

Psalms 42 & 43

God Speaks When I Am Moody

A statement worth remembering, probably spoken by Augustine, an early church father is this: "God has reserved in every human heart a vacancy that He alone can fill."

The Heading of Psalm 42: To the Choirmaster. A Maskil of the Sons of Korah.

A Maskil is: _____ The Sons of Korah were _____.

The author of these psalms was most likely a Levite who perhaps was taken hostage by the Syrians during the reign of King Jehoshaphat of Judah.

Psalm 43 has no heading. The thoughts of Psalm 42 are carried into Psalm 43, and therefore the two are usually considered to be one composition.

Webster defines *mood* as a particular state of mind or feeling. We'll look for evidence of the author's mood as we read the two psalms

Section 1: Read Psalm 42: 1-5.

1. What is the psalmist's mood in these verses? What words describe his mood?
2. What question does he ask?
3. Who were the people in v. 3?
4. What does v. 4 tell us about the psalmist's past life?
5. For what is the psalmist longing for in vv. 1-5?
6. Think about your own life. What kinds of things are you longing for?

How can memories of the past encourage us at such times?

Does it really bother you to be deprived of the privilege of worship with fellow Christians?
(note: this question came from a source with a copyright date of 1994.)

7. We'll see v. 5 again. How does the psalmist's mood seem to change?

8. A possible heading for this section is: **The Psalmist longs for _____**.

Section 2: Read Psalm 42: 6-11.

9. Verse 6 gives a possible location for the psalmist. Mount Hermon is northeast of the Sea of Galilee. On a modern map it can be found near the border of present-day Syria, Lebanon, and Israel. We don't know the location of Mount Mizar, but *mizar* means "little." It's possible that Mount Mizar is too small to appear on a map.

We see that the psalmist is far from Jerusalem and therefore unable to attend temple worship. What is his mood in verse 6?

10. Verse 7 uses a word picture to describe the psalmist's feelings. What is he feeling? What might be the cause of the feelings?

Can you relate this to today's situation?

11. How does the psalmist attempt to relieve his pain? (vv. 8-10)

How is he completely honest in his conversation with God? Is this okay?

12. **Read Mark 14: 34 & 36.** Compare Jesus' complaint with those of the psalmist.

13. Now look at Ps 42: 11. Where have we seen this before? How does it compare with the response of Jesus in Mark 14: 36?

14. One more question for you to think about: Have you ever felt forgotten by God in some dire situation? What did you do? (You don't need to share this with all of us – unless you want to!)

15. The heading for this section might be: **The psalmist feels forgotten** _____.

Section 3: Read Psalm 43.

Psalm 43 has no heading. It is a continuation of the direction of Psalm 42.

16. In verse 1, who is troubling the psalmist now? What does he ask God to do?

17. Look at verse 2.

What mood is the psalmist in now?

To what two questions does he seek an answer?

18. Since the psalmist cannot change his situation or the difficult people with whom he is associated, what request does he make? (verse 3)

19. In verse 4, the psalmist predicts what will happen if the previous request is granted. What will happen?

How will this affect his mood?

20. Three times (42:5, 42:11, and 43:5) the psalmist tries to shake off his previous moods.

What question does he ask?

What solution does he find?

The heading for this psalm might be: **The psalmist prays for _____.**

In Psalm 43:3, the psalmist asks God to “send out Your Light and Your Truth”.

What truths about Jesus brighten the way?

Look at: **John 1:4-9**

John 8:12

For your own consideration:

Still today we face many times when people are unsympathetic to our longing for God and the things of the kingdom. We live and deal with difficult people, both inside and outside the church. Have you experienced any difficulties from people with whom you live or work or associate who do not understand your situation? What was your reaction?