

## The Downcast Man

Jesus in the Psalms

*Psalm 42*

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### I. I am Grimaldi (cf. Pr 14:10,13)

*“Even in laughter the heart may sorrow, And the end of mirth may be grief”* (Pr 14:13).

### II. Background

A. Book Two (Psalm 42-72 cf. Num 26:11; 2 Chr 20:19)

B. Setting

The setting of our psalm is a man in \_\_\_\_\_. He is separated from his fellow believers, unable to worship with God’s people, and subject to the taunts of his enemies.

### III. The Downcast Man

A. Lamentation and Exhortation #1 (1-5)

1. Facing the taunts of his enemies (3, 10).
2. Enduring isolation from God and His people (2, 4, 9 cf. Ex 23:17)

In his discouragement, the psalmist reminds himself that God will surely turn His face toward him and bless him. He recollects the Aaronic blessing that he had heard many times in the tabernacle, *“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace”* (Num 6:24-26).

B. Lamentation and Exhortation #2 (6-11)

In his sorrow, the only place the psalmist can turn is to the Lord. It is the Lord who must rescue him from his sorrow. He is empty, but he knows that God can fill him.

Nevertheless, in his exile, he *feels* as though God is drowning him in sorrow, overwhelming him with grief. So he cries out to God in prayer by day and by night (8), saying to God his Rock, *“Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?”* The oppression of his enemies is shattering him (10) as they reproach him and taunt him (11).

Again, these circumstances are causing the psalmist great personal grief. But he concludes the psalm by again reminding himself of God’s faithfulness: *“Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.”*

#### IV. Dealing with Depression

The psalms are suited to every circumstance of our lives. The more we learn the psalms, the more we shall be equipped to face the various circumstances of our lives in faith. Remember Paul's exhortation: *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs..."* (Col 3:16). The psalms are the word of Christ to us.

##### A. Express your grief to God (1-4, 6-10)

First, express your grief to God. One of the grievous things about discouragement and depression is that we can find it difficult to articulate our pain. Because depression weighs down our very soul, it is incredibly difficult to find words to articulate what we are experiencing. It is at this very point that the psalms come to our rescue.

##### B. Talk to your soul (5, 11 cf. 43:5)

Second, in your discouragement and depression, talk to your soul. Note the refrain: *"Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him..."* In his deep suffering, discouragement, and depression, the psalmist talks to his soul, he addresses himself.

This is a key in dealing with discouragement. The great problem when we are discouraged or depressed is that we \_\_\_\_\_ *to ourselves* rather than \_\_\_\_\_ *to ourselves*.

When you are cast down, be on your guard. When you notice that you are listening to yourself, take your "self" in hand. "Self," say, "Listen to me!" Talk to yourself.

##### C. Remember there is hope (cf. Num 6:24-27; 14:6-9; Rom 8:28, 31)

Third, when you talk to yourself, remind yourself of God's promises. Ground yourself in God and in His Word. Remember that there is hope in Him. The psalmist reminds himself of the Aaronic blessing:

*"The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace."*

God closes His words to Moses regarding this blessing with these words: *"So [the priests] shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will \_\_\_\_\_ them"* (6:27).

#### V. Conclusion