

## Disappointments, remembrance and hope!

Disappointment is often what lies at the heart of depression: We have had certain expectations and reality did not come to the party. If this is intense or happens repeatedly, it can affect our emotions, appetites, sleep and quality of life.

Psalm 42: 1 - 4 reads as follows: *As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God? My tears have been my food day and night, while men say to me all day long, "Where is your God?" These things I remember as I pour out my soul: how I used to go with the multitude, leading the procession to the house of God, with shouts of joy and thanksgiving among the festive throng.*

When you read Ps 42, by the time you get to verse 4, this page of the Bible is drenched with the psalmist's sadness. But it is also where the role of memory begins to assume a peculiarly high profile. At the lowest point of this psalmist's pain, he says something utterly striking: in verse 6 he roars out his depression, but then he says, "Therefore, I will remember you."

Hope sneaks back into this poem. There is greater confidence that at some point the psalmist will yet again be able to sing to God. In fact, *the memory of God's past actions in his life prompts the psalmist to declare that there can be no other resting place for his hope than God alone.*

So what is the mechanism that can take a distant memory of something God once did and use it to review the present?

*The recovery of our hope doesn't depend on making sense of the present moment. Maybe in life's darker, deeper valleys it is our memories of who God is and what he has done in the past, that restore our deflated hope.*

But it is not just our individual memories to which we cling as Christians. We also cling to our collective memory as the Body of Christ on earth. Ultimately we cling to the memories of what Jesus did on the cross.

Whether or not we can sing God's praises right now with as much delight as we remember singing it in the past, the promise is that you will do so again.

Because when we remember Jesus by the work of his Holy Spirit, we know that some day we surely will praise our Saviour and our God again, with depression destroyed and with joy-filled hearts!