE WANT THE NORMAL TIMES WHEN WE WERE HAPPIER, OR WHEN WE WERE HEALTHIER, WE WANT THE TIMES WHEN NATHANIEL WAS HERE...**and then why would God allow these things to happen that we are driven away from Jerusalem.

ILLUSTRATION ; Chuck Swindoll wrote this in his book “Growing Strong”

Author Edgar Jackson poignantly describes grief: Grief is a young widow trying to raise her three children, alone. Grief is the man so filled with shocked uncertainty and confusion that he strikes out at the nearest person. Grief is a mother walking daily to a nearby cemetery to stand quietly and alone a few minutes before going about the tasks of the day. She knows that part of her is in the cemetery, just as part of her is in her daily work. Grief is the silent, knife-like terror and sadness that comes a hundred times a day, when you start to speak to someone who is no longer there. Grief is the emptiness that comes when you eat alone after eating with another for many years.

Grief is teaching yourself to go to bed without saying good night to the one who had died. Grief is the helpless wishing that things were different when you know they are not and never will be again. Grief is a whole cluster of adjustments, apprehensions, and uncertainties that strike life in its forward progress and make it difficult to redirect the energies of life.

That is what grief is all about. It’s emotionally draining.

3. *Overwhelming

**7 Deep calls to deep
in the roar of your waterfalls;
all your waves and breakers
have swept over me.*

Again, based on the context, they were in the wilderness, in the forest because of the visual of deers and now waterfalls and strong rivers.

Illustration : I remember Mica telling the story in our summer camp last year that she was being carried away by the river current and it's frightening. But the rivers here are the strong rivers and waterfalls and that can really drown you.

So trials are not only relentless, emotionally draining but sometime overwhelming too. It's too much...the problem is too big..it's drowning us.

Palalim siya ng palalim... We're going deeper and deeper or instead of it becoming easier...it's becoming heavier.

Note : Grief is never linear (you've heard about the seven stages)...it's not linear. It's cyclical. Sometimes, you're ok, sometimes you're not ok. Sometimes you just want to give up. Sometimes, you're trying to hard to pick yourself up. It's like losing a limb. It's there but you learn to live with it and sometimes it can be overwhelming.

**And again what happens when the problems, trials and sufferings are overwhelming?
In the midst of it...**

***The Psalmist remembers**

*8 By day the Lord directs his love,
at night his song is with me—*

***In KJV**

*Yet the Lord will command his lovingkindness (chesed) in the daytime
And in the night, His song shall be with me.*

Illustration: I still remember when I was young and couldn't go to sleep, what my Nanay would use to do is sing to us. It was so comforting.

In short, when we are overwhelmed, the comfort of God is there. He reminds us of His chesed love for us.

***And then I love this. While like a little child being comforted by a mother in the midst of a bruise or a problem, the child talks to God
a prayer to the God of my life.**

You see this? Earlier, because of the relentless trial, he wants God and now knowing that God is there, he talks with him like a child.

It's like nagsusumbong... (confiding or opening up)

*9 I say to God my Rock,
"Why have you forgotten me?"*

*Why must I go about mourning,
oppressed by the enemy?"*

*10 My bones suffer mortal agony
as my foes taunt me,
saying to me all day long,
"Where is your God?"*

This a natural cry. When even Jesus on the cross when all the sins of the world was being laid to Him shouted... "My God, my God why have you forsaken me." (Mat 27:46; Psalm 22) That's the first time in eternity that God cannot look at His Son, that God separated from His Son because all of the sin of the world was laid on Him.

***But will God really forget us?**

*Isaiah 49: 15 "Can a mother forget the baby at her breast
and have no compassion on the child she has borne?*

*Though she may forget,
I will not forget you!*

*16 See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands;
your walls are ever before me.*

So what do we do when trials become relentless, emotionally draining and overwhelming?

**Put your hope in God,*

Hope Etymology : yahal ; to wait for him; to trust in him;

Illustration : We were talking one time during dinner as a family that when God brings great trials that is the time that God is doing a pivot in our lives. It means that's a time that God is preparing something great to happen in our lives.

**Remember*

*Psalm 23: 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;*

The Lord, The Shepherd is the one who is bringing them through this valley. Why? It's because He is leading them to greener pastures or they are going home. Either way, it's a good and great thing.

Nathaniel is now home. He is now literally with Jesus. And one of these days, we will be with him praising and worshipping Jesus Christ our Lord.

What is the proof that we're putting our hope in God?

- We choose to praise Him.

**we for I will yet praise him,*

Again, we're not denying that there is a problem but we're trusting Him in the middle of the problem and choose to praise Him. Look at what David said in Psalm 59

**Psalm 59 : 14 They return at evening,
snarling like dogs,
and prowl about the city.
15 They wander about for food
and howl if not satisfied.
16 But I will sing of your strength,
in the morning I will sing of your love;
for you are my fortress,
my refuge in times of trouble.
17 You are my strength, I sing praise to you;
you, God, are my fortress,
my God on whom I can rely.*

Yes, I'm in this pain, in this trouble and in this suffering...but I will still choose to praise you and thank you.

***Illustration :** Don Moen has a song that really strikes a chord when this is sung in church.

*Lord You seem so far away
A million miles or more it feels today
And though I haven't lost my faith,
I must confess right now that it's hard for me to pray.*

*But I don't know what to say
And I don't know where to start.
But as you give the grace
With all that's in my heart.*

*I will sing.
I will praise
Even in my darkest hour
Through the sorrow and the pain
I will sing
I will praise
Lift my hands to honor You
Because Your word is true
I will sing*

*Lord it's hard for me to see
All the thoughts and plans You have for me.
But I will put my trust in You.
Knowing that you died to set me free.*

***Why can we put our hope in God and praise Him? Because our Lord is My Savior and my God.**

Notice, that the Psalmist is not putting his hope “on what can or cannot happen”. (I hope God will heal me. I hope God won’t let me lose my job.) That’s not what he is putting his hope on. He is putting on WHO GOD IS in his life. Notice that he didn’t say, “Our” but he said, “My”. It’s a personal conviction.

My Savior – He doesn’t know HOW God will save him but he knows GOD will save Him. ***my God.*** -He may never understand why is this happening to Him but He knows that God is in control and in my last sermon I was here, the reason we can always be thankful to God is because He is God, He is good and He is gracious.

***Biblical Illustration:** In 2nd Corinthians 12 Paul was speaking of a “thorn” on his side. Paul PLEADED God three times to take it away and look at what the Lord said,
2 Corinthians 8: 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. 9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

Yes, we may never understand why things happen. Yes, there will be times, it will be so hard. But our Lord is saying, “My grace is sufficient... I will give You the grace that you need to pass through these difficult times.”

Yes, we are mourning because we are “separated” from Nathaniel but since Nathaniel has received Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, we are assured He is with the Lord. And one of these days, all of us we’ll be forever praising God together with Nathaniel.

CONCLUSION :

Now during these trying times, what do we need to do?

Story : A miserable looking woman recognized F.B. Meyer on the train and ventured to share her burden with him. For years she had cared for a crippled daughter who brought great joy to her life. She made tea for her each morning, then left for work, knowing that in the evening the daughter would be there when she arrived home. But the daughter had died, and the grieving mother was alone and miserable. Home was not "home" anymore. Meyer gave her wise counsel. "When you get home and put the key in the door," he said, "say aloud, 'Jesus, I know You are here!' and be ready to greet Him directly when you open the door. And as you light the fire tell Him what has happened during the day; if anybody has been kind, tell Him; if anybody has been unkind, tell Him, just as you would have told your daughter. At night stretch out your hand in the darkness and say, 'Jesus, I know You are here!'" Some months later, Meyer was back in that neighborhood and met the woman again, but he did not recognize her. Her face radiated joy instead of announcing misery. "I did as you told me," she said, "and it has made all the difference in my life, and now I feel I know Him."

W. Wiersbe, The Wycliffe Handbook of Preaching & Preachers, p. 194.

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Why so disturbed within me?

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S.G.D.