

1. We are going to continue this morning with our word from the Lord for 2023.
2. This is Your Year of Jubilee.
3. This is the year where the Lord restores and renews. Where the Lord brings liberty and freedom and life.
4. The last two weeks we talked about the renewing of our strength.
5. In week one our scripture was found in... **Isaiah 40:29-31** He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. **30** Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; **31** but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.
6. And then last week our text was from **1 Peter 5:10** And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.
7. We discovered that Peter was writing to followers of Jesus who had been scattered throughout the known world at that time.
8. He calls them exile. Strangers living in a foreign land who were not able to return to their home country.
9. It was a struggle that was sapping their strength.
10. In chapter 5 Peter reminds these faithful believers of the relationships through which God could renew their strength.
11. Strength is not renewed only between us and God, renewed strength is brought to us through multiple relationships that the Lord has provided for us.
12. What are those relationships?
13. Relationships with other believers. Our relationships with other believers are to be carried out in submission to our elders in the Lord. Those whom God has placed over us that lovingly and carefully lead us toward greater maturity in Christ.
14. The kingdom of God is based on an authority structure. All of us have elders over us including me. And refusal to submit to those Godly elders is a sign of sinful pride that puts us in opposition to God and his ways.
15. Our relationships with other believers are also to be carried out through humility toward one another. As The Amplified Bible says to tie on the servant's apron. To be willing to lovingly serve one another.

16. Contrary to popular belief, strength is renewed not as we sit back and let everyone wait on us, strength I renewed as we actively serve others.
17. Where in the body of Christ are you actively serving others?
18. The second relationship through which the Lord provides strength is through our relationship with God.
19. 1 Peter 5:6 tells us to humble ourselves under God's mighty hand. Not the kind of hand designed to squeeze the life out of us, but the kind of mighty hand that protects and cares for us.
20. If we will humble ourselves under God's mighty hand, then Peter says that the Lord will lift us up in due time.
21. Being strengthened and lifted up comes through humble submission to the Lord.
22. And then the third relationship is not a relationship with but rather a relationship to.
23. In order to be strong, we need to know what the enemy is like and how he acts so we can actively resist him.
24. Being strengthened is not a passive thing whereby we just sit back and let it happen. Having our strength renewed is a result of our participation in God's process of that renewal.
25. Only he can renew our strength, but only we can cooperate with that renewal.
26. This morning we are going to talk about something else the Lord wants to renew in each of us and that is hope.

TEXT: Psalm 42:1-11 For the director of music. A maskil of the Sons of Korah. As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. **2** My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? **3** My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" **4** These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go to the house of God under the protection of the Mighty One with shouts of joy and praise among the festive throng. **5** Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. **6** My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar. **7** Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. **8** By day the LORD directs his love, 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 go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?" **10** My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day

long, "Where is your God?" 11 Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

TITLE: Renew Your Strength.

INTRO:

1. Verse, one tells us that this psalm is actually a worship song, written for people to sing.
2. As we will see it was a reminder to them of not only the struggles we face as the people of God, but also the recipe for the renewing of our hope when we find ourselves in hopeless situations.
3. I don't have to tell you that thousands of years later we are prone to find ourselves in circumstances that see to such the hope right out of us.
4. Circumstances and sorrows that touch us all the way down to the depth of our souls.
5. In these 11 verses, the writers of the Psalm use the word soul 6 different times.
6. Our soul has been described as the command center of the human personality. It includes our intellect (thinking), our emotions (how we feel), and our will (the ability to choose for ourselves).
7. Our soul is the deepest part of our being. When something touches our soul, it touches every part of us.
8. The writers of Psalm 42 describe the condition of their soul as being disturbed within them (verse 5).
9. Every part of my being is disturbed. Troubled, anxious, agitated, or frightened.
10. Those are some very powerful words to describe this terrible condition of the soul. But hidden in verse 5 is an illustration, a picture if you will that we would tend to miss in the 21st century.
11. We would probably miss this verbal picture because it is a word used to describe a condition that we almost never use.
12. Psalm 42:5 Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me?
13. When the Sons of Korah ask the question, why my soul are you so downcast, they are painting a picture that everyone in olden times

would have understood.

14. It was more than just discouraged. The picture is actually one of being distraught.
15. The word they use is downcast.
16. Downcast is actually two words put together. We all understand what down is. But probably very few of us understand what the word cast means.
17. The word cast was a word that could be used to describe any animal that was in a deadly situation.
18. For the sake of today we are going to consider a sheep.
19. It would have been very common in the Old Testament for a shepherd to say, I came across a sheep that was cast.
20. A cast sheep was a sheep that had accidentally become turned upside down. **(Picture of sheep)**
21. A sheep that was cast is one who had gotten rolled over on their back and were unable to get back up on their feet.
22. It was literally a hopeless situation because sheep are unable to get back on their feet when this happens. Only the shepherd can help them get back upright.
23. A cast sheep flails its legs frantically and usually makes these distressing sounds.
24. It was also a deadly situation. When a sheep was cast, they were very vulnerable to predators. And on top of that they were susceptible to suffocating.
25. Gasses from the grass they had been eating would build up and kill them very quickly.
26. Can you imagine a more hopeless situation? That is what the writers meant when they asked, why my soul are you downcast.
27. In talking about humans, they were describing a condition that was overwhelming, distressing, and hopeless.
28. I don't have to tell you that is the very place we can find ourselves in at times.
29. I must admit, I have found myself in that condition several times throughout my life, and chances are I will find myself in that condition several more times.

30. And the reality is being a believer and follower of Jesus doesn't make us immune to those seasons of life.
31. In fact, being a believer and follower of Jesus Christ is one of the tools the enemy uses against us to try and take us down for the count.
32. In verse one it says as the deer pants for streams of water, my soul pants for you God. Meaning, I am searching and longing for you God, but it feels like I am dying of thirst.
33. In verse 2 they ask another question. When can I go and meet God? I am in the middle of this situation that feels like it is killing me, and I don't even know what to do to get God's attention.
34. In verse 3 the sorrow becomes even deeper. My tears have been my food day and night, and people say to me all day long, where is your God?
35. Doesn't that sound just like the enemy to kick you while you are down?
36. I don't know about you but I have gone through times in my life where I thought, nobody understands what I am going through and how hard this is on me, but the writers of this Psalm, the Sons of Korah, seem to have captured perfectly the depth of darkness that all of us can face at times in our lives.
37. Times of hopelessness.
38. But praise God. Hopelessness is not the end of the story.
39. In the first part of verse 5 we have the picture of the cast sheep, on its back flailing away, and the depth of the disturbance that our soul is experiencing, and then hope.
40. Psalm 42:5 Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.
41. We begin to see in the last part of verse 5 the restoration of hope.
42. It is here in the song that the music ramps up and the excitement starts to build and the belief begins to stir.
43. Maybe there is hope after all.
44. Let me assure you this morning, if you find yourself today in a hopeless situation, there is hope.
45. The God we serve is a God of hope. And the God we hope in is able to renew hope inside us and get us back on our feet.

46. So, let's sing along with the Sons of Korah as the Lord begins to renew our hope.
47. The first thing we need to know is this.

It is not being in a hopeless situation that is the problem, the problem is staying in that hopeless situation.

1. In other words, we shouldn't beat ourselves up when what we are experiencing is hopelessness because God doesn't beat us up.
2. The Lord understands that being in situations of hopelessness are part of the journey.
3. Remember that when the writers ask the question in verse 5, why my soul are you downcast, they are referring to a sheep who is on its back flailing around.
4. The question they are asking is NOT. Everybody say NOT. The question they are asking is not what is the matter with you?
5. The question they are asking is not, why aren't you a better Christian.
6. The statement they are making is not, there is something wrong with you if you feel hopeless.
7. I believe those statements are true because of the nature of sheep.
8. Multiple times in the bible we are referred to as sheep.
9. Here is the thing about sheep. Sheep have short stubby legs and fairly large bodies. To put it plainly, sheep tend to be top heavy.
10. Especially if the sheep is pregnant or the weight of the wool they are wearing is very great.
11. On top of that, the terrain they live on is not flat, it is hilly and it is very easy to stumble.
12. Because of that, sheep get cast all the time. It's a normal part of their lives.
13. I believe the same can be said about us. We carry weights. We get top heavy if you will. We sometimes stumble and fall when what we are going through is difficult. And often times the result is that we too get cast.
14. On our backs, legs flailing away with no way of getting back on our feet.

15. So the problem is not finding ourselves cast, hopelessly on our back, the problem is not crying out to our shepherd, the only one who can help us get upright again.
16. Sheep are stubborn. They don't want to listen to the shepherd. And I hate to say it but so are we sometimes.
17. There is no way to think your way out of, or work your way out of, or earn your way out of hopelessness, the only hope is to cry out to the great shepherd who is always listening to our cry.
18. So, the question is, how should we cry out to Him?

We cry out to him through praise.

1. Psalm 42:5 Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.
2. Ok pastor. Now I know you have lost your mind.
3. When I am in a hopeless situation, on my back, feeling like I am suffocating, the thing you want me to do is praise God?
4. Yes. Praise God.
5. What do you want me to praise him for? Do you expect me to praise Him for the hopelessness I feel? No.
6. Do you expect me to praise him for this hopeless situation I find myself in? Absolutely not.
7. The writers of Psalm 42 didn't praise God for the disturbing situation they were in, they praised God for the disturbing situations God had delivered them from in the past.
8. Psalm 42:6 My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar.
9. Again, it is possible for us to miss the meaning of this verse.
10. Several bible scholars agree that this was probably a reference to king David before he became king when he was being hunted down like an animal by Saul.
11. And when it says I will remember you from the land of Jordan, the heights of Hermon, and from mount Mizar, it was referring to times in David's life where he too felt hopeless. Trapped. With his back against the wall.
12. These were physical places where David and his men were near

death, and yet the lord came through for them and delivered them and brought them out of their hopeless situation.

13. So, what is the key to seeing our hope restored in hopeless situations? To remember that God is great. To remember that we have been hopeless before. To remember that the Lord has delivered us before. And to praise God because we trust him to deliver us again.

Conclusion:

1. You see, when we talk about the restoration of our hope, we are not referring to sitting down, wallowing in the mud, and asking the Lord to give us hope like a gift or a present.
2. Don't get me wrong. The Lord does want to give us hope. But what I want us to focus on today is that the restoration of our hope doesn't begin by relating to hope as if it is a thing, the restoration of our hope begins when we practice the principle of intentionally putting our hope in the Lord.
3. Psalm 42:5 Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.
4. To put our hope in God is an action phrase.
5. To praise him is an action phrase.
6. Again, I am not saying we can praise our way out of hopelessness like it's our job.
7. I believe it is praise for what the Lord has done in the past that is the quickest way to summon our great shepherd who can get us turned right side up again.
8. And so today, I am going to ask all of us to put this principle into practice.
9. We are going to ask the Holy Spirit to remind us of God's provision in the past and we are going to praise him for what he is done.
10. I recognize not everyone here today is dealing with hopelessness.
11. If you arrived full of hope, then remembering what God has done and praising him will only lift your hope further.
12. But if you are facing a hopeless situation or season, remembering and praising God is the key to get you back on your feet.
13. Pray the Holy Spirit will remind us of God's goodness.

14. Lead in a time of praise to God.
15. Ask Him to restore hope.
16. Make this practice a part of your everyday life.