

Read

Psalms 42 (and 43)

Consider

I offer to you as a place to begin your devotional pauses this week something that I have unapologetically “borrowed” from a commentary by James Montgomery Boice. He begins with some helpful remarks that introduce this second book of the Psalms and follows that with what I thought was a very hopeful note, a reminder that we serve the God of infinite grace.

“There are a number of interesting changes at this point in Psalms, and the first is that the compositions shift from being almost exclusively psalms of David to being those of a variety of authors. In the first section (Psalms 1–41), thirty-seven psalms are ascribed to David. The first two are introductory, and two others have no opening ascription. David is the only author identified in the first book. In the second section (Psalms 42–72), eighteen are ascribed to David. But in addition, one is assigned to Asaph, another to Solomon, and seven (eight if Psalm 43 is assumed to have the same author as Psalm 42) to the Sons of Korah. Three have no names with them. There are more psalms of Asaph, David, and the Sons of Korah, as well as one more by Solomon and a few by other authors later on.

“Psalm 42 (as well as Psalm 43, which needs to be taken with it as the second part of a longer original composition) is by the Sons of Korah. There are two collections under this name: Psalms 42–49 (to which we have now come) and Psalms 84–88, with the exception of Psalm 86.

“The Korahites were Levites, descended through Kohath, Korah’s father (1 Chronicles 6:22–48; 9:17–32; 2 Chronicles 20:19). They were employed in the performance of the temple music. But the interesting thing is this: When the Israelites were wandering in the desert, Korah led a rebellion of 250 community leaders against Moses and perished by God’s judgment along with the other leaders and their families (Numbers 16; cf. Jude 11). For some reason the Sons of Korah were spared, and it seems from their later employment that, in gratitude to God and his mercy, they must have dedicated themselves to producing and performing the music used to praise God at the wilderness tabernacle and later in the temple in Jerusalem (cf. Numbers 26:11).”

Here is a reminder that God treats us as individuals and that we come to faith in Jesus one by one, that always, no matter the past or a family history that might embarrass us, God welcomes every faithful person into kingdom service.

Tomorrow is Mother’s Day on the secular calendar and my mom always made sure I was in worship every Sunday. I will honour her memory by being with you in worship tomorrow at 9:30 a.m. and look forward to seeing you at SCBC or online.

The Rev. Dr. Bill Norman

P r a y

Here is an evening prayer offered as a poem, translated from the writings of Ephrem the Syrian, an influential Christian in ancient Turkey in the fourth century.

Receive, O Lord, in heaven above
Our prayers and supplications pure;
Give us a heart all full of love
And steady courage to endure.
Thy holy name our mouths confess,
Our tongues are harps to praise thy grace;
Forgive our sins and wickedness,
Who in this vigil seek thy face.
Let not our song become a sigh,
A wail of anguish and despair;
In loving-kindness, Lord most high,
Receive tonight our evening prayer.
O raise us in that day, that we
May sing, where all thy saints adore,
Praise to thy Father, and to thee,
And to thy Spirit, evermore. Amen.

D i v i n g D e e p e r

How am I actively pursuing biblical community? In what ways might I need to grow in that pursuit?

In what ways might you be spiritually dehydrating yourself? Are you looking for hope in something that cannot provide spiritual refreshment?

What is one concise truth from Psalm 42 (either a verse, verses, or a paraphrase) that you can commit to memory so that you might be armed with truth to combat lies or spiritual dryness in your life?

How can we live closer **WITH GOD** in our lives?

How are we being **TRANSFORMED** to be more like Christ?

How is the Holy Spirit empowering us to imitate Christ in what we **DO** this week?