

Hope in God

Psalms 42:1-11 David wrote this psalm when he was going through a depressed state. He says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the help of my countenance" (Ps. 42:11, KJV). David is telling himself to praise God even when he does not feel like it. The world has grabbed this principle, and motivational seminars usually include a section on "self talk." God's Word relates this principle often. An example is, "Let the weak say I am strong" (Joel 3:10, KJV). There has been an emphasis over the years on making positive confessions rather than negative ones. Sometimes if we are not careful, we curse ourselves by declaring negative things over us. I know when I keep saying I'm tired, it seems I get more tired. David tells himself to hope in God.

What is hope? Hope is the substance that faith is made of. We are able to partake of this substance through the Word of God. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1, KJV). How can we build ourselves up in hope when we are having down days? David reveals the secret in this psalm. Even though things were not going David's way and he was depressed about it, he remembered that no matter what the circumstances were or how he felt, the Lord was still commanding His love toward him. "Yet the Lord will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life" (Ps. 42:8, KJV).

There was enough substance of faith (God's Word) hidden in David's heart to give him hope even at his lowest moment. He describes the physical, mental and emotional pain he is experiencing, yet in that tremendous time of pain, he makes the decision of his will to praise the Lord in the midst of all he was encountering. He tells himself to hope in God. If we put our hope in circumstances or our feelings, we will

easily lose faith and begin to sink into a depressed state. However, if we put our hope in God, His Word and His promises, we will eventually come out of the slump. David praised the Lord for the help and health of His countenance (presence). We can also praise the Lord for the hope of His countenance. I believe when David was down, he pulled out his harp, began to sing songs to the Lord and entered into the presence of the Lord. David prayed, sang songs and remembered the times when his soul was lifted through praise and worship. He also remembered the lovingkindness of the Lord. This is how he encouraged himself in the Lord. We can do the same.

Lord, help me to put all of my hope in You. When the storms of life are about to drown me, help me to anchor my soul in hope. You are the bishop of my soul, and only You can be the glory and lifter of my head when life gets me down.

**READ: Leviticus 19:1-20:21; Mark 8:10-38; Psalm 42:1-11;
Proverbs 10:17**