

Psalm 43

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In reading Psalm 43 and reflecting back on Psalm 42, we see that the psalmist's predicament did not change. However, through his sorrow, the psalmist concludes both psalms with an upbeat tone, choosing to put his hope in God and praise Him regardless. This begs a question that longs to be answered: If his predicament has not changed, how can praise be on his tongue?

What has changed? What could have happened within these few lamenting words? Might I suggest that the psalmist changed His mind? He made a choice. His moments of lamenting led the psalmist to redirect and realign his thinking to what he knew to be true of God. In a short time, he was able to subdue his pain with a choice to praise. This teaches us a valuable lesson: hope is not deferred, it's seized. We do not have to wander aimlessly through trials waiting for hope. We can seize it the very moment that we catch a glimpse its light!

Read Proverbs 13:12.

What is the result of hope deferred?

Read Isaiah 40:31.

How is an ailing heart strengthened?

Renaming and reclaiming His promises will renew our hope and give us the strength and energy to push through our pain. We become empowered to seize the hope necessary to defeat the unknowns and the uncertainties of our circumstances.

In Seizing Hope: We Offer What We Have

After tasting the freedom that just a glimpse of hope offers, we can't help but desire more. Fortunately, God's river of hope never runs dry. But to seize more of His hope, we must surrender all those things in which we place our hope and trust Him with it all. You may be thinking, "I knew there was a catch." The good news is that God never asks us to give up something without replacing it with something even greater.

In the following Scripture, God asks a woman to surrender what she had, trusting that her son would be saved.

Read 2 Kings 4:2.

What did the woman tell Elisha?

Read 2 Kings 4:5-7.

What did God do with her little?

Have you experienced a season of hardship and felt you had nothing, except a little hope? Seize hope. Then seize more hope. And watch Him make *much* of your *little*.

Read Deuteronomy 32:4.

What is true about our God? Let this truth redirect our thinking.

In Seizing Hope: We Expose The Dark To The Light

Read I John 1:5

Who is light?

Like the psalmist, there are times when we are not as close to the Lord as we once were. A distance forms and is often undetected—until a crisis arises or when wisdom is needed to make a life-changing decision. We then become aware of our need and filled with a sense of urgency. But often we are uncertain of our next step. In these moments, it is easy to follow the glow of the world’s artificial light go to the wrong source of light and truth.

This kind of synthetic light may lead us to the bottom of a bottle, to holding a handful of pills, to standing in a hotel room with someone who “really” understands, or to keeping late nights in a high rise trying to seal a big deal. Many times we are not even aware of its deception until the light burns out, leaving us in an even darker place than the one before.

The real, authentic light that comes from God never burns out. It exposes the dark places of the unknown and uncertainty in our lives. His light and truth will replace our sense of urgency with patience, our fear with peace, our despair with hope, and our guilt with freedom.

Reread I John 1:5

What is not found in God?

Read John 8:12.

How can we avoid the darkness?

God is light, and in Him there is no darkness. In Him we can completely avoid the allure that the false, artificial light of this world sends out. This is news worthy of celebrating!

In Seizing Hope: We Take Up Residence In The Holy Place.

The psalmist wanted the light and truth of God to guide him and bring him to the holy mountain, the place where the Israelites could be in the presence of God. He knew that, if he could get to the holy place, and get in the presence of God, everything would be all right. I felt the same way during a season of my own season of hopelessness when we lived through 18 months of undiagnosed health issues with my husband.

Although we can often feel His presence everywhere, there is just something special and powerful about being in God’s house. We can feel Him there more powerfully, and we can receive comfort from His people. If circumstances prohibit you from physically getting to church, make your bedside or a kitchen table a beautiful altar. Meet Him wherever you are able, and humbly seize the hope He offers.