

Lenten Devotional February 25, 2024

Scripture

Psalm 42

- 1 *As a deer longs for flowing streams,
so my soul longs for you, O God.*
- 2 *My soul thirsts for God,
for the living God.
When shall I come and behold
the face of God?*
- 3 *My tears have been my food
day and night,
while people say to me continually,
“Where is your God?”*
- 4 *These things I remember,
as I pour out my soul:
how I went with the throng,
and led them in procession to the house of God,
with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving,
a multitude keeping festival.*
- 5 *Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.*

*My soul is cast down within me;
therefore I remember you
from the land of Jordan and of Hermon,
from Mount Mizar.*
- 7 *Deep calls to deep
at the thunder of your cataracts;
all your waves and your billows
have gone over me.*
- 8 *By day the LORD commands his steadfast love,
and at night his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.*
- 9 *I say to God, my rock,
“Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I walk about mournfully
because the enemy oppresses me?”*
- 10 *As with a deadly wound in my body,
my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me continually,
“Where is your God?”*

11 *Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.*

Devotion

The Rev. Annamarie Groenenboom '17

When I was young, I had the opportunity to visit Mt. Rushmore. It was the hottest day of the year. There was no cloud in the sky, just the blazing sun. My parents decided we needed to go on a family hike around the base of the mountain. I remember that we seemed to walk around the whole mountain and it seemed to take the whole day. We didn't have water and I remember feeling like I was going to die from a combination of exhaustion, dehydration, and boredom. But mostly, I was just so, so thirsty. This hike was one of the times in my life that I remember distinctly being so thirsty, needing water so badly, that I would have done almost anything to get it.

Water is a necessity in life. The psalmist who wrote Psalm 42 understood this concept well. He needs God like a deep thirst. God is not just a desire but a necessity in life. Yet, for some reason, the psalmist can't find God, can't feel God's presence. He can't go to the temple where he feels God's presence most acutely.

We too need God like we need water. God is our source of life. But where can we find God when the wells of our souls feel like they've run dry? When we ask ourselves, "Where is our God?"

The psalmist finds hope through memory. He finds the presence of God through remembering the places and moments where he felt God's presence. Like the psalmist, we can find hope in God's presence by remembering the thin places in life—the places where heaven and earth meet, and we truly feel God's presence. During this Lenten season, let us all remember the moments of God's faithfulness where we truly felt the presence of God.

Prayer

Gracious God, you are the God of our past, present, and future. In times when we feel a deep thirst for you, help us to remember the moments when we have felt your presence in the most powerful ways. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.