

Week 19

5/8/13

James: I want to welcome you to Wednesdays with Beth. I'm James Robison.

If you've been watching *LIFE Today* this week, you've been seeing Dr. Ben Carson. What a gift from God.

I wrote a commentary titled, "A Breath of Fresh Air." If you didn't read it, I would really like to suggest... I wish you would write this down. Make it a point to go there. JamesRobison.net and I post a commentary every week dealing with issues that are of concern to me, to you, and I believe to God and pass them on.

But go back a few weeks and read what I wrote about him the first time I heard him; a breath of fresh air. And you've been listening to him.

Well, Beth Moore today is going to ask the question so often we ask, why? Why? Why do things happen? It's not wrong to question. Not even wrong to question God. I think you're going to appreciate what she shares and hopefully you'll tell your friends about Dr. Carson being on with us. Encourage them to watch the program.

Here's Beth Moore. Welcome her.

Begin video clip

Beth: Let me tell you this before I read it to you. Scholars through the centuries have believed that probably Psalm 42 and 43 were originally one Psalm. So it went from the very first verse all the way to the end of Psalm 43. So I'm going to read it to you that way because that's the way they believe -- and you'll see why because the chorus, the refrain repeats itself over and over in these two Psalms. So I'm going to start at verse one of 42 and I'm going to read all the way through 43.

But here's what I want you to do. I've really called this group into participation and I want you to do the same thing. When I ask them for something, I want you to do it too, even if you feel silly in your den or if you're watching on a break at work, whatever you may be doing. Try as much as you can to get into it and answer back. Here's your assignment first of all. As I read it to you, I want you to count off the questions because these Psalms, they flow in the form of a question mark. So as I read it to you, when I come to the first question, I want you all to shout out, one. When I get

to the second one, two! And then I just want you to keep going until I get to the last verse of 43. Is that a deal?

So I want to hear -- I want them to hear it and I want them to do it too. So listen carefully, I'll try to emphasize it where I need to, to get you started. Psalm 43, verse one. I'm going to read through 43.

As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

Audience: One!

Beth: My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me all day long, "Where is your God?"

Audience: Two!

Beth: 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. Why, my soul, are you downcast?

Audience: three!

Beth: Why so disturbed within me?

Audience: Four.

Beth: Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon – from Mount Mizar. Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me – a prayer to the God of my life. I say to God my Rock, "Why have you forgotten me?"

Audience: Five.

Beth: Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?"

Audience: Six.

Beth: My bones suffer mortal agony as my foes taunt me, saying to me all day long, "Where is your God?"

Audience: Seven.

Beth: Why, my soul, are you downcast?

Audience: Eight.

Beth: Why so disturbed within me?

Audience: Nine.

Beth: Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. Vindicate me, my God, and plead my cause against an unfaithful nation. Rescue me from those who are deceitful and wicked. You are God my stronghold. Why have you rejected me?

Audience: Ten.

Beth: Why must I go about mourning, oppressed by the enemy?

Audience: Eleven.

Beth: Send me your light and your faithful care, let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy mountain, to the place where you dwell. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God. Why, my soul, are you downcast?

Audience: Twelve.

Why so disturbed within me?

Audience: Thirteen.

Beth: Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

How many questions you got, girlfriends and guy friends? Thirteen! -- And in a few verses.

Did anybody happen to take stock which question is asked the most? Why? Why? Why? Ten times, in these two Psalms that are believed to be by many just one, just one writing in its entirety, ten times the Psalmist says, "Why? Why?" Now notice with me, if you've got this. If you've got little captions and headings at the beginning of your Psalms, notice with me that it says "To the choirmaster." That means that this Psalm was meant to be sung in their congregational gatherings. So picture that with me. "All together now..." And then picture them beginning to sing this particular: Why have you rejected me? Anybody getting that with me?

[Laughter]

In fact, this is page one of the hymn book of Korah. Growing up in my church as a little girl, the first hymn was... page one, it never failed, anybody know? Holy, Holy, Holy -- every single time. Okay, picture page one is: Why So Downcast Oh, My Soul?

[Laughter]

Picture... and they would sing it. They did not consider it heresy. Is anybody finding this strange but me? Didn't find it heresy to come together and sing: "Where are you? Where is my God?" How wild! I kept wondering, what would this be like to sing this? I thought -- I tried to put it in my mind. What tune would it go with? And musical savant that I am --

[Laughter]

All that really would come to me is the tune of that great song of old... Old McDonald had a farm. And it went like this: Why so downcast oh, my soul? Put your hope in God. Why so downcast oh, my soul?

Audience: Put your hope in God.

Beth: Are you ready for this? With why why here.

[Laughter]

Audience: And a why why there.

Beth: Here a why.

Audience: There a why.

Beth: Everywhere a...

Audience: Why why.

Beth: Why so downcast oh, my soul. Put your hope in God. Anybody? Let's give ourselves a little hand. I'm not often going to sing for you. Take that one home with you. I mean like how -- does anybody else find that peculiar? Because we're just not used to that and yet, that's exactly... music can completely change your mood. Have you noticed that? It can put you in a mood. It can help you work through a mood, or it can help you just give way to your mood. Now I don't know if our brothers can understand what I'm about to say but when a woman is in a mood to really cry, instead of getting music that would make us feel better, oh, no!

[Laughter]

Girls, am I telling anybody the truth? No, no! We'll go pick out the most melancholy CD we have because girlfriend, we're going with the baby. We feel bad and we're going with it because for us, you work it through. You don't just -- you just want to work it through and get on past it into a better mood. So sometimes I find that I'll get music that will make me feel even worse because that's what I'm after. Out of nowhere, a couple of weeks ago I heard myself. You know when your mouth opens, like you're not even having any thoughts to go with it, your mouth opens and you begin singing something that is like from 1982? Anybody know what I'm talking about? For me, here recently it was of all things, Jimmy Buffet's, wastin' away again...

[Laughter]

in Margaritaville, searching for my...

Audience: ...lost shaker of salt.

Beth: Are we pathetic or what? I thought, listen, I've done a lot of worse things than wasting away again in Margaritaville, but I'm not necessarily wasted away again in Margaritaville. I've just done a lot of worse things than that but why in the world am I singing that? So sometimes we have to ask ourselves when we're in our praise and worship, and we listen to what we're singing, do I even mean what I... do I remotely mean what I'm singing?

Before you joined us today, we were singing as this congregation, we have a wonderful sister, a couple of sisters that lead us in praise and worship. We really love to do that before we ever have Bible study together. And we were singing the old hymn, 'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus. And we sang it but do we? Because I looked around, almost every single one of us were singing it. Do we? Is there anything harder than that? I trust you. How I trust you, Lord. It's a big one -- it's a big one.

So here in this wild grouping of scriptures, we find this stretch of human emotion that to me is fascinating. And remember, if the scholars and theologians are right and it was one writing then we're going all the way, 42 verse one all the way through 43, I want you to look at a couple of verses in 43 that have this picture, this vocabulary wrapped around the full stretch of the human soul. And I don't know but it is so intriguing to me and I wonder if you'll look at it with me.

It says in verse three and then I'm going to read through five: Send out your light and your truth; let them lead me; let them bring me to your holy hill and to your dwelling. Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my... Now you'll have various translations out there. What does some of them say?

Audience: Exceeding joy.

Beth: Exceeding joy? What? Greatest joy -- joy and delight. I love that one! My very favorite one of all is the N.E.T. the New English Translation that says, "Ecstatic joy." I like me some ecstasy in my joy. Give me some joy but I want some joy on steroids. Anybody know what I'm -- I want me some ecstatic joy. It says: To God, my exceeding joy -- my ecstatic joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, oh, God my God.

And then immediately, verse five: Why are you cast down, O my soul? Why in turmoil within me?

So in the stretch of two verses, it shows in the Hebrew thinking, the full biblical stretch, the full vocabulary that is wrapped around the stretch of the human soul. What the Hebrew in the Psalms would consider to be the ultimate emotion that a human could have is what we will call ecstatic joy. And then for the lowest we can go - - and I love it, for a believer, for a person of faith -- the lowest we can go is to something the Psalmist calls cast down. I want to draw that image for you in our present series, if I could, please. You and I are going to stretch our souls out and picture this, all the way to my right and so your left, I want you to think of ecstatic joy, exceeding joy, and then to the other side of the continuum, all the way to the other

end, and if you're jotting this down, draw an arrow both directions and you might title it, this is how I titled it in my own notes: The human soul at full stretch. And I've got at one end "ecstatic joy" and I've got the other end "cast down."

I want you to jot that down, if you would, if you're willing to do that. But I also want you to take a moment with me and appreciate the ability to even have a soul of that kind of complexity. As much as we may hate the whole continuum, when it leans over to that left, extreme of cast down, do you realize how wonderfully, how fearfully we are made, that as human beings we can go through this whole stretch of the human condition that created in the image of God by a God who literally breathed his own breath into a human being, into this dead form of clay that he had taken with his own hands and formed into man, breathes in this soul with this full capacity.

Now gentlemen, you may not be able to wrap your mind around this as quickly as the women can but we understand the full stretch of human emotion even through the course of one day. Is that fair to say, girls? -- One day... in fact, before noon.

[Laughter]

I think it is fair to say that before noon we can go there -- even as mothers. I was talking to a couple of young moms, moms of young children just here recently. And I said, "Isn't it interesting how you can like in the morning go, 'I'm telling you, these are going to be pastors. I'm telling you, these boys are going to be pastors!' By that night you're going, 'No, they're not. They're going to be convicts! That's what they are. They're going to be convicts!'" Anybody know what I'm talking about? Because life is just like crazy. It is like wild. Wild!

And so I want you to see this because... I've got this knot in my back and it is from writing, leaning over a computer. It is from all manner of thing. But I had a chiropractor tell me not long ago, "Beth, you need to stretch. You do a lot of working out but are you stretching?"

"No, I can't say I'm stretching."

He said, "I'm telling you that knot is coming because you're not stretching."

So what you and I, we're going to work some knots out in our present series. We're going to stretch some things back out because we're all cramped up with very little appreciation of all that we're experiencing in this human condition, jars of clay filled with the Holy Spirit of the living God.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: That's well stated. Well, we all need to be filled; this vessel to overflowing with the spirit of the living God. I think it is really important for people to understand because I don't think we necessarily always do. You oftentimes think of the filling of the Holy Spirit as you go and you fill it up, like you take a glass or a cup and you fill it up. And then you go use it up, and then you come back and you fill it up again and then you go use it up.

But what Paul is saying in Ephesians, it is really, really important for us to grasp because this is exactly what Jesus meant when he said, out of your innermost being, your innermost person, who you really are will flow rivers of living water. So what you really have is to take a vessel as Beth says, this clay jar and you put it under the source, right in the center of the will of God, committed to and determined to live in the center of God's will, under the spout.

There's an old gospel song, take me to the spout where the glory runs out. Really and truly theologically, that's exactly what you want. You want to put the vessel under the source, in the center of it, and let it overflow so that the presence and power and the very nature of God is flowing out all the time. That's how God wants us to live.

I'm going to show you right now a reason for that overflow to be a reality so that when you see something desperate, dry, needy, hurting, you can flow the life of God; out of your innermost being flow what? Rivers of living water – life-giving water. And you're going to look right now at a critical need. We have supported mission feeding outreaches to keep children from reaching this point. But we also support and keep goods in and even build these emergency clinics when children have reached the last stages to try to turn it around for them and we can, miraculously if we do it together. You're going to be moved by what you see.

On the mission field:

Announcer: While you don't always expect a hospital to be a happy place, you do have expectations for what might send you there: A broken bone, severe illness, failing organs. What's shocking to find is bed after bed with children fighting for their lives, and often losing that fight, all because of a lack of food.

Ironically, they don't arrive saying their hungry; hunger for these children is life. It's all they've ever known. They're brought here because their bodies are shutting down. Failing organs should send you to the hospital. In the case of malnourished children, their skin, which is actually an organ, is one of the first to go. It literally begins to fall off.

>> Here at the hospital the mortality rate has gotten higher recently because they already come in a critical condition. We've been trying to overcome but it's not working.

>> I am afraid he will die. I am not going to be okay if I lose him. He is my firstborn child and I do not want to lose him.

Announcer: These moms are doing all they can and our team is too, but unless you join us, it may not be enough.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Well, I can tell you quite pointedly, it won't be enough. It doesn't matter how great the burden on the part of the missionaries.

And by the way, those attendants and those nurses are there, they themselves are missionaries. Many of these are clinics that are basically in the bush, or on the edge of the extreme areas of isolation and poverty, and they're there with love. And the missionaries and those doctors, I promise you, they care. But we give them the resources, the sugar and oil that goes into the intravenous feeding and that they give those children when they can't really absorb food well. All of the various medications to try to turn it around for them, that's provided by love.

But the thing I want you to understand is, those children right there, if we don't have a miracle now, they won't even make it the next 24-48 hours. We're getting most of these children some 400,000 of them right now, that the missionaries have located who are in desperate need; most of them have not reached that state because we're trying to turn it around before they get there.

But the fact is, we're unable to accomplish the goal, the very worthy, meaningful, precious, and special goal. Not only do those mothers and those missionaries but to God, he loves those children, and we're his hands. We express the heart of God the Father.

Would you dial that number please, right now? Would you say, "I'll tell you what, James, I'm going to help save three children." Or "I'm able to help save five... or ten." \$30, \$50, or \$100 enables us to care for three, five, or ten children for the next months. Would you dial the number right now? Take your bankcard, go get it! Please go get it. Go to the phone and you call. If you ever get a busy, you say, "I'm getting through."

This is a lifeline; thank God somebody else is calling but a lot of people will be calling - they're calling for personal need and prayer themselves. But you say, "I'm going to get through."

Of course, if you have a heartbreak, you need prayer -- always call. But those of you who will help, you be determined, "I'm going to get through. And here's my gift of \$100 to help take care of ten children or \$50 to care for five, \$30 to care for three." There are some of you who could give \$1,000, and I pray you will. I think you'll be excited to do it if you're able; help us care for 100 children. Would you please make that call?

If you write a check, make it to *LIFE*, but let us know you're sending it. You can go online, LifeToday.org and many of our friends are giving that way, it's immediately here. We thank you for that. We can tell the missionaries how we're coming along. But we've got to care for 400,000 children and it starts one child, three children, five, ten at a time.

We have some beautiful gifts for you. We always send you something to bless you because you bless others. A Good Word for a Great Day -- 365 devotions that will help you start your day. The Family Reading Bible, great to share with your children or grandchildren; and then the commemorative bronze for 50 years of ministry.

Thank you for helping make it possible. But thank you today for not turning away but reaching out and helping.

Begin video clip:

Announcer: At this very moment a child is drawing his last breath, struggling to stay alive due to a lack of food. Sadly, this impoverished child is not alone, and without our help many like him face death as well.

Today you can make a difference. You can help save a life. Life's mission feeding teams are in place right now ready to answer the hunger cries of 400,000 suffering children in remote areas of Africa.

With previous food reserves gone, and parts of Africa facing its worst drought and food shortage in years, we desperately need to replenish our supplies immediately. Your life-saving gift of \$30, \$50, or \$100 will help feed and care for three, five, or ten children for three full months.

With your gift, we would like to send you A Good Word for a Great Day, a 365 day devotional providing an inspirational new word, Bible verse, and promise for each new day.

With your gift of \$100 or more to help feed ten children, you may request The Family Reading Bible featuring easy-to-use reading tracks, questions, and fun facts to help engage your children in God's Word.

Finally, please consider a gift of \$1,000 or more to help feed and save the lives of 100 children, and you may also request the 50th anniversary commemorative bronze, Brotherly Love.

Please call, write, or make your gift online today.

End of clip

In the studio:

James: Thank you so much for your help. I do hope you'll get the anniversary bronze and if you can help us save the lives, reach out to 100 children, please do so. But whatever you can do, you do your best. Thank you so much for watching. Don't miss Dr. Ben Carson on the next program.

Announcer: Join James and Betty Robison July 18th through the 20th for the Awaken Now Conference at Gateway Church in Southlake, Texas featuring inspiring speakers such as author and neurosurgeon Dr. Ben Carson, international Bible teacher and author, Beth Moore, Pastor Robert Morris, author and speaker Christine Caine, and many more, including musical guests such as Phillips, Craig and Dean. Register today for this once-in-a-lifetime event celebrating 50 years of ministry with James and Betty Robison. Go to LifeToday.org.