

If you have ever been in a situation in which some person or persons has turned against you and seems to be out to ruin you, you know that there is a sense in which you feel helpless and hopeless. Life, in such moments, is not a joy and it produces a deep, downcast depression. Your stomach churns your head aches and there is a tension that is very lasting and very real.

I do not think there is any greater stress in life than when someone has targeted you and is out to get you. Whether on the job, in the school, in the home or in the church, when this kind of thing happens, life becomes long and lonely. Bullying is not new to our day; it was very real in Biblical times.

One man who really experienced this at the ultimate level was David. When David wrote Psalm 43, he was totally depressed to the level that even his “countenance” showed it. David was no phony. He was no play actor. He was the real thing. When he was happy, you knew it and when he was depressed, you saw it.

Truth is David did have much to be depressed about. There were great numbers of people who wanted him out of the picture. As a result, David had to flee to the mountains to hide out like some evil, ruthless bandito. He was alone and depressed and he needed help.

I think this teaches us something and that is if we are a person after God’s heart, trying to understand and apply the Word of God, we will have our low moments. We will have times of depression and alienation.

Martin Luther said the Christian is like a goose tied up over a wolf pit. The wolves keep jumping at the goose but are never able to get it because God is protecting them.

Now one key thing to observe at the end of this Psalm in verse 5 is that when the Psalm ends, David apparently had not been delivered from his pressures, but he had somewhat been delivered from his depression. The key to this was not so much a change in his circumstances, but a change in his thinking, specifically in the way he thought about God.

Dr. Warren Wiersbe said, “The most important thing about any difficult experience is not that we get out of it, it is what we get out of it.” The great lesson to be learned from this Psalm is this:

THE KEY TO OUR COPING WITH DEPRESSION BROUGHT ON BY ENEMIES IS TO CONTINUALLY PRAY TO GOD AND CONTINUALLY MAINTAIN HOPE IN GOD THAT HE WILL EVENTUALLY DELIVER US AND TURN OUR SORROW INTO JOY.

One of the things that God uses troubles and trials to accomplish is to cause us to have a greater dependency on Him. God will apparently permit different enemies to come into our lives at different times so that we will depend on Him for deliverance from those enemies.

Moments of depression can become great moments of development. That is what this Psalm is all about.

Now the Psalm breaks down nicely into two main parts:

PART #1 – In times of depression it is critical that we pray to God. **43:1-4**

Now there are two specific prayers that specifically made to God:

Prayer Request #1 - The prayer for vindication and deliverance . **43:1-2**

That word “vindicate” is one in Hebrew that means to make a judicial, ruling type of judgment. To litigate a matter in order to determine condemnation or commendation (William Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, p. 844).

Now by using the pronoun “me” as the object of the vindication, David is asking God to specifically analyze his situation and case and judge it. He was not afraid of God’s judgment. He was not afraid of God’s litigation because he knew he had done nothing wrong to deserve what was happening to him.

The highest court of appeal to whom we may appeal is not the Supreme Court, it is the Sovereign God. David asks God to analyze his case and make a judgment.

Now there are two assumptions David makes when he prays this prayer:

(Assumption #1) - He is in the right and the rest of the people are wrong.

There are times when the majority is wrong. All we have to do to prove that is to look at what happened to Barabbas. The multitude were crying crucify Jesus and let Barabbas go free. The majority was evil and wrong.

(Assumption #2) - God is a just and righteous judge.

God knows exactly what is happening and is in a position to make a judicial judgment.

David was being attacked by an ungodly nation that, for the most part, was being led in an ungodly way which was in total opposition against David. Furthermore, notice the adjectival description of the kind of person who was making life miserable for David—he was “deceitful” and “unjust.”

There is a close connection between those “unjust” and those “deceitful.” People who aren’t interested in truth aren’t interested in telling the truth. Those who are unjust are those who are deceitful.

Now David is praying and asking God to deliver him and vindicate him and there are two reasons why:

(Reason #1) - Because God is the one who can give Him strength and He hasn't given it yet. **43:2a**

God is able to give strength to His people no matter what they face. He is able to give peace to His people in "every circumstance." Strength to be able to cope with difficult things in life comes from God.

(Reason #2) - Because David was being oppressed by many enemies. **43:2b**

There was no possible way David could fight all of his enemies. His only hope was that God would fight for him so that is exactly what David asks God to do. David was being antagonized by godless people and he was not sensing God's presence. So what David did was to go directly to God about the situation.

We may expect to see many more blessings and victories when we pray more. When we are surrounded by those hurtful and hateful there is always one thing we can do and that is to pray and ask God for His help.

Prayer Request #2 - The prayer for instruction and guidance . **43:3-4**

This is quite amazing, but in the midst of the dark times, David came to the realization that he could still grow. He asks God to let him see and understand God's truth and to lead him into a deeper relationship with Him. Now notice the reason why—**verse 4**—if God would do this, he would have joy.

What David longed to do was to go to the "holy hill" (**v. 3**) which is where the house of God or tabernacle was located (42:4). This tabernacle would eventually become Solomon's temple. This was the place where the "lyre" was used (**v. 4**). The lyre was a stringed instrument with 3-12 strings. David wanted to be at God's dwelling place and worship because he knew this was a key to his happiness.

God is our joy and real happiness will be found as we go to church and grow in the Word of God. Troubles and trials should cause us to want to grow.

Do you see and sense what is said here? Joy in the midst of trouble comes from a deeper relationship with God. Joy in the midst of trouble comes from a deeper understanding of God's truth. When we find ourselves surrounded by enemies and depressed, let us keep our focus on going deeper into the Word of God and drawing close to the Lord.

PART #2 – In times of depression it is critical that we keep our hope in God. **43:5**

Hope in the Bible is not “I hope so,” but “I hope knowing and believing so.” A critical key to getting out of depression is to continue to hope in God and believe that in His time He will help. Even though there were troubles in the present, David had no doubt about the future.

There are many lessons to learn:

- 1) Godly people do get depressed.
- 2) Enemies of those godly are unjust and deceitful.
- 3) Prayer is a critical key to victory over enemies and over depression.
- 4) Growth is a critical key to joy when surrounded by trouble.
- 5) Hope in God is a critical key to praise when surrounded by trouble.