

My soul is cast down within me.

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[0 : 00] Welcome to our service this evening. We seek God's blessing on our time together under the sound of his word. We pray that we would find it a blessing to our heart and to our mind and to our soul. We are going to begin by singing the words of Psalm 130. Psalm 130, we sing the whole psalm. Lord, from the depths to thee I cried, my voice, Lord, do thou hear, and do my supplications voice give an attentive ear. Lord, who shall stand, if thou, O Lord, should mark iniquity, but yet with thee forgiveness is that fear thou mayest be. I wait for God, my soul doth wait, my hope is in his word, more than they that for morning watch, my soul waits for the Lord. I say more than they that who watch the morning light to see, let Israel hope in the

Lord. For with him mercy be, and plenteous redemption is ever found with him, and from all his iniquities he, Israel, shall redeem. Psalm 130, to God's praise, Lord, from the depths to thee I cried.

Lord, from the depths to thee I cried, my voice, Lord, do thou hear, until I shall speak.

Psalm 130, to God's praise, Lord, from the depths to thee I cried, my voice, Lord, do thou walk iniquity, forgetteth thee, begith thee forgiveness.

■'ERVE MAC título-And the■■■■ mijnjamain Crossing, my voice, Lord, are they all of you, thank you, Lord, for give Christ to be. I wait for God, my son of cinq technicians ■■■■■■■■ like me, The Lord agrees, my hope is in His word.

[3 : 08] O'er the lily that God's morning was my joy with God the Lord?

I say, Lord, I lay not to watch the morning light to see.

Let Israel hold in the Lord, for with Him let He be.

And let He us redemption is justified within.

And from all His iniquities, He will shall redeem.

[4 : 42] Amen. I say, Lord, I lay not to be aware of the greatness of the God whose name is upon our lips.

A name that inspired fear in the hearts of many. Others dared not to have that name upon their lips.

And still others delighted to rejoice in it, having experienced the fullness of your grace in their lives.

Even the grace of salvation by the hand of another. We pray that you would remind us afresh of the many things that you have made known to us through your word.

Even the many things that you have made known to some. Through the experience that they have had of interaction with you through your word.

[6 : 25] Through the providence of which you are the author. Through the salvation that you have administered through the person of your son Jesus Christ.

We bless you and thank you for any way by which you have revealed yourself to us. And it is our prayerful desire this evening that you would honor us with your presence.

And reveal that presence to us in a redemptive way. By directing us to Christ where we will receive mercy and forgiveness for our sins.

We remember before you. There are people here. Those who are present. And many who are desirous of being with your people.

But are unable because of the frailties of the flesh. Because of illness. Because of being bound up in the path of duty.

[7 : 32] We commit one and all to you. Thankful that all our circumstances are writ large in the sight of a God who sees all things.

That there is nothing hid from your sight. And we pray that you would remind your people. That their circumstances, whatever they may be, are known to you.

And where there is a need for comfort and solace. And the ban of healing to be administered upon whatever wound.

That you are ever ready to act as the physician. And administer such healing. We pray that you would visit the sick.

Whether they be at home or in hospital. Being cared for by others in care homes. In hospice. And all other places of care.

[8 : 44] That are found within our communities. We bless you for the way these things have been given to us. We pray that you would remember those who are grieving and sorrowful in our midst.

And again we bring them before you. Upon the wings of prayer. Thankful that even as we utter these words that you have answered.

Sometimes before we have asked. We pray that you would bless your people. People who have to endure all kinds of trial and temptation and difficulty in their journey through life.

This world is a place that is a crucible of suffering for many. And the furnace is as hot as it could possibly be for some.

And yet others are spared and know nothing of it. This is under your hand. This is under your hand. And we give thanks that you have the wisdom to know who needs what.

[10 : 02] And we pray that you would remind each of us of what you do. That you do all things well. We pray for the blessing of the Most High to be upon all the services of your house within the community at this time and always.

Remembering our neighbouring congregations throughout the island. We pray for the gospel that is preached there and those who are sent to preach it. We pray for the blessing of the Most High to be upon the word that is sown.

That it may yield fruit in due time. We pray for our nation and those who govern us. The parliaments of our land be it at Westminster or Holyrood.

And those whose duties involve them in undertaking the care and the welfare of those entrusted to them to that end.

For which they would be answerable to a higher authority as we all will. We pray Lord that you would bless our council as it proceeds in preparing for beginning new terms.

[11 : 17] We pray for those of office for those that have been elected. We remember in your presence all who serve within our communities in whatever capacity.

Enabling us to live our lives in peace and to be cared for in various ways. Sometimes when we are not even mindful of these things.

How much deprivation we would suffer if these things were not ours. We pray for the nations of the earth. Especially these places where there is a constant reminder to them of the world that lies in wickedness.

Because of war and the aftermath of it and the ongoing effects of it. Not just in Ukraine but in other places where for years and upon years these civil wars have gone on.

So that we are forgetful of these things. Think of Afghanistan. Think of the Yemen. Think of places in the African continent that have known civil war for countless decades.

[12 : 32] And yet still there is no evidence of peace. The wickedness that lies in the heart of man is there for all to see.

Your word declares it to us and reminds us that there is but one remedy for it. And that is the peace that is in Christ. And if we seek it we will find it.

That is the promise that you have given to us. We ask that you would bless your word. At this time of our gathering. The short while that we are together.

May it be the word that we read. The word that we sing. The word that we contemplate. May it be blessed to us. May it be blessed to us.

May those who suffer because of their witness. May they be blessed. Those who have martyred to the cause. Those who have persecuted for the love of Christ.

[14 : 00] We bear them before you in prayer. Continue to watch over us now we pray. Have mercy upon us. Cleansing us from sin. In Jesus name.

Amen. Amen. I am going to read the scriptures of the Old Testament. From the book of Psalms. I am reading two Psalms.

Psalms 42 and Psalm 43. The book of Psalms. Psalm 42 and Psalm 43. Psalm 43. As the heart panteth after the water brooks.

So panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God. For the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

My tears have been my meat day and night. While they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me.

[15 : 05] For I had gone with the multitude. I went with them to the house of God. With the voice of joy and praise. With the multitude that kept holy day.

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him. For the help of his countenance.

O my God, my soul is cast down within me. Therefore will I remember thee from the land of Jordan. And of the Helmeineites and from the hill Mithar.

Deep calleth and do deep at the noise of thy water spouts. All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. Yet the Lord will command his loving kindness in the daytime.

And in the night a song shall be with me. Unto my prayer and to the God of my life. I will say unto God, my rock. Why hast thou forgotten me?

[16 : 08] Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? As with a sword in my bones mine enemies reproach me. While they say daily unto me, where is thy God?

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him. Who is the health of my countenance and my God.

Psalms 43. Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation. O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man.

For thou art the God of my strength. Why dost thou cast me off? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? Or send out thy light and thy truth?

Let them lead me. Let them bring me unto thy holy hill. Unto thy tabernacles. Then will I go unto the altar of God.

[17 : 12] Unto God, my exceeding joy. Yea, upon the harp will I praise thee. O God, my God. Why art thou cast down, O my soul?

Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope in God. For I shall yet praise him. Who is the health of my countenance and my God.

Amen. May the Lord add his blessing to a reading of his word. And to his name be the praise. We're going to sing this psalm that we read last.

Psalms 43. I can sing the whole psalm. Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against the ungodly nation. From the unjust and crafty man, O be thou my salvation.

For thou, the God, art of my strength. Why thrust thou me through for the enemy's oppression? Why do I morning go? Send thy light forth and thy truth.

[18 : 15] Let them be guides to me. And bring me to thine holy hill. Even where thy dwellings be. And so on. The whole of Psalm 43. To God's praise.

Judge me, O God, and plead my cause. Judge me, O God, and plead my cause.

Against the ungodly nation. From the unjust and crafty man, O be thou my salvation.

For thou, the God, art of my strength.

Why thrust thou me through? For thou, the Lord, and plead my cause.

[19 : 31] For thou, the God, art of my life. Why do thou, the Lord, and plead my cause?

O stand thy light forth and thy truth.

Let them be guide to me, and bring me to thy holy hill, in where thy dwelling's thee.

Then will I do what ought to go, to God my sheep has joy.

Yea, God, my God, my name, who raised my heart, I will employ.

[20 : 56] Why, Arnold, then, hast done my soul, what should his charity?

And why, with a sting, all our love is quiet in me.

Still thrusting, all our men who raised, who caused thy age's heart.

He of my countenance is the hell, my God, not God, be saved.

I'd like us to turn to the passage read, Psalm 42, in the Book of Psalms.

[22 : 25] And we can read at verse 6. So on.

As a congregation we've used to sing the Psalms. The Psalms are the Book of Praise that we use.

But it's because of that, that it may be easy for us to overlook how truly spiritual the Psalms are, and how much they are part of God's word to us.

They're every bit as important as any other part, whether it's the Book of Genesis or the Book of Revelation or the Gospels.

The Psalms are very familiar with them. They are God's word, and we're fortunate to have them as our hymn book, our psalm book.

[24 : 16] And they are meant to convey God's word to us. And God's word is more readily impressed upon our hearts because we have these words upon our lips so often.

One of the many books that I have on the Psalms is a book by Tremper Longman III. And it has the title, How to Read the Psalms.

And I suppose we're so familiar with how to books that this might create suspicion within us. How to Read the Psalms.

But this writer suggests that this Book of God, this word of God is to be handled with the greatest of care.

This is what he says. They inform our intellect. They arouse our emotions. They direct our wills. And stimulate our imaginations.

[25 : 27] When we read the Psalms with faith, we come away changed, not simply informed. Now, it's interesting that this psalm that we're looking at this evening is called Amas'il.

And there is a variety of opinions as to what Amas'il actually is supposed to do. And generally speaking, it is thought that where you see the title to a psalm, it is considered a psalm of instruction.

A psalm that is meant to inform us and to do more than inform us, to be the means by which the word that it contains is applied meaningfully to the lives of those who read these words.

John Calvin, you're familiar with this statement that he made concerning the Psalms. I've been wont to call this book, not inappropriately, an anatomy of all parts of the soul.

For there is not an emotion of which anyone can be conscious that is not here represented as in a mirror. An anatomy of all parts of the soul.

[26 : 53] So you've got a combination of things there suggested by these theologians as to what we would gain in our singing of the Psalms, in our reading of the Psalms, in our consideration of what these Psalms are saying.

Now it's important for us to remember that because sometimes we like Psalms to lift us up.

We enjoy singing the Psalms that are Psalms of celebration, Psalms of rejoicing, Psalms that point us to Christ, that are speaking about his passion, speaking about his ministry, speaking about his death and what it means to accomplish.

And we delight in having such Psalms in our mouths and our lips. There are other Psalms that remind us of the longings and aspirations that the child of God possesses.

What they are intending to accomplish, what they are desirous of achieving, what they would wish to do for the Lord and to the glory and praise of his name.

[28 : 18] But sometimes the Psalms that we have are similar to this one. It's maybe a psalm that is a lament.

It is, some would say, a dirge. It is something that leaves the heart heavy when you read it.

And yet it is important for that reason because it covers territory that you would not normally cover willingly.

You would rather maybe avoid the issue. Because here it is speaking about something that is true about some of God's people all of the time, part of the time, some of the time in given situations.

They might be feeling themselves heavy hearted or sad or struggling to believe or struggling to make sense of what God has brought them to their experience.

[29 : 26] And God's word. The Psalms contains such experiences. And they record for us elements that belong to the deep experience of God's people as they live their life here in this world.

Now what is strongly suggested by this Psalm, although not everybody would agree with that, is that the Psalmist is someone who is vasilating between the certainty of faith and spiritual depression.

It is as if one moment he is confident in who God is, his relationship with that God and the place that he has in the structure of God's purposes.

And then within a short space, he is trying to make sense of his place in God's purposes.

Questioning if he does have a place. Wondering if this God is his God. And that is something that is recorded for us within this passage.

[30 : 48] Somebody who is trying to make sense of things at times that he doesn't believe make sense. Now maybe you think that God's people should never have this experience.

That they should always be confident. They should always be assured. That they should always be on a level plane. And never deviate to the left or to the right in their emotional life.

No ups, no downs. Just straight down the middle. Because they are believers. Christ is their saviour. They are confident that one day soon they will be with them.

He has promised to take them to be with them. And that is what people are meant to believe. That is what people have a right to believe. That is what people are encouraged to believe.

But it doesn't always work like that. And there are many reasons for it. And I think the psalmist here is one of these people.

[31 : 54] Who is describing his emotional journey. For whatever reason, I don't know. The psalmist doesn't tell us. What situation has given rise to these thoughts.

If you read the commentators, as I do. You will find that there are various opinions as to who composed the psalm. When the psalm was composed, what the situation was that gave rise to it.

Some are quite confident that David is the author. That he composed the psalm as a result of his predicament with Absalom. And the emotional turmoil that he suffered as a result of being betrayed by his son.

There is no reason to question that possibility. But there is no evidence within the psalm that that is the real time in which it was composed.

Or that it even was composed by David. But it was composed by somebody who knows the Lord. And it is somebody who is struggling with the knowledge that he has of God to deal with the emotions that he is feeling.

[33 : 19] And the turmoil that is his, given his situation, whatever it is. Some have suggested that what the psalmist is portraying here is somebody who is experiencing depression.

Now I am not an expert, far from it. And I am very reluctant to even begin to speak about the nature of depression.

But I do know that there is such a thing as depression. And I do know that there are people who suffer from depression. But I also understand that there are a whole host of different experiences of that kind of illness.

And it is an illness. And it manifests itself in different ways. Not every depression is the same. Some of the evidences of depression may be similar, but not the same.

They may be caused by different things. And not necessarily the same. Sometimes what you would see there is somebody who is in a cup of heaviness.

[34 : 42] And he is mentally lethargic. Overwhelmed with his experience of life. Unable to deal with trivia.

Unable to deal with some things that ordinary people, maybe that is the wrong word to use, but people in ordinary circumstances would just deal with these things and move on.

But for some, these things take on huge proportions and they become unmanageable. And they become difficult to bear.

And there is a whole array of symptoms contained within this condition. And I think that makes it complicated in the sense that when you think of depression, you must also think of the possibility of spiritual depression.

depression. A person can be susceptible to spiritual depression who may know nothing of what it is to experience depression as a clinical experience.

[36 : 02] But a person who has the clinical experience of depression in one or all of its forms can also suffer from spiritual depression.

And that makes it very difficult to handle. But understand this, that we cannot insist that a person is anything other than a child of God, even though he may encounter and experience such an illness, such an experience as the depression that can manifest itself in the life of some people.

The psalmist declares clearly that he is downcast. And we are not told why.

As the heart panteth after the water broke, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. And he goes on to say that he is experiencing being cast down.

And he is not talking about being put in a prison, a physical prison, a physical prison with bars and with chains, but a prison nonetheless where he experiences the bondage of the lack of liberty that he once enjoyed as a child of God.

[37 : 38] And this is the thing that he is speaking about. This is the thing that he is concerned with. Now, it could be that the psalmist may be manifesting elements that belong to the clinical disturbed mind of a person who is suffering from a psychological depression.

Which may be something that others who know nothing of the Lord's blessing of their life know nothing about.

This is the thing. This is the thing. We cannot just assume that what the psalmist is describing here is divorced from, separate from, distinct to something that could be experienced by others who have this malaise.

You know, this is my own opinion, so I take it as that. But I have often been in company with people and you would say about these people, if you were too often in their company or too long in their company, your heart would sink to your boots.

Because of their very natural disposition. They just, they found everything was almost a pleasure to be in their company.

[39 : 11] And they couldn't help it. They couldn't help but be what they were. Whereas other people who were in their company, it was just as difficult, but they were on the other end of the scale.

They were polar opposites. They were exuberant. They were on a constant high. They were difficult to contain because of the emotional outpouring that they were constantly engaged in.

Two polar opposites. Now you would hear some people say that if they were both Christians, that they would be happier with the person who was down in the dumps than the person who was up in the clouds.

And that's because there's a safety perhaps in somebody who is in that kind of, you know, if there's too much euphoria, you're suspicious of it.

Now this is just my own opinion. We cannot, we dare not say that one condition is better than the other. Unless it is something that is stimulated within us by God.

[40 : 29] If the euphoria is God generated. If God gives us joy and that joy is overflowing, as he can do, then praise be and let us rejoice to our hearts content if he has given us that capacity to rejoice.

If God is responsible for our lack of joy, if we are depressed because of some awareness that he has given to us about our sin, about our walk with him being not consistent, about anything that can create a heavy heart within us.

And it's God's doing, we must acknowledge it and recognize it for what it is. But we dare not think that either of these experiences are always God's doing.

That it is God that is responsible for the euphoric Christian and that it is God that is responsible for the downcast Christian. Because sometimes it may be a natural inclination, it might be what we are like by nature, nothing at all to do with what our spiritual condition is.

As I said, that is my own personal opinion, but you hear people say different. As I said, we are not told about the psalmist's circumstances.

[41 : 56] And plenty are willing to supply answers. But I just want us to think about the words that we read in particular, but remind ourselves of the things that may be the reasons behind what the psalmist is saying.

He feels misery, he feels sadness, he feels grief, he feels depressed for a number of reasons.

And he identifies them. Then, having identified them, he describes to us the effect that it has on them.

And then, he clearly, I think, indicates to us how he also has come to understand the only true remedy for what he has experienced.

Now, these things that I am going to identify come from the psalm. I think the first thing that is clear that is a source for the psalmist's misery is that he is missing God.

[43 : 16] He is missing God. And he is missing God as somebody who knows God and who had occasion to be in the company of God.

Who recognizes what it is to have fellowship with God. Who understands what it is to be privileged as one of God's people. As the heart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

He is clearly yearning for, longing for, desiring God. And as somebody who is yearning for something, longing for something, it is more than probable that the thing that he is missing is missing to him.

Whether it is missing in real terms or not. To his senses, God is not there. We know God is always present. We know God is never absent. We know God is always in the midst of his people.

But it is not the same for you to be conscious of that or aware of it. And the psalmist is longing for the presence of God. And he is downcast because he is not experiencing it.

[44 : 35] He does not experience his presence or his comfort. The second thing that is a cause, I think, to his sorrow is that he is missing God's people.

He is thirsting after God. For the living God, he says. And then he says, When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me, for I had gone with the multitude.

I went with them to the house of God with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy day. Now, maybe there is a different way of understanding it.

But this person is somebody who enjoyed the company of God's people in the act of worship. He, at some stage in his life, at some point in his life, on more than one occasion, no doubt, attended upon God's house with God's people to join in the worship of God.

And this is absent for whatever reason. Maybe he is sitting well. Maybe his sickness, maybe his depression has kept him back from going amongst God's people.

[45 : 56] Have you not heard of people like that? Have you perhaps been one of them? When a big, black, heavy cloud comes on your heart, you say to yourself, I can't go with these people.

I'll affect them. I'll influence them. My darkness will permeate the atmosphere of God's house. I won't go with them. I've heard people say that.

That when they're in the grip of this personal experience, that it overwhelms them.

And they are missing out on the company of God's people, perhaps because of it.

The third thing that we can say is that he experiences the torment of the enemies of God. In verse 3, I think, and verse 10.

[47 : 04] My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me, while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?

Now I don't know what kind of situation the psalmist is in. Where he is exposed to enemies that would torment them in this way.

But God's people are sometimes in a very difficult situation in their lives. And they're exposed to people who have no time for God, no time for his people.

And if their personal circumstances are public and open, the question may well be asked in the most malicious way. Where is your God, if this is how you are?

Where is your God because he allows you to suffer? Where is your God who has taken from your loved ones? Where is your God who has allowed you to suffer the loss of earnings, loss of a job?

[48 : 14] You're such a Christian, good Christian, believer. Why does God allow you to suffer like that? And these are like the psalmist describes, like a sword piercing through their bones.

When God's people are accused, when God's people are abused, when God's people are challenged as to the veracity of truth, of the truth of God, of the reality of their God, it is as a sword through their bones.

And finally he finds himself, which is probably something that is the worst thing for him.

He finds himself accusing God of not remembering him. I will say unto God, my rock, why hast thou forgotten me?

Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? Do you think that that is the worst thing a Christian can do?

[49 : 28] Accuse God of not being faithful? Have even a place in your heart or mind for such a thought.

Maybe it's never entered into your heart. To suggest that God has forgotten you. That God doesn't care about you. That God wouldn't allow you to endure the things that you endure.

But has the suspicion of a thought ever entered into your heart? And when it does creep in, how do you feel? What do you feel when that thought takes a hold?

Are you embarrassed by it? Are you ashamed by it? Are you afraid of it? Is it something that you're saying to yourself, why does God allow this to go on?

I think the psalmist is somebody who is really struggling in all of these areas.

[50 : 31] Some accuse the psalmist of suffering from spiritual declension. Saying that he has brought this on himself. That he has been careless in his relationship with God.

Well, we can't say anything other than that it may be a possibility. But you may wonder that any believer, some of you who are not believers, you may wonder how any believer can go on without God for any length of time.

Not realizing that God is not there for you. That God is not as close to you as he once was. Not being as alert to his presence.

But unfortunately for the believer that can happen. It's a good psalm, this.

It's a psalm that's full of meat and matter for the soul of the believer. Because it tells you the potential that there is in all our lives to experience such sorrows as the psalmist is describing.

[51 : 55] For any one of these reasons, all of them. And sometimes we struggle to find God in that experience.

I remember a Christian telling me how he was in the throes of conversion and he was completely confused about the experience.

Because he didn't know that he was in the throes of conversion. He didn't know that God was working in his life. He didn't know that it was God who was pointing out his sin to him and telling him the need that he had of a saviour.

And the worse it became for him, he just made his way to the doctor and he thought he was going crazy. And the doctor sat him down and wanted him to explain his symptoms to him.

And at the end of the conversation he sent him to the minister. I doubt if that would happen today. But that's exactly what the doctor did. And he says the strange thing was the doctor wasn't even a believer.

[53 : 05] But he understood from my description of what I was experiencing. That it wasn't anything other than the grief and the sorrow that sin had introduced into his heart.

And the awareness that God had given off him created that in him. And only by going to God could it be resolved. Which was exactly what happened.

How did this resolve itself in the experience of the psalmist? He felt confused, disconcerted, vulnerable.

And you would think that much of what he had to say, there is no remedy for it. Interestingly, Martin Lloyd-Jones has got a book on spiritual depression.

And many people wouldn't agree with Martin Lloyd-Jones in his assessment of spiritual depression and its remedies.

[54 : 07] But he categorically says that what lies at the root of spiritual depression is the work of the devil.

The devil himself. This is what he says. The ultimate cause of all spiritual depression is unbelief.

For if it were not for unbelief, the devil could do nothing. And it's because we listen to him instead of listening to God that we go down before him and fall before his attacks.

Maybe a lot of people don't agree with Martin Lloyd-Jones' assessment. Remember, he was a medical doctor before he was a theologian. And he's well aware of the kind of depression that exists in the life and heart, mind of men and women.

That is not spiritual. So what he was talking about was spiritual depression and the cause of it. And the cause of it, as far as he was concerned, you could work your way back to the devil creating that cause.

[55 : 34] However, it manifests itself. But clearly there is the prospect of recovery. In the midst of his yearnings and longings, there is the evidence that something was there before.

We've all seen that in our lives, I hope. You can see it in ways that some have to deal with problems.

That they have come to a place in their lives where their experience is a reminder to them of things that were formerly there.

Just think of it in a tangible way in which we see, for example, derelict buildings.

They speak to us about the existence of life within these buildings before they were derelict. You'll know that they were used and useful at some point.

[56 : 46] And they fell into disrepair and disuse. But the fact that they're there speaks to you about that. Even when they're taken away.

Even when their stones are removed and there's nothing left. There's an impression made on your mind. Oh, there was once something there. We can't see it now, but it was once there.

In the experience of God's people, God never leaves them without the impression that he made upon their lives remaining and reminding them that he is their God.

And this is what was true about the psalmist. You know, his memories and his longings are stimulated. And the eternal hope that God placed within his heart is every bit as strong just by way of God's prompting.

I've often wondered about the imagery of verse 7. You know, in verse 6 there, it speaks about the land of Jordan and the Hermonites and the hill Mitzar.

[58 : 05] We know something about the land of Jordan. We know something about the Hermonites, who they were, but nothing about the hill Mitzar. But there seemed to be things that he could remember, places that he could identify and go to, albeit in his memory.

Instances, experiences, encounters with God that were reminders to him of a bygone experience.

And he returned to that. And then in verse 7, this is what I have often wondered at. Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy waterspouts.

All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me. It's as if there's a vacillation, a fluctuation, a movement from one thing to the other.

He's remembering what was once there and he's now thinking of what is there now. And what is there now is the story.

[59 : 14] It is the experience of the oppression and the depression. I looked at what Matthew Henry had to say about this.

What he says, and he's always a careful commentator. One affliction comes on the neck of another, as if it were called to hasten after it.

One frightful thought summoned another and made way for it, as is usual with melancholy people. It's as if you're in a storm and the waves.

The waves come one after the other and they're not just small waves at that. They're billows, they're breakers.

And they follow one after the other. And the oppression is clear. But it is to that God that he returns. Just like Peter, he knows that there is no one else that he can turn to.

[60 : 21] He can't go anywhere else. Because this is the God that took him out of the true depths of despair when he was a sinner without hope. And without God in the world.

And how can a sinner who has experienced that salvation at the hand of God go back to something where God is not?

Where God does not function. Where God is no longer in evidence. You're always looking for him. You're always seeking him out. Bishop Horne, in his own comments, says, There's a sovereign cordial for melancholy.

That prescribes faith in God which will show the morning of salvation dawning after the night of calamity has run its course.

And that is something that the psalmist is looking for. And it is something that the psalmist can look for.

[61 : 30] And has every right to look for. Because God has not changed from being what he once was. What he always will be. You know, when we, as an individual perhaps, when you have to deal with somebody and they're downcast, you have to deal with them with an understanding that what they're suffering is something real.

You can't just dismiss it. You can't just pretend it's not. You know, if a person has a broken arm or a broken leg, we are very sympathetic to these people.

Because we can understand the break is there. But if it's somebody who's suffering from the deep-seated sorrow, which you can't see and can't understand and can't explain, you have a tendency perhaps, or we all have, because of a lack of understanding to be less sensitive.

And we can't afford to be. Not in the experience of a person who is clinically depressed or spiritually depressed.

You know, I've heard people speak to the Lord's people who are down. And I mean down. And they'll say, oh well, it'll be alright soon.

[63 : 07] Just as if, you know, that's all you have to do. Just jolly them along. Give them a wee boost. Give them a wee pat on the back. It doesn't work like that.

What we need is an understanding that the situation that they are in is a genuine situation that can only be resolved with God's help. And if at all you can, you direct them to that God.

And if at all you're given opportunity, speak to them about that God. Remind them about that God. Encourage them to look to that God if they can.

Because sometimes the darkness can be exceedingly dark. Well, I hope that God will encourage us to understand that the Christian believer is someone who may enjoy from time to time what it is to almost need an oxygen cylinder because they're on the heights.

Because they're up in the clouds. But I don't see many of them who are up in the clouds today. With good reason, perhaps.

[64 : 25] And we must be more sensitive to the fact that there may be many that they spent more time in the depths. For good reason.

But it's not a healthy place to be in. And it's not a place that I would encourage anyone to remain in for too long. If at all, they can help themselves to get out of it.

If not, they know where to look, as the psalmist did. I will say unto God, my rock, why hast thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?

He finishes off with these words that are a refrain. Why are you cast down, my soul? Why are you disquieted within me?

Hope thou in God. For I shall yet praise him. Who is the health of my countenance and my God? May that be so for each of us.

[65 : 25] Let us pray. Most merciful God, we give thanks to him. You know every one of us here. You know as if we were on a scale before your eyes.

You know some of us may correspond to one another where we are at. Where we are at with regard to our knowledge of you, our experience of you, our delight in you and all the rest of it.

You know those of us who are prone to being down just as you know the need that there is for those of us who have experiences of the heights.

We need to have our feet on the ground. Whoever we are, whatever our place is, we give thanks that you know what it is. Bless us together and bless all of your people, regardless of need.

Hear our prayers for our sins. In Jesus' name, Amen. I'm going to sing from Psalm 42, from verse 5 to verse 8.

[66 : 42] Psalm 42, from verse 5 to 8. Four stanzas. So on to verse 8.

O why art thou cast down my soul? O why art thou cast down my soul?

Why in me so dismay? Trust God, Lord, I shall praise him yet.

His power, and this is my name. My God, my soul, trust God in me.

Be there for my thy will. From Jordan's land, the heaven on ice, Have him from Israel.

[68 : 28] At the noise of thy waters, He burned to keep the call.

Thy bringing grace, Thy bringing grace, Thou hast over me, Yea, and thy billows on.

His loving kindness yet adore, From all love, Whose path of corazón with joint.

If songs with me, By night, true God, I heard my left, I live thy way.

May grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you all now and always. Amen.