

Lesson 5: Where is God?

Tuesday, January 30, 2024

Ryan Day

Read Psalm 42:1–3, Psalm 63:1, Psalm 69:1–3, and Psalm 102:1–7. What causes great pain to the psalmist?

As the deer pants for the water brooks,
So pants my soul for You, O God.

² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.
When shall I come and appear before God?

³ My tears have been my food day and night,
While they continually say to me,
“Where *is* your God?”—***Psalms 42:1-3***

O God, You *are* my God;
Early will I seek You;
My soul thirsts for You;
My flesh longs for You
In a dry and thirsty land
Where there is no water.—***Psalms 63:1***

Hear my prayer, O Lord,
And let my cry come to You.

² Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my trouble;
Incline Your ear to me;

In the day that I call, answer me speedily.

³ For my days are consumed like smoke,
And my bones are burned like a hearth.

⁴ My heart is stricken and withered like grass,
So that I forget to eat my bread.

⁵ Because of the sound of my groaning
My bones cling to my skin.

⁶ I am like a pelican of the wilderness;

I am like an owl of the desert.

⁷ I lie awake, and am like a sparrow alone on the housetop.—

Psalms 102:1-7

The mention of wilderness highlights the sense of isolation from God. A bird “alone on a housetop” is outside of its nest, its resting place. The psalmist cries to God “out of the depths,” as if being engulfed by mighty waters and sinking into a “deep mire” (*Ps. 69:1–3, Ps. 130:1*). These images depict an oppressive situation from which there is no escape, except by divine intervention.

Read Psalm 10:12, Psalm 22:1, Psalm 27:9, and Psalm 39:12. How does the psalmist respond to God’s apparent absence?

¹² Arise, O Lord!

O God, lift up Your hand!

Do not forget the humble.—***Psalms 10:12***

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?

Why are You so far from helping Me,

*And from the words of My groaning?—***Psalms 22:1****

⁹ Do not hide Your face from me;

Do not turn Your servant away in anger;

You have been my help;

Do not leave me nor forsake me,

O God of my salvation.—***Psalms 27:9***

¹² “Hear my prayer, O Lord,

And give ear to my cry;

Do not be silent at my tears;

For I *am* a stranger with You,

A sojourner, as all my fathers *were*.—***Psalms 39:12***

The occasions of God’s silence cause the psalmists to examine themselves and to seek God, but with confession and humble petitions. They know that God will not

remain silent forever. The Psalms demonstrate that communication with God must go on, regardless of life's circumstances.

“To all who are reaching out to feel the guiding hand of God, the moment of greatest discouragement is the time when divine help is nearest. They will look back with thankfulness upon the darkest part of their way.” —

Desire of Ages Pg. 528

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. — **James 1:2-4**

³ And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope. — **Romans 5:3, 4**

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, ⁸ whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹ receiving the end of your faith— the salvation of *your* souls. — **1 Peter 1:6-9**

¹⁰ For You, O God, have tested us;
You have refined us as silver is refined.

¹¹ You brought us into the net;
You laid affliction on our backs.

¹² You have caused men to ride over our heads;
We went through fire and through water;

But You brought us out to rich *fulfillment*. — **Psalms 66:10-12**