

Psalm 42 and 43

- put your hope in God -

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Introduction

- ❖ Psalm 42 and 43 belong together and are one Psalm. It is a lament and shows a realistic faith. The Psalm covers up the sad realities of life and takes the promises of God seriously. Life isn't always fair. See also Psalm 73. Broyles: "The faith reflected here does not try to deny reality (mind over matter) or to rationalize the dilemma away, nor does it reject God's word as ineffectual. It recognizes the gap between God's promises and human experience and believes that this dissonance should be presented to God for him to resolve."¹
 - Broyles: "Regrettably, lament has been all but censored from most Christian worship services. By always stressing the positive, such worship alienates those suffering pain and depression. And shying away from lament produces unnecessary guilt and, ultimately, a superficial faith."² Lament can help to express faith and to help faith grow.
- ❖ Psalm 42 and 43 are didactic Psalms, conveying personal wisdom and faith, to help believers to express their sadness, despair, their feelings towards God:
 - "The worshipper who recites psalm 42 and 43 speaks not with a singular voice but rather with the voice of generations of God's people. This should give greater confidence when speaking to God. In addition, we are invited to read our own personal experience against the wider experience of the community and so see that our experiences are shared by others."³

¹ Broyles, C. C. (2008, p. 394). *Lament, Psalms Of*. In T. Longman III & P. Enns (Eds.).

² Broyles, C. C. (2008, p. 394). *Lament, Psalms Of*. In T. Longman III & P. Enns (Eds.).

³ Broyles, C. C. (2008, p. 386). *Lament, Psalms Of*. In T. Longman III & P. Enns (Eds.).

- ❖ The structure of the Psalm enhances the feelings of sadness and distress, especially Psalm 42:7-9. See below.
- ❖ The context, form and structure, theological, technical and hermeneutical notes given in this sermon outline overlap with other sermon outlines taken from the Book of Psalms. This makes it possible to use this sermon outline as a “stand-alone”. You can also fit this outline into a series of sermons.

Context

- ❖ The historical context of Psalm 42, 43 is not known. See below
- ❖ The Book of Psalms is Wisdom literature. Psalm 42 and 43 are part of the second book of Psalms (Psalm 42-72). Within this collection, Psalm 42-49 belong to the collection of the sons of Korah
- ❖ The major theme of these Psalms is “hope in God.”

Form and structure

- ❖ The structure makes clear that Psalm 42 and 43 belong together. They share the same refrain. There are three parts:
 - The first part (Ps 42:1-5) describes a deep thirst for God and the lost joy.
 - The second part (Ps 42:6-11) describes the feelings of the soul which is downcast and disturbed.
 - The third part (Ps 43:1-5) is a prayer for vindication and restoration of the joy in the future.
- ❖ The Psalms reflect on:
 - The present and the past (Part 1);
 - The present (Part 2);
 - The present and the future (Part 3).
- ❖ The refrain summarizes the Psalm (Psalm 42:5, 11; 43:5).
- ❖ In the chart below, the last column describes the possible associated emotions conveyed by the different verses.
 - The listed emotions reveal a disturbed soul.

<i>Superscript</i>	For the director of music. A maskil of the Sons of Korah.	
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Part I: the Present and the Past (Ps 42:1-5)		I pour out my soul <i>(Associated emotions)</i>	
<i>(Verse 1)</i>	As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.	The Present (situation)	<i>Craving, desire, longing</i>
<i>(Verse 2)</i>	My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?		<i>Craving, desire, longing</i>
<i>(Verse 3)</i>	My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me all day long, "Where is your God?"		<i>Grieve</i> <i>Hostility, contempt</i>
<i>(Verse 4)</i>	These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go with the multitude, leading the procession to the house of God, with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng.	The Past (situation)	<i>Grieve</i> <i>Loneliness</i>
<i>Refrain</i> <i>(Verse 5)</i>	Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.		<i>Sadness</i> <i>Hope</i> <i>Trust</i> <i>Faith</i>

Part II: The Present (Ps 42:6-11)		My soul: downcast and disturbed <i>(Associated emotions)</i>	
<i>(Verse 6)</i>	My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon— from Mount Mizar.	The present (situation)	<i>Sadness</i> <i>Faith</i>
<i>(Verse 7)</i>	Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me.		<i>Anxiety</i>
<i>(Verse 8)</i>	By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me— a prayer to the God of my life.		<i>Faith</i> <i>Hope</i>
<i>(Verse 9)</i>	I say to God my Rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?"		<i>Faith, trust</i> <i>Anxiety, sadness</i> <i>Grieve</i> <i>Hostility, contempt</i>
<i>(verse 10)</i>	My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, "Where is your God?"		<i>Severe emotional suffering</i> <i>Hostility, contempt</i>
<i>Refrain</i> <i>(Verse 11)</i>	Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him,		<i>Sadness</i> <i>Hope</i> <i>Trust</i>

	my Savior and my God.		<i>Faith</i>
	Part III: the Present and the Future (Ps 43:1-5)	Prayer: I'll put my hope in God <i>(Associated emotions)</i>	
<i>(Verse 1)</i>	Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation; rescue me from deceitful and wicked men.	The present (situation)	<i>Anger</i> <i>Fear</i>
<i>(Verse 2)</i>	You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?		<i>Faith</i> <i>Anxiety, sadness</i> <i>Grieve</i> <i>Hostility, contempt</i>
<i>(Verse 3)</i>	Send forth your light and your truth, let them guide me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell.		<i>Longing, desire</i>
<i>(Verse 4)</i>	Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.	The future (situation)	<i>Joy</i>
<i>Refrain</i> <i>(Verse 5)</i>	Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.		<i>Sadness</i> <i>Hope</i> <i>Trust</i> <i>Faith</i>

Technical, hermeneutical and historical notes

Covenant

- ❖ Psalm 42 and 43 as the other Psalms, must be understood within the context of the covenant. The covenant established the fellowship between the LORD, Israel and the individual believer.
 - The LORD is King, Israel his people. As King, the LORD is also Judge. His people are responsible to him. The LORD has given the Law and the stipulations. The LORD presents himself also as Father (Isa 63:16) and Creator (Isa 43:1), Israel being his firstborn son (Ex 4:21-23; Hosea 11:1-4) and creation. The covenant is also described in terms of marriage (Isa 54:5).
 - The covenant is like a treaty characterized by promises and stipulations. At the same time, it is a fellowship with the living God by faith, obedience, fear (in a positive sense), and worship. There is even friendship with God (Jn 15:15). This aspect of the covenant describes an intimate fellowship and gives room to human emotions such as grieve, anger, and joy.
 - The LORD has revealed himself as: compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love (Ps 103:8). He is a righteous and merciful God.
 - Finally, the New Covenant has been established by the blood of Christ (Mt 26:28).⁴

Psalms of Lament⁵

- ❖ The psalms of lament form a genre, a special category with a shared pattern of communication. The two main motifs of these Psalms are lament and petition. Psalm 42 is a lament, Psalm 43 is partly a lament accompanied by the petition, where the Psalmist asks for vindication with the final aim the praise of God.
- ❖ **These Psalms are model prayers and instruct the believer(s) for spirituality and theology.**
 - The superscript calls it a maskil = “מִשְׁכִּיל”. It is a participle of a verb which means 'be wise, prudent'; in 2 Chronicles 30:22, it means to be fit, capable.⁶ The meaning seems to be that it refers to a wisdom song performed to music. 1 Or: contemplative poem. This 'technical term' occurs in titles of several Psalms: 32, 42, 44, 45, 52, 53, 54, 55, 74, 78, 88, 89, 142; also 47:8: didactic poem or a skilful, artistic song. 2 Because of the contemplative and didactic character, the Psalm is meant to teach and express feelings of a downcast and disturbed soul, and to put hope in God.

⁴ See for more information on the Covenant the Biblical Dictionaries.

⁵ This paragraph is partly a summary of Broyles, C. C. (2008, p. 384–399). *Lament, Psalms Of*. In T. Longman III & P. Enns (Eds.).

⁶ Bratcher, R. G., & Reyburn, W. D. (1991, p. 302).

- ❖ It is difficult to relate these Psalms to specific persons and circumstances (who? what? where? When?). Some commentators think of David when he was a refugee during the insurrection of his son Absalom (2 Sam 15-17). This lack of specificity gives the Psalm an open-ended character. That is one of the reasons that they became so popular among God's people throughout the ages. The search for a historical setting will divert the attention from the purpose of this Psalm.
- ❖ Broyles writes: "The individual laments (such as Psalm 42 and 43) appear to have been composed to suit recurring, typical occasions—generic times of need—not the particular circumstances of a particular individual in a moment in history. **Lament psalms thus present themselves as set prayers written for worshipers to use for typical distresses.**" "In this respect, a lament psalm is not a mirror reflecting the composer's experience; rather, **it provides worshipers a framework to interpret their own experiences and to guide their expressions of prayer.**" Even, God is held (partly) responsible for the distress:
 - Psalm 42: 9 "I say to God my Rock, 'Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?'"
 - Psalm 43:2: "You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?"
- ❖ Broyles notes: "The worshipper who recites psalm 42 and 43 speaks not with a singular voice but rather with **the voice of generations of God's people**. This should give greater confidence when speaking to God. **In addition, we are invited to read our own personal experience against the wider experience of the community and so see that our experiences are shared by others.**"
- ❖ Lament psalms can be quite disturbing, also for today's readers: "Why have you rejected me?" At the same time they can become a source of comfort:
 - "Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God."
- ❖ These Psalms have become "'word of God'" for God's people" (Broyles). They reveal the spirituality of the believer and the people of God. These words are because they are part of the Word of God, the acceptable and appropriate word of men to God, in all frankness. They also reflect a human spirituality and theology which is not rational but rather emotional, a theology of the (downcast) heart, a theology from the perspective of human need.
 - Broyles writes: "Prayers today usually consist primarily of requests or petitions. But the lament psalms were no mere 'business agenda' or 'shopping list' telling God what to do. **The laments testify to the value of simply telling one's story to God.** God is not portrayed simply as 'Mr. Fixit' "who solves all our problems; **he is the supreme listener.**" "The image of God reflected in the psalms is one who is interested not only in healing but also in pain" and grieve. "Remarkably, they testify that God can be moved" by our prayers and emotions.

- The complaint “Why have you forgotten me?” (Ps 42:9) shows the high expectation of an intimate relationship with God. “This invites forthrightness and candor, not averted eyes and politeness for its own sake.” The complaint doesn't ask for answers or reason, but for the return of God's remembrance: “Stop, leaving me alone!”
- Broyles: “The psalmists were theological lawyers arguing the people’s case before the Most High. These psalms do not evidence a passive faith that simply accepts circumstances as ‘God’s will’; rather, they show that the promises of God should be taken seriously and affirm that they should become manifest. Assumed here is that God can be moved not only emotionally, as expressed in the laments, but also by reason and by argument.”
- ❖ These laments show a realistic faith, they cover up the sad realities of life but also takes the promises of God seriously. Life isn’t always fair. See also Psalm 73. Broyles again: “The faith reflected here does not try to deny reality (mind over matter) or to rationalize the dilemma away, nor does it reject God’s word as ineffectual. It recognizes the gap between God’s promises and human experience and believes that this dissonance should be presented to God for him to resolve.”
 - Broyles: “Regrettably, lament has been all but censored from most Christian worship services. By always stressing the positive, such worship alienates those suffering pain and depression. And shying away from lament produces unnecessary guilt and, ultimately, a superficial faith.” Lament can help to express faith and to help faith grow.

Parallellismus membrorum

- ❖ Parallellismus membrorum is a special feature of Biblical literature, especially of the Old Testament Wisdom Literature, i.e. The Book of Job, Psalms and Proverbs. It “is also present, although less prominent, in biblical prose. It can be defined as the repetition of the same or related semantic content and/or grammatical structure in consecutive lines or verses.”⁷
- ❖ There are several forms of parallellismus membrorum found in this Psalm:
 - Synonymous parallelism.
 - Two (or three, or even four) lines express the same thought:
 -
 - Why are you downcast, O my soul?
 - Why so disturbed within me? (Ps 42:5, 11, 43:5)
 -
 - As the deer pants for streams of water,
 - so my soul pants for you, O God (Ps 42:1).
 - Syntactical parallelism.
 - The second line completes the first line (Ps 43:4):
 -
 - Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight.
 - I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.
 - Antithetical parallelism and chiasm.
 - The second line contrasts the first line (Ps43:2):
 - **A. You are God my stronghold.**
 - **B. Why have you rejected me?**
 - **B'. Why must I go about mourning,**
 - **A'. oppressed by the enemy?**
 - A. and A' from antithetical parallelism: God my stronghold versus the oppression by the enemy. They are opposites. B. and B'. form a synthetical

⁷ See for more information: Berlin, A. (1992). *Parallelism*. In D. N. Freedman (Ed.)(Vol. 5, p. 155).

parallelism, the first line gives the reason for the second line. He mourns because God seems to have rejected him.

Lexicographical comments

- ❖ “soul”= “נַפְשׁוֹ”: **soul as the centre and transmitter of feelings and perceptions.**⁸ It simply means “I.”

Remark

- ❖ There are some textual variants found in this Psalm. The text of verse 10 line 2 is uncertain. This will not be discussed in this outline.

Exposition

Remark

- ❖ While reading this Psalm, it is helpful to visualize the images and metaphors used in both Psalms.
 - The psalmists used many images and metaphors to describe circumstances, feelings, and to portray God, who is unique in person and character. He is Spirit “and must be portrayed and depicted by images and metaphors if God is to be apprehended by humans at all.” The use of images is related to the creation of man, being God’s image: “God’s image lives in the living image of human beings, who in turn live on images, including images of the living God.”⁹ xx

Psalm 42 Verse 2-5 *The Present and the Past (Part I)*

- ❖ “**Deer.**” These animals were living in the semi-desert or desert. Especially in the desert of Judah and around the Dead Sea freshwater streams were scarce. The simile describes a deep longing to be in the presence of God. See also Psalm 84:2.
 - The Psalm describes the longing of somebody who has been excluded from the presence of the Lord. See for the contrast Psalm 23:2 and 36:8.
- ❖ “**living God**”: There is only one God. He is the living God. He is the source of life. He is a relational God. He is acting and communicating. His actions are not always understandable. He is a God of Justice, the God of truth and the God of light. He is a Rock and stronghold.
- ❖ Note the contrast between verse 2 and 3:

Psalm 42:2	Psalm 42:3
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⁸ Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., Richardson, M. E. J., & Stamm, J. J. (1994–2000, p. 713).

⁹ Strawn, B. A. (2008, p. 312). *Imagery*. In T. Longman III & P. Enns (Eds.).

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

My tears have been my food day and night,
while men say to me all day long, "Where is
your God?"

- The answer to this question of the heart is partly found in Psalm 43. He needs vindication (Psalm 43:1), truth and light (Ps 43:3)
- This thirst is also reflected in the thrice-repeated refrain and the prayer: "o God, my God" (Ps 43:4).
- ❖ **"Where is your God?"** This is a very painful question when a believer longs for God and at the same feels that God has forgotten and even rejected him.
- ❖ **"I pour out my soul"** other translations:
 - = "My heart breaks"; one way of saying it is "I am heartbroken"; The New English Bible has "As I pour out my soul in distress"; the Hebrew can mean "as I give expression to my pent-up feelings"¹⁰
 - "The psalmist's grief is especially sharp as he recalls how in the past he used to go with the crowds to the Temple during the festivals."
- ❖ **"While men."** Who are these men? We don't know. They are probably men who belonged to "a multitude" (42:4); "foes" and "enemy" (42:9, 10; 43:2); "ungodly nation", deceitful "and wicked men" (43:1).
 - The rulers of the Jews and crowds standing at some distance from the cross mocking Jesus (Lk 23:35) provide a good example.
- ❖ **"Say to me all day long, 'Where is your God?'"** This taunting question is a recurring theme in the Psalms: Psalm 10:11; 12:4; 59:7; 64:5; 71:11; 73:11; 94:7; 115:2.
- ❖ The translation of the second part of verse 4 is difficult, due to the Hebrew text. It still gives us some insight into the practice of religious festivals.
 - There is a multitude gathered for a procession.
 - There is a leader, probably with a musical instrument, the harp (Ps 43:4).
 - There are songs (shouts) of joy and thanksgiving, to praise God (Ps 42:5). Religious feasts were full of joy (Ps 81:1, 2; 150)
- ❖ The psalmist is disturbed and downcast. The cause is given in verse 3 and 4. It is a conflict between doubt, despair and faith and hope.

¹⁰ Bratcher, R. G., & Reyburn, W. D. (1991, p. 401).

Psalm 42 Verse 6-11 *The Present (Part II)*

- ❖ **“My soul is downcast within me.”** The Psalmist didn’t yet succeed to overcome his feelings of sadness and disturbance. Instead, his feelings of sadness become even more disturbed. This is reflected in the sequence of feelings, which he describes:
 - Verse 6: the remembrance of God; (hope)
 - Verse 7: the waves (of life) engulfing him; (distress)
 - Verse 8: a song and prayer; (hope)
 - Verse 9: “Why have you forgotten me?” (distress) This stands in sharp contrast with verse 6: I haven’t forgotten you!
 - Verse 9, 10: physical pain, due to emotional stress. (distress)
- ❖ The geography (verse 6):
 - **“The land of Jordan”** could be Canaan as a whole or else the region where the Jordan River rises.¹¹ This reference would be understood by contemporaries, certainly it is not Canaan as a whole. The Psalmist refers to a specific location, where he can escape the people who kept constantly saying: “Where is your God?” (Ps 42: 3, 10)
 - **“The mounts Hermon.”** Mount Hermon is some 75 kilometres (45 miles) north(east) of Lake Galilee, reaching the height of some 2750 meters (8940 feet); the Hebrew text plural “Hermons” is explained as a reference to the whole mountain range, or else to **the three main peaks of the Hermon.**¹² It is the utmost northern part of Canaan, where the tribes of Israel settled (Deut 3:8; Jsh 13:11; 1 Chron 5:23).
 - Mount Hermon played some role in the religious beliefs of the Psalmists. Psalm 133:3 says: **“It is as if the dew of Hermon** were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.”
 - **“Mount Mizar.”** The location of this mount “is unknown; the Hebrew **“מִצְעָר”** means “small”; some take it to be a lesser peak near Mount Hermon; others take it as a reference to Mount Zion,¹³ being relatively humble (low) compared to Mount Hermon (765 meters (2510 feet).

¹¹ Bratcher, R. G., & Reyburn, W. D. (1991, p. 403).

¹² Bratcher, R. G., & Reyburn, W. D. (1991, p. 403).

¹³ Bratcher, R. G., & Reyburn, W. D. (1991, p. 403).

- ❖ The Lord is also “my rock” (Ps 18:2, 46; 28:1; 31:3; 42:9; 62:2, 6, 7; 144:1)¹⁴
 - The Psalmist shows that he is familiar with the dangers of the sea or the deep and the waves.
 - “The statement Deep calls to deep is taken to be poetic language; like waterfalls which seem to roar at each other, so the forces of chaos summon other forces to overwhelm the psalmist.”¹⁵

¹⁴ Rata, T. (2008). [David](#). In T. Longman III & P. Enns (Red.), *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings* (p. 86). Downers Grove, IL; Nottingham, England: IVP Academic; Inter-Varsity Press.

¹⁵ Bratcher, R. G., & Reyburn, W. D. (1991, p. 403).

- ❖ The contrast with the previous words and the following words is startling:

Psalm 42:7	Psalm 42:8	Psalm 42:9
Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me.	By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me— a prayer to the God of my life.	I say to God my Rock, "Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?"
<i>Despair</i>	<i>Faith and trust</i>	<i>Despair</i>

- ❖ This change of mood reflects a downcast and disturbed soul.
- ❖ **"Why...?"** This is not a question but a lament. The Psalmist doesn't expect an explanation but action.
 - Wilcock aptly remarks: "The very words *Why have you forgotten/rejected me?* (42:9; 43:2) show that in the psalmist's mind God is remote enough for him to feel deserted, yet near enough for him to talk to."¹⁶
- ❖ **"My bones."** Verse 10 is difficult to translate. The imagery remains clear. The distress is also felt physically. See Psalm 32:3, 4:
 - "When I kept silent, **my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.** For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer." See also Psalm Ps 6:2. 31:9, 10. 38:3. 51:8. 102:3-5.

Psalm 43 verse 1-5 *The Present and the Future (Part III)*

- ❖ **"Vindicate me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation."** The words used are those of the law court (see also Psalm 7:8; 26:1; 35:23–24). It is probably a way of asking God to help him against his enemies who torment him with their taunts (Ps 42:3, 10).¹⁷ These men are **"deceitful and wicked."**
 - Due to the character of this Psalm (instruction/wisdom) is a search for a historical setting not necessary and will divert the attention from the purpose of this Psalm. See above.

¹⁶ Wilcock, M. (2001, Vol. 1, p. 154).

¹⁷ Bratcher, R. G., & Reyburn, W. D. (1991, p. 406).

- ❖ Compare Ps 42:9 and 43:2 (see also Psalm 13:1):

Psalm 42:9	Psalm 43:2
I say to God my Rock ,	"You are God my stronghold .
"Why have you forgotten me ?"	Why have you rejected me ?"
Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?"	Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?"

- **"My rock"** and **"my stronghold"** are synonyms. See also Psalm 18:2, where six synonyms are used.
- **"Rejected me"** is even stronger than **"forgotten me."**
- **"I go about"** / "I go" (ESV) translates two different forms of the same verb. There is a slight difference in meaning. "I go" (Ps 42:2).

- ❖ **"truth"** = **"אֱמֶת"**:

- 2. constancy, duration; 4. truth; 3. faithfulness (hard to distinguish from 2 and 4): a) faithfulness of God (Ps 30:10; 43:3; 54:7; 71:22).¹⁸
- This prayer stands in sharp contrast to Psalm 42:7: "Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me." Also the laments: "Why" reveal disturbance.

- ❖ **"Light"** is a metaphor for salvation, vindication (Ps 43:1) and liberation (Ps 43:2). "Light" is often used as a symbol of goodness, uprightness, or blessing. "Light dawns for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart" (Ps. 97:11). Even "in the darkness" light rises for the upright because the Lord is gracious (112:4). Thus the psalmist could pray that God would send His light and truth to bring him to God's dwelling (43:3).¹⁹

- ❖ **"The place where you dwell"** (NIV) / **"your dwelling"** (ESV). It is plural: The plural form **מִשְׁכַּנְיָךְ**, "place where you dwell" (NIV) is an intensive plural: **"your very dwelling place."**²⁰

¹⁸ Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., Richardson, M. E. J., & Stamm, J. J. (1994–2000, electronic ed., p. 69).

¹⁹ Morris, L. (1979–1988, Vol. 3, p. 135). *Light*. In G. W. Bromiley (Ed.).

²⁰ VanGemeren, W. A. (2008, Vol. 5, p. 388).

- ❖ **“Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.”**
 - The longing of Psalm 42:1 will be fulfilled: **“My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?”**

Application

Remark

- ❖ It is important “to feel” this Psalm, the sadness, the distress, the prayer at night.
- ❖ If possible, try to identify situations in the lives of believers or the church which cause sadness and distress and relate these Psalms to these situations.

Praise

- ❖ Praise God:
 - He is a rock (Ps 42:9) and stronghold (Ps 43:1);
 - He will vindicate, plead our cause and rescue (Ps 43:2);
 - He will send his truth, light and guidance (Ps 43:3);
 - He will bring us into his presence (Ps 43:3);
 - He will give us praises and joy (again) (Ps 43:4);
 - That he is given us these prayers of lament, to express our deepest feelings of sadness and disturbance, even of rejection (Ps 43:2);
 - We can put our hope in him. He is our Savior (Ps 42:5, 11; Ps 43:5).
 - He has proven to be our Savior by sending his beloved son Jesus Christ.
- ❖ Praise Christ:
 - He identified himself with the believer:
 - He was rejected by the people;
 - They mocked at him: “Where is your God?” (Ps 42:3, 10);
 - Christ lamented: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Mt 27:46).
 - He is the “truth” (Jn 14:6) and the “light” (Jn 8:12).

Teach

- ❖ This is a didactic Psalm to teach the children of God to express their feelings of:
 - Longing for God (Ps 42:1, 2);

- Grieve (Ps 42:3);
- To pour out the soul (Ps 42:4);
- To remember God (Ps 42:6), especially when life is like a stormy sea and the deep and the waves of God, sweep over. And that this is even the case when the believer experiences the love and the joy of God (Ps 42:8).
- To put the hope in God, just as Christ and the saints of the Old and New Testament put their hope in God.
- Worship together not only in moments of joy and praise but also in moments of grief. Take at heart the comments made by Broyles. See above.

Quotations

- ❖ Augustin has made some valuable remarks in his Exposition of the Psalms:
 - **“LONGING FOR GOD.** AUGUSTINE: Let us burn together with this thirst; let us run together to the fountain of understanding. Let us ... long rather for it as a hart yearns for a spring ... let us long for the wellspring of which Scripture says, “With you is the fountain of life.” ... Long for the fountains of water. With God is the fountain of life, a fountain that can never dry up.... God has everything that will refresh you. He is able to fill anyone who comes to him.... This is what I am thirsting for, to reach him and to appear before him. I am thirsty on my pilgrimage, parched in my running, but I will be totally satisfied when I arrive. EXPOSITIONS OF THE PSALMS 42.2, 3, 5.”²¹
 - **“NOT LIKE IDOLS.** AUGUSTINE: “Where is your God?” If a pagan says this to me, I cannot retort, “What about you? Where is *your* God?” because the pagan can point to his god. He indicates some stone with his finger and says, “Look, there’s my god! *Where is yours?*” If I laugh at the stone, and the pagan who pointed it out is embarrassed, he looks away from the stone toward the sky; then perhaps he points to the sun and says again, “Look, there’s my god! *Where is yours?*” He has found something he can demonstrate to my bodily eyes. For me it is different, not because I have nothing to demonstrate but because he lacks the kind of eyes to which I could demonstrate it. He was able to point the sun out to my bodily eyes as his god, but how can I point out to any eyes he has the sun’s Creator? EXPOSITIONS OF THE PSALMS 42.6.”²²
 - **“A PROBLEM OF REFERENCE.** AUGUSTINE: “My soul was troubled as it turned to me.” It would not be, would it, if it turned to God? It is troubled when it turns to myself.

²¹ Blaising, C. A., & Hardin, C. S. (Eds.). (2008, p. 328).

²² Blaising, C. A., & Hardin, C. S. (Eds.). (2008, p. 329).

When turned toward the unchangeable, it received new strength, but when turned to what is prone to change it was disturbed.... Since there is in me no stability, neither is there any hope for me in myself. "My soul was troubled as it turned to me." Would you like to free your soul from its anxiety? Then do not let it linger in yourself.... Put no trust in yourself but only in your God. If you trust in yourself, your soul will be turned toward yourself and gravely troubled, because it cannot yet find any grounds for security in you. So then, if my soul turned toward myself and found itself disturbed, what is left to me but humility, the humble refusal of the soul to place any reliance on itself? What course is open to it, except to make itself very small indeed, and to humble itself so that it may be raised up? Let it attribute nothing to itself, and then what is profitable may be granted to it by God. EXPOSITIONS OF THE PSALMS 42.12."²³

- **"ONE CHRIST.** AUGUSTINE: "Your light" and "your truth": we have two names here but one single reality, for what else is God's light, if not God's truth? And what is God's truth, if not God's light? But both of these are the one Christ, who says, "I am the light of the world. Whoever believes in me will not walk in darkness. I am the way, the truth and the life" (Jn 14:6). He is light, and he is truth. May he come, then, and deliver us, distinguishing our cause from that of an unholy people even now; may he deliver us from the wicked and deceitful. May he separate wheat from weeds, for he will send in his angels at harvest time to collect from his kingdom all the things that make people stumble and throw them into a blazing fire, but his wheat they will gather into the barn. EXPOSITIONS OF THE PSALMS 43.4."²⁴

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²³ Blaising, C. A., & Hardin, C. S. (Eds.). (2008, p. 330).

²⁴ Blaising, C. A., & Hardin, C. S. (Eds.). (2008, p. 334).

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