

A Has Been

“ . . . I used to go to the house of God. . . ”

Psalm 42:4 (NIV)

In the western world we refer to a person as a “has been” when we mean they were at one time an outstanding person but something happened and now they are just another failure in life. Their former glory is gone and no one seeks them out or wants to receive their help.

It is indeed sad to witness the decline of someone who was very successful but now is in need of help from others. It can be a source of embarrassment to the person who has fallen from prominence to be in a crowd of people. They wonder what others are thinking about them. They imagine everyone pities them or is gossiping about them.

The Psalmist is just such a person. Apparently at one time he was a vitally active child of God who went on the Sabbath with wonderful friends to the house of God. In verse 3 of the Psalm he speaks of his struggle with the painful ways God has dealt with him. His enemies mock him and ask where his God is in times of trouble.

Many a child of God has felt deserted and alone in their sorrow. They wonder if the scoff-

ers are right after all. They hear the scorn in people’s voices as they taunt the Christian about how God has abused them and left them to sort out their own problems.

Psalm 42:6 records the Psalmist’s hope that in the future he will again praise God. For now it seems he cannot find the Lord in the sea of troubles that has engulfed him. How do you worship a God who seems absent from your life? In verse 9 the Psalmist asks God why He has deserted him. He speaks of dreadful suffering.

Such is the case with many of us today. God seems to be totally absent from our situation. We grieve the loss of our Lord’s wonderful presence. Then we come to the place where we recognize with the Psalmist that our real hope is never in the present but in the future. This life is what one author called, “a valley of tears”. Regardless of how life abuses the Christian their hope lies beyond their present difficulties.

The conclusion of the Psalm resonates with a word of faith in the Lord. Psalm 42:11 (NIV) “Why, my soul, are you down-

cast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.”

The writer has hope that once more he will come and worship the Lord with his fellow believers. As you read this Psalm you see the man moving back and forth between despair and hope. He grieves over the present problems and yet speaks of a hopeful future.

Lift your eyes Christian, to look beyond what you endure now and see the glorious eternity that is being prepared for those who love the Lord. Endure the present by the wonderful prospect of what God has prepared for those who love Him.

Perhaps in this life some of us will be called, “has beens”. But we need to remember that we should really be called, “will be’s”. The day will come when we shall be forever with the Lord and all the difficulties of the present will disappear in the glories of eternity. Wait on the Lord and He shall bring all this to pass.