

Psalm 42

Quemadmodum

1 As the deer longs for the water-brooks, *
so longs my soul for you, O God.

2 My soul is athirst for God, athirst for the living God; *
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?

3 My tears have been my food day and night, *
while all day long they say to me, "Where now is your God?"

4 I pour out my soul when I think on these things: *
how I went with the multitude
and led them into the house of God,
with the voice of praise and thanksgiving, *
among those who keep holy-day.

5 Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul, *
and why are you so disquieted within me?
Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to the Holy One
who is the help of my countenance and my God.

6 My soul is heavy within me; *
therefore I will remember you from the land of Jordan,
and from the peak of Mizar among the heights of Hermon.

7 One deep calls to another in the noise of your cataracts; *
all your rapids and floods have gone over me.

8 The Lord grants loving-kindness in the daytime; *
in the night season a song of God is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.

9 I will say to the God of my strength, *
“Why have you forgotten me
and why do I go so heavily *
while the enemy oppresses me?”

10 While my bones are being broken, *
my enemies mock me to my face;
all day long they mock me and say to me, *
“Where now is your God?”

11 Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul, *
and why are you so disquieted within me?
Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to the Holy One
who is the help of my countenance and my God.

Psalm 43

Nonne Deo?

1 Give judgement for me, O God,
and defend my cause against an ungodly people; *
deliver me from the deceitful and the wicked.

2 For you are the God of my strength; *
why have you put me from you?
And why do I go so heavily *
while the enemy oppresses me?

3 Send out your light and your truth,
that they may lead me, *
and bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling;

4 that I may go to the altar of God,
to the God of my joy and gladness; *
and on the harp I will give thanks to you, O God my God.

5 Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul, *
and why are you so disquieted within me? *
Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to the Holy One,
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Glory to God, Source of all being, eternal Word, and Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Nehemiah 9:26-38

A reading from the book of Nehemiah.

“Nevertheless, they were disobedient and rebelled against you and cast your law behind their backs and killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you, and they committed great blasphemies. Therefore you gave them into the hands of their enemies, who made them suffer. Then in the time of their suffering they cried out to you, and you heard them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave them saviors who saved them from the hands of their enemies. But after they had rest, they again did evil before you, and you abandoned them to the hands of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them, yet when they turned and cried to you, you heard from heaven, and many times you rescued them according to your mercies. And you warned them in order to turn them back to your law, yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey your commandments but sinned against your ordinances, by the observance of which a person shall live. They turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck and would not obey. Many years you were patient with them and warned them by your spirit through your prophets, yet they would not listen. Therefore you handed them over to the peoples of the lands. Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

“Now therefore, our God—the great and mighty and awesome God, keeping covenant and steadfast love—do not treat lightly all the hardship that has come upon us, upon our kings, our officials, our priests, our prophets, our ancestors, and all your people, since the time of the kings of Assyria until today. You have been just in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly; our kings, our officials, our priests, and our ancestors have not kept your law or heeded the commandments and the warnings that you gave them. Even in their own kingdom, and in the great goodness you bestowed on them, and in the large and rich land that you set before them, they did not serve you and did not turn from their wicked works. Here we are, slaves to this day, slaves in the land that you gave to our ancestors to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts. Its rich yield goes to the kings whom you have set over us because of our sins; they have power also over our bodies and over our livestock at their pleasure, and we are in great distress.”

Because of all this we make a firm agreement in writing, and on that sealed document are inscribed the names of our officials, our Levites, and our priests.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.