

Thanksgiving – Still Thankful

Living thankful is a direct result of the impact that God has on our lives.

Throughout the history of man, we have observed many reasons to rejoice in the Lord our God with glorious shouts of thanksgiving. These shouts of thanksgiving offered from the lips of those who have been redeemed will continue to increase until they have the sound of many waters and the sound of mighty thunderings. (Revelation 19:6) In every stage of life, people have given praise and thanksgiving to the Lord God Omnipotent Who reigns in great power and glory.

The Psalms of David often provide a voice to the cries of our hearts.

He shows us the highs during great triumph and trust and rest that is found in the intense lows of deep valleys. Most of us have known both of those times. We have rejoiced with great joys as we have experienced God's blessings and victories. In the distresses of troubles that plague us day and night, we have found God to be a Refuge and Shelter.

Many of us have faced those hours of sorrow and troubles when we asked, "*Where is your God?*"

The Sons of Korah were a group of Levitical singers who had served in the tabernacle and were appointed by David to sing praises in the temple.

Their songs often made a contrast between the joy they found in God's presence and what they faced in life. Psalms 42 is one of those songs that portrayed a deep thirst for God in the midst of distress. It is apparent that the Sons of Korah were singing about King David's experiences. David had experienced a devastating thirst for what he had known in the house of God.

Psalm 42:1-4 NKJV As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my food day and night, While they continually say to me, "*Where is your God?*" When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me. For I used to go with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, With the voice of joy and praise, With a multitude that kept a pilgrim feast.

Does that sound like you?

Have you experienced moments when your soul was crying out with joy and praise? You remember times when you were with other believers in the house of God and you were filled with cries of thanksgiving. You remember the voice of joy and the sound of praise.

While still in a time of deep discouragement, David cried out in thirst for God's presence.

Psalm 42:5 NLT Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise Him again— my Savior and My God!

David was transparent with his emotions and feelings. From within his deep discouragement he said, "*I will remember my God!*" Have you been going through

a great dark valley experience? Is your soul aching for the Lord God to come to your aid?

Psalm 42:11 NLT Why am I discouraged? Why is my heart so sad? I will put my hope in God! I will praise Him again— my Savior and my God!

Listen to what David did when he was cast down. He said to himself, *“Look up! God is still your help.”* While he was still in that valley, he had a testimony of God’s faithfulness.

Psalm 3:1–2 NKJV Lord, how they have increased who trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me. Many are they who say of me, “There is no help for him in God.” Selah

Psalm 3:3–4 NKJV But You, O Lord, are a shield for me, My glory and the One who lifts up my head. I cried to the Lord with my voice, And He heard me from His holy hill. Selah

Psalm 3:5–6 NKJV I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me all around.

Psalm 3:7–8 NKJV Arise, O Lord; Save me, O my God! For You have struck all my enemies on the cheekbone; You have broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongs to the Lord. Your blessing is upon Your people. Selah

David was putting into practice lifting up his eyes to the Lord who made heaven and earth.

When things do not turn out the way that you planned and when it seems there is more against you than for you, lift up your eyes to the Lord Who made heaven and earth. David knew that the Lord had been a present help in the time of his trouble. You need to practice praising the Lord Who has been your healer and the Supplier of your needs. He has been your defense on the right hand and on the left. He is your strength and the sustainer of your life.

The more we learn about the Lord our God, the more we will “still be thankful.”

When the waters of trouble surge all around you, lift up your head and rejoice, for the Lord is your salvation. When the fire of adversity is raging, He is your peace and safety. When the enemy has encamped all around you, the Lord is your high tower and rock of defense. He has tens of thousands of angels that are encamped all around you. When your iniquities and sins drag you down and almost destroy your soul, He becomes your righteousness and the lover of your soul.

This is why we still cry out with thankful hearts.

1 Chronicles 16:34 NKJV Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

Did you hear that?

God is good, and His mercy endures forever. Just think about that. When everything around you seems to be bad, look up to the God of your salvation. When your trouble has encamped around you like an army, remember the Lord has

not forsaken you. When your soul is distressed with the trouble of it all, God is still your very present help.

When I consider these things, my mind goes back to declarations of Psalms 23.

Look at these familiar words with an attitude of thanksgiving.

Psalm 23:1–3 NLT The LORD is my shepherd; I have all that I need. ²He lets me rest in green meadows; he leads me beside peaceful streams. ³He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths, bringing honor to his name.

Psalm 23:4 NLT Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid, for you are close beside me. Your rod and your staff protect and comfort me.

Psalm 23:5–6 NLT You prepare a feast for me in the presence of my enemies. You honor me by anointing my head with oil. My cup overflows with blessings. ⁶Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will live in the house of the LORD forever.

Why are we still thankful?

When everyone else would be filled with fear and dread, we have hope. When everyone else would be hungry and deprived, we are taken care of and fed. When everyone else would be having restless days and sleepless nights, we rest under God's care. Through every storm and adversity, we have peace that passes understanding.

We should put this into practice right now.

Psalm 24:7–8 NKJV Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. ⁸Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle.

Psalm 24:9–10 NKJV Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. ¹⁰Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah

We should take a Selah moment and just give God more praise and thanksgiving for all that He has done for us.