

“TROUBLE TIMES”

Psalm 42

(Part I)

Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, Psalm 42: 5, 11

If you refer to the inscription with which this psalm opens, you will find that it is addressed to the Choirmaster, and is called a Maskil of the Sons of Korah. The Sons of Korah were a family of singers in Israel who passed along their musical office from generation to generation, and were noted as an outstanding family of musicians. These inscriptions are part of the inspired record; they belong with the psalm and indicate something vital about it. The exact meaning of this common term is not clear but scholars believe it is a Hebrew word for teaching. If this is true Psalm 42 is intended to teach something to us. What? Judging by the repeated refrain, it is intended to teach us about how to handle troubled times.

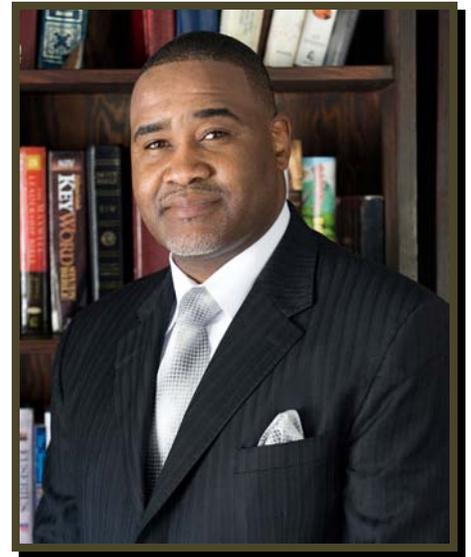
The experience which this psalm reflects was unquestionably David's, and was put to music by the Korah Family Singers, and dedicated to the Chief Musician, or the Royal Choirmaster. Some scholars feel that the occasion which is reflected in this psalm was when David was excluded from the temple at the time of Absalom's rebellion. Late in David's reign Absalom took over the kingdom temporarily and David was driven into exile outside Jerusalem. There is no mention of this in the psalm, but it clearly reflects a time of depression and frustration.

Almost everyone will at some time in their life be affected by depression, either our own or someone else's, they will come. None of us need think that because we are Christians we shall escape times of depression; but when they come, we need to do something about them.

We learn from this Psalm that when we are surround by trouble and despair to put our hope in God. "Hope in God, is a sure "antidote" for restoration of joy." Hope is a healing medicine for troubled believers. Hope is soul aspirin for those who suffer from chronic discouragement. No one is hopeless whose hope is in God.

(Stay tuned for Part II in December's edition)

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