

Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs: The Master Musician's Melodies

Bereans Sunday School
Placerita Baptist Church
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by
William D. Barrick, Th.D.
Professor of OT, The Master's Seminary



Psalm 43 — Light and Truth

1.0 Introducing Psalm 43

- Psalms 42 and 43 are often considered together.
 - ◆ See notes on Psalm 42 for the reasons.
 - ◆ Note the refrain found twice in Psalm 42 (vv. 5, 11) is also found here in Psalm 43 (v. 5).
- “[I]t has been supposed to be a fragment wrongly separated from the preceding song; but it is always dangerous to allow these theories of error in Holy Scripture, and in this instance it would be very difficult to show just cause for such an admission. . . . We believe the fact is that the style of the poetry was pleasant to the writer, and therefore in after life he wrote this supplemental hymn after the same manner.”—C. H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David*, 3 vols. (reprint; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, n.d.), 1/2:292.

Reading Psalm 43 (NAU)

- 43:1** Vindicate me, O God, and plead my case against an ungodly nation;
O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man!
- 43:2** For You are the God of my strength; why have You rejected me?
Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?
- 43:3** O send out Your light and Your truth, let them lead me;
Let them bring me to Your holy hill
And to Your dwelling places.
- 43:4** Then I will go to the altar of God,
To God my exceeding joy;
And upon the lyre I shall praise You, O God, my God.

**43:5 Why are you in despair, O my soul?
And why are you disturbed within me?
Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him
The help of my countenance and my God.**

For the choir director.

2.0 Understanding Psalm 43

2.1 Outline for Psalms 42–43

- I. The Psalmist's Introspection (42:1-5)
- II. The Psalmist's Retrospection (42:6-11)
- III. The Psalmist's Vindication (43:1-5)



2.2 Notes

- v. 1 “Vindicate me”
 - God alone can vindicate the psalmist.
 - God has the authority and power to defend the psalmist and to prosecute the enemy.
- v. 1 “an ungodly nation”
 - Enemies of the psalmist and of his nation have made life unbearable and depressing.
 - If this is a hymn penned during Judah's exile, the reference would be to all the Israelites suffered at the hands of the Babylonians.
- v. 3 “Your light and Your truth”
 - “The light of God is the experience of the fullness of his redemption (36:9; Isa 58:8, 10; 60:1, 3). The ‘truth’ ... of God is the expression of his covenantal fidelity (40:10; 57:3).”—Willem A. VanGemeren, “Psalms,” in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 12 vols., ed. by Frank E. Gaebelain, 5:336 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991).
- vv. 3-4 “Let them bring me to Your holy hill . . .”
 - Is this a return from exile or leaving this earth in death?
 - Note the movement:
 - Mt. Zion (“to Your holy hill,” v. 3a).
 - The Temple (“to Your dwelling places,” v. 3b—the plural gives an intensifying force: “Your very dwellingplace”).
 - The altar in the Temple (“to the altar of God,” v. 4a).
 - God Himself (“To God my exceeding joy,” v. 4b).

- v. 5 “The help of my countenance and my God”
 - This third stanza, as it were, added to the first two (in Psalm 42) expresses a prayer of strong conviction.
 - God is the psalmist’s help in time of need (cp. Hebrews 4:16).

3.0 Singing Psalm 43

Send the Light

There’s a call comes ringing o’er the
restless wave,
“Send the light! Send the light!”
There are souls to rescue there are souls to
save,
Send the light! Send the light!

Refrain:

*Send the light, the blessèd Gospel light;
Let it shine from shore to shore!
Send the light, the blessèd Gospel light;
Let it shine forevermore!*

We have heard the Macedonian call today,
“Send the light! Send the light!”
And a golden offering at the cross we lay,
Send the light! Send the light!

Let us pray that grace may everywhere
abound,
“Send the light! Send the light!”
And a Christlike spirit everywhere be
found,
Send the light! Send the light!

Let us not grow weary in the work of love,
“Send the light! Send the light!”
Let us gather jewels for a crown above,
Send the light! Send the light!

— Words & Music: Charles H. Gabriel (1890)

4.0 Praying Psalm 43

- Lord, defend me from my enemies. [v. 1]
- My strength is in You, Father. [v. 2]
- Thank You for redeeming me and being faithful to me. [v. 3]
- My desire is to be with You, my God. [v. 4]
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5.0 Applying Psalm 43

- Salvation (“Your light”) and God’s own faithfulness (“Your truth”) lead us on life’s journey.
- Our ultimate desire and goal is the presence of God.