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The
Songs
43

PSALMS - The SONGS

Forty-three

Despair of Soul? Hope in God! (The Sequel)

READ AND OBSERVE

Read through **Psalm 43** and mark every reference to the LORD, or God, including all pronouns and synonyms, with a red triangle.

Read through **Psalm 43** and mark every reference to the psalmist, including all pronouns and synonyms, with a blue capital "R+".

Read through **Psalm 43** and mark every reference to the psalmist's soul with a blue capital "S".

Read through **Psalm 43** and mark every reference to despair or disturbed, along with all synonyms, with a brown tear drop.

Read through **Psalm 43** and mark every reference to enemies, along with all pronouns and synonyms, with an orange capital "W".

Read through **Psalm 43** and mark every geographical reference with a pair of orange brackets.

Read through **Psalm 43** and mark every reference to time with a blue box.

Read through **Psalm 43** and mark every comparison with a pink equal sign.

Read through **Psalm 43** and mark every contrast with a pink diagonal line.

Read through **Psalm 43** and divide the passage into the following segments. Mark and title these segments in your text using brackets in the margin.

1. Vindicate me, O God
2. Lead me in Your truth and bring me to Your holy hill, O God
3. My soul is in despair (I hope in God because I shall again praise Him)

READ AND ANSWER

Psalm 43:1-2

Who is speaking in this **Psalm**?

Whoever the psalmist is, is he the same man who wrote **Psalm 42**?

How can you know?



**Read Psalm 42 and Psalm 43 one right after the other.
What do you notice?**

**The two Psalms were traditionally sung together as one Psalm.
Although they are separate, they may still be sung together.
Either way, they remain together here, side by side,
as the first two Psalms in Book 2 of The Psalms.**

Who is the psalmist speaking to?

What does the psalmist ask God to do?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Why does he feel he needs vindication? (If he needs to be delivered from deceitful and unjust men, what are these men doing to him?)

Why is he pleading with God and not trying to deliver himself?

What two rhetorical questions does the psalmist ask?

1.

2.

Why does the psalmist feel as though his God has rejected him?

Why had the psalmist been mourning due to the oppression of the enemy?

Psalm 43:3-4

What route does the psalmist want God to take?

1.

2.

What does he expect God's light and God's truth would do for him?

1.

2.

Where is God's holy hill?



Point of Depth

Psalm 84

How lovely are Your dwelling places, O LORD of hosts!

***My soul longed and even yearned for the courts of the LORD;
My heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God.
The bird also has found a house,
And the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young,
Even Your altars, O LORD of hosts, My King and my God.***

***How blessed are those who dwell in Your house!
They are ever praising You. Selah.***

***How blessed is the man whose strength is in You,
In whose heart are the highways to Zion!
Passing through the valley of Baca they make it a spring;
The early rain also covers it with blessings.
They go from strength to strength,
Every one of them appears before God in Zion.***

***O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;
Give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah.***

***Behold our shield, O God,
And look upon the face of Your anointed.
For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside.
I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God
Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.
For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
The LORD gives grace and glory;
No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.***

***O LORD of hosts,
How blessed is the man who trusts in You!***

What is on God's holy hill?

What are God's dwelling places?

Where is the altar of God?

What is synonymous with God's holy hill, His dwelling places, and the altar of God?

What emotion does the psalmist expect to experience if he were brought to his God?

In fact, it is more for the psalmist than just experiencing joy while in the presence of his God—what exactly does the psalmist say *his God is*?

What will the psalmist do upon his return to God's holy hill, Jerusalem, where God's dwelling places and His altar are?

Psalm 43:5

Read **verse 5**. If you have studied **Psalm 42**, it should sound familiar. Go back to **Psalm 42** and reread it once again. Note which two verses in **Psalm 42** are practically identical to **Psalm 43:5**.

Who is the psalmist speaking to in **verse 5**?

What two rhetorical questions does he ask his soul?

1.

2.

What reasonable answer could his soul give him, according to the context of **Psalm 43**?

Instead of listening to his soul, what advice does the psalmist give to himself?

Why should he hope in God?

Why will he be able to praise God again?

1.

2.

READ AND REASON

This is interesting to think about...

Where is God's holy hill? It is true that Mount Zion, in Jerusalem on earth was called His holy hill, but in actuality His holy hill was Mount Zion in heaven.

Hmmm...

Where are God's dwelling places? You could say that His dwelling place was above the mercy seat in the Holy of holies in the temple at Jerusalem, but His dwelling places (plural) would more naturally refer to His home in heaven.

Hmmm...

Where is God's altar? Well, at the time of this **Psalm**, His earthly altar was in the temple at Jerusalem. But His true altar was in heaven. The temple at Jerusalem was built after the pattern of the true temple in heaven.

Hmmm...

I just can't help but ponder these differences between earth and heaven—partly because **Psalm 43** is a separate **Psalm** than **Psalm 42**.

Let me share with you what I am thinking...

In **Psalm 42**, the psalmist started out in a near-death state of mind because he was separated from Jerusalem and the temple, and therefore, he thought, from His God...

He was experiencing the gloom of depression and despair... and he was fighting it with all that he had... Twice, he literally talked himself into hope by remembering God and His truth.

And yet, according to **Psalm 43**, he still was not delivered back to Jerusalem—he remained an exile in a distant land. His enemies remained with him, as well, and he still struggled with emotional discouragement...

But in **Psalm 43**, the psalmist does not start out with complete despair (although he is still forlorn and wishes to return home). His enemies are still with him, but he believes they can be overcome through the strength of His God.

Verse 3 feels like a game-changer to me. He is not asking for a horse-drawn vehicle to come and get him and take him back home—instead, he asks for God's light and God's truth to be sent to him. While no carriage is sent to transport him to his beloved Jerusalem, God's light and God's truth are even better vehicles for transporting him to

his true need. It is not the earthly location of Jerusalem that really pierces his heart in longing, it is the nearness, the presence, of His God and his ability to worship Him, as he once did in Jerusalem.

It's as though the psalmist has just discovered that he can go directly into God's presence by following the path that God's light and God's truth show him. And he is right—God does not delight in sacrifices and burnt offerings, or any of the levitical rituals which were performed at the temple. God delights in obedience... And this psalmist realized that a righteous man could enter into the presence of God even without making the pilgrimage back to Jerusalem.

He now knew he could take his lyre and use it to praise God all he desired... without ever setting foot in Jerusalem again. Yes... he would love to go home to Jerusalem... but in the meantime, in the confinement of his exile... the nearness of his God was more than sufficient...

The continuance of his thought, **verse 5**, can be heard unaccompanied by the burdensome desperation which engulfed it in **Psalm 42:5, 11**. Here the psalmist sounds confident and poised. He possesses the heart of a man who leaned singularly on his God during his darkest hours... relentlessly... and broken through to a victorious faith that soars above the crippling crises of despair...

 Segment by Segment

**Try titling these segments yourself.
Ask God to help you.**

Verses 1-2

Verses 3-4

Verse 5

~ Purpose of Psalm 43

**Try to identify the purpose of Psalm 43.
The purpose simply states “*why* the Psalmist wrote the Psalm”.**

~ Theme of Psalm 43

**Try giving Psalm 43 a title by identifying its theme.
The theme simply states “*what* the Psalm is about”.**
