



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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"For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 1:9)

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My dear readers,

SEND OUT THY LIGHT AND THY TRUTH Psalms 42 & 43

Introduction - Contextual Background

The Psalms are some of the most widely read portions of the Old Testament. They have a long history of popularity in the Christian tradition, so much so that often the Book of Psalms is bound with the New Testament in pocket editions. Such popularity reflects sensitivity to the fact that the psalms are about God's people, the personal struggles and joy of victorious life under God. The message of the psalms goes far deeper, addressing the wide range of spiritual **concerns in the life of the redeemed and the sovereignty of the Almighty Jehovah.**

While David is traditionally seen as the author of most of the psalms, it is also important to note that it is the product of the community of faith inspired by God who composed, collected and passed on their prayers, hymns, songs and liturgy as a **witness to God's covenant faithfulness to the people of God.** With inspired authors of these Hebrew poems, the significance of the psalms lies in what they communicate about God's revelation of Himself to His people and the people's response to Him.

The psalms are rich everlasting repositories of truth and spiritual experiences mingled together. The book of Psalms kindle and excite spiritual desires that are strong and fervent; with gracious hopes, fears, joys, sorrows and faith, with its divine answers. Psalm 42 was possibly penned by King David when he was going through the very exacting trial of being removed from Jerusalem by Absalom, his own son, who rebelled against him and conspired to take over his kingdom. This Psalm gives us four instructive elements of seeking God as we go through the depths of despair and distress.

Consider the following Four Aspects of Psalm 42.

1. Aspiration of seeking God (verses 1 - 3)

Verse 1: *"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."*

Water is a scarce premium in the dry deserts of Jordan. A hart refers to a young...

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deer. The verse describes the writer's intense longing to worship God. What is our interest and chief concern? Is it for money, pleasure, fun or is it for things that are eternal? **Faith begins with holy desires towards God and communion with him. Have you ever missed God or felt homesick for Him?** What is the chief end of man? It is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. 1 Corinthians 10:31 encourages: "*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*" "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

Verse 2: "*My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?*"

King David was looking forward to communion with God. He was far away from Jerusalem, which was where he often worshipped God, and hence felt estranged from His presence. **Do you ever miss corporate prayer, sabbath worship and the daily communion with God?**

Verse 3: "*My tears have been my meat day and night ...*"

King David was inconsolable. He cried so much that his tears flowed into mouth, as if his tears became his drink or food ("meat"). Whenever we are very sad, we can be comforted by the thought that God cares and He remembers every drop of tear that we shed (Psalm 56:8 - "*Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle ...*"). He is mindful of our trials and truly cares for us through the vicissitudes of life and we are to draw nigh to him even in times of despair and great distress and encouraged ourselves in the Lord (1 Sam 30:6).

2. Anticipation of worshipping God (verse 4)

Verse 4 tells us that King David remembered the corporate gathering in Jerusalem of the Israelites to worship God and longs to be there. He went to keep holy days, not to keep them in vain mirth and recreation, but in religious exercises.

What did God want the Israelites to remember? "*... all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness ...*" (Deuteronomy 8:2). "*... it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth ...*" (Deuteronomy 8:18)

In this new year, we should make it a point to remember how God has blessed us, to give thanks (thanksgiving) and to live for Him ("thanksgiving") and not neglect personal devotion, service, sabbath and family worship.

3. Anxiety of present troubles (verses 5 - 7)

There will be seasonal times when God allows us to face trying times or even depression. Depression which can happen to God's people affects one's appetite, sleep, psychomotor skills, interests, energy level, feelings, biological and functions and our mental life. There is often no respite but Christ alone is our only refuge and our Hope. The answer is found in Isaiah 26:3, 4 and Philippians 4:6, 7, when we focus our minds on Christ alone and cast all our cares unto Him, He provide the divine peace that surpasses all understanding that will flood our hearts and minds in Him.

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4. Antidote to depression (verses 8 - 11)

There are two things we can do to counter depression: **that is hope in God and the praise of God.** Hope is a future expectation and entails waiting (Psalm 130:5 - *"I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope."*) Our blessed hope is not in this world or self or any worldly interest but in the imminent second coming of Jesus (Titus 2:13, 14). We can hope continually in God and praise Him more and more (Psalm 71:14), for **praise is the language of heaven and let us learn to speak this language while we are on earth. Remember to exalt the Lord. A believing confidence in God is a sure antidote against prevailing despondency and inquietude of spirit.** Therefore, when we encourage ourselves to hope in God, and when the soul catches hold on the power and promise of God, it is lifted up to the heaven. Expectant hope in God, as David here makes application to God, by faith and prayer, as his strength, his guide, his joy, his hope, with suitable affections and expressions. When we wait upon God in public ordinances we have reason to do it both with cheerfulness and thankfulness, to take to ourselves the sound and pleasant comfort and give to God the glory due to him. **Remember, with Christ it is an endless hope, without Christ, a hopeless end.**

Holy hoping (Psalm 42:5): *"Why art thou cast down, O my soul?"* The psalmist's sorrow was heavy but it prevails to depress his despondent spirits; he therefore communes with his own heart, for his relief, that we shall have comfort in Him. We shall praise Him for the help of His countenance, for His favour, the support and the satisfaction we have in it. Those that know how to value and seek **the light of God's countenance will find in Him a reliable, seasonable, and sufficient help, even in the worst of times.** David's believing expectation in God alone kept him from sinking and from drooping further in despair. His hope was an unshakable one **in Christ the Rock. Praise is the 'rent' God 'charge' for the use of His mercies.** It is a privilege for the elect of God and comely for the upright and when we worship and exalt Christ first (which is the chief end of men), He will also deliver us from all our woes and troubles. Let us remember to honour the Lord in praise and adoration and offer the sacrifice of praise through our lips (and substance) as He ought to be glorified and exalted above all (Hebrews 13:15).

In Psalm 43, after lamenting and being in despair, the psalmist turned his attention to heaven and cried out to God to send out His light and truth in a spiritually treacherous and dark world. When God sends His light and truth into our hearts, these will guide us in our aims and expectations; and, if we conscientiously follow that light and that truth, they will certainly bring us to the holy hill where our Lord abides. Consider the following applications on this important concern.

Send out thy Light

These are two principal things that the Light of Christ will do for us.

Christ's Light gives us a new way of hoping.

As the Light of the world, Christ is the one who gives everlasting life and spiritual strength to the lost and pulls them out of the darkness of sin and despair and reveals hope for those who have repented and believed in Christ, the only eternal Son of God, as their personal Lord and Saviour, we can find His merciful...

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acceptance while we repent of our sins and discover His grace to re-direct, mend, uphold, and salvage us again and again. With Christ, there is forgiveness, hope and heavenly prospect of everlasting life. For a new beginning, hope forever springs out of faith in Christ. Believe in Jesus' claim as the Light of the world (John 8:12), for He died for our sins and assures us that He will be the guiding Redeemer of our lives throughout eternity. If we are in desperate straits, put our trust in God, who teaches us to put our faith in Christ our Saviour, the Light and have hope forever more. The victorious risen Christ alone is the blessed Light of the world and we, lesser lights and we are to let His light shine through us before men that they give glory to your Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:14, 16) when they see our works.

Christ's Light gives us a new way of living.

Paul writing to the Romans said that believers are to "*cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light*" (Romans 13:12). Therefore, with a new way of thinking and hoping, the believer goes through his daily life with the Light of truth and the Light of hope. There is divine guidance for the person of faith while the world is in confusion. **There is a triumphant hope for the person of faith when the world can only see present and future despair. Living in the Light of the Saviour is to live with knowledge, purpose and grace:** purpose to follow the Light and walk in the Light. Just as the light of creation ruled the day and the night, Jesus as the Light of the world illumines and rules the lives of the faithful with righteousness and truth. He abides with them to protect them from the evil one and surrounds them with His Spirit to guide, preserve and protect them.

Send out thy Truth

We live in a postmodern world of spiritual relativism, cultism, occultism, selfism, ecclesiastical confusion and religious pluralism, accommodation and decadence. Satan is constantly sending out deceit, falsehood and spiritual darkness. We need to beseech the Lord to send out the heavenly truths and the marvellous light of the gospel of redemption. **The truth of the gospel of redemption must be proclaimed to depraved men** who must repent of their sins and be eternally saved by grace through faith in Christ alone and not of their works (Ephesians 2:8, 9; Titus 3:5). This is a glorious truth that we have to send out in these last days of great spiritual decadence and sinfulness in a fallen world, while the pure and unadulterated gospel will be preached to all nations or ethnic groups or cultures (Matthew 24:14). Are you involved in fulfilling the great commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and is your church sending out the light today to the lost or have we dim the light of Christ and hid the gospel under a bushel?

Conclusion

In conclusion, like the psalmist, let us seek Christ in praise and hope in times of prosperity or despair and continue to beseech the Lord to **send forth the light of the glorious gospel of redemption and the truth of God's holy and indestructible word in the last days.** Let us be revived and awakened and do our part as well and be diligent and vigilant to preach Christ and save souls and comfort and edify the saints and be ready for the Master's imminent return.

*Rev Jack Sin
Maranatha B-P Church, Singapore*

GOD THE SON

William Vernon Higham, b. 1926

Great is the gospel of our glorious God,
where mercy met the anger of God's rod;
a penalty was paid and pardon bought,
and sinners lost at last to Him were brought:

Chorus:

o let the praises of my heart be Thine,
for Christ has died that I may call Him mine,
that I may sing with those who dwell above,
adoring, praising Jesus, King of love.

Great is the mystery of godliness,
great is the work of God's own holiness;
it moves my soul, and causes me to long
for greater joys than to the earth belong:

The Spirit vindicated Christ our Lord,
and angels sang with joy and sweet accord;
the nations heard, a dark world flamed with light -
when Jesus rose in glory and in might:

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON

CHURCH THEME: WALK IN THE NEWNESS OF LIFE (Romans 6:4)

Our **worship services** begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm**.

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME	
Morning	<i>Today: 28/01/2007</i>	<i>Next Week: 04/02/2007</i>	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day.	
<i>Chairman:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Seetoh Yoong Chiang		
<i>Speaker:</i>	Rev Graham Harrison	Pr Mok Chee Cheong		
<i>Message:</i>	Tbd	Is Submission to God a Matter of Choice?	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS	
<i>Text:</i>	John 14:27	James 4:7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Bible Knowledge (BBK): The BBK classes will commence on the next Lord's Day, 4 Feb 07. These classes are meant to prepare those who wish to seek baptism, reaffirmation of faith or transfer of membership. For those interested, please see Pr Mok. • Family Worship: For those who like to open their homes for family worship for the month of February and March, please contact Pr. Mok. • Ministry Committee Meeting: For ministry committee members, please take note that the meeting will be held at 2pm in the side hall. • Reprint of the Memory Verses for the month of January 2007: <i>Week 1: Romans 6:4</i> Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. <i>Week 2: 1 Corinthians 15:58</i> Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord. 	
<i>Organist:</i>	Yanning	Anthony		
Evening				
<i>Chairman:</i>	John	Jonathan Kim		
<i>Speaker:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Pr Mok Chee Cheong		
<i>Message:</i>	The Names of God – El Shaddai	The Names of God – Jehovah Shammah		
<i>Text:</i>	Genesis 17:1	Ezekiel 48:35		
<i>Pianist:</i>	Anthony	Yanning		
Other Duties				
	<i>Today: 28/01/2007</i>	<i>Next Week: 04/02/2007</i>		
<i>Ushers</i>	Daniel/Chin Kiong	Jonathan/Evelyn		
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Joyce	Yanning		
<i>Lunch:</i>	Yoong Chiang/Jonathan	Maureen		
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Prema/Yetta	Volunteers		
<i>Bible Study:</i>	Video Presentation	DHW - Genesis		
Appointments of the Week				
Fri 2 Feb	7.00 pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Led by Tbd		
Sat 3 Feb	4.00 pm	Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: Spkr/C'man: John		
Last Week's Worship Service Collections				
Offering: £218.55		Lunch: £37.00		
Memory Verse				
<i>Last Week (Jan 07 Wk 3): Matthew 22:37-39</i>				
Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.				
<i>This Week (Jan 07 Wk 4): 1 Peter 5:6-7</i>				
Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.				