14 LONGING FOR GOD

KEY TEXT: PSALM 42:1-11

CENTRAL truth

In this week's psalm, the author coaches—even commands—himself to put his hope in God amid a very difficult circumstance. In his pain, the psalmist resolves to praise the Lord—a reminder we all need. Through this psalm, we will discover that **God's presence brings hope, even when we go through difficult times.**

key question

Why does the psalmist compare himself to a deer that is longing for a flowing stream?

The psalmist is experiencing a spiritual drought of sorts. In his desperation, he expresses "thirst" for the living God. Only the Lord can bring true satisfaction and nourishment to His soul. The author is in a dark, dry valley, and he longs to experience the green pastures and quiet waters that the Good Shepherd provides.

keep in mind

- In a moment of intense grief, the psalmist commands himself to put his hope in God. The students in your small group are likely experiencing various types of pain and difficulty. Help them to understand what it looks like to remind ourselves of God's presence and kindness amid what we're going through. Allow your group to be a safe environment for students to share what they are going through.

- In verse 6, the psalmist acknowledges that he is deeply depressed, and his response is to put his hope in the Lord. Using this week's **Give an Answer** note to guide you, help students to see that while we should seek the Lord and wise spiritual advice in all seasons, occasional times of sadness can become clinical depression, which is a serious medical condition. We should not respond it by saying we should "just pray about it."

application

Why is it hard to remember the Lord's presence with us in painful moments?

the win

FOR THE STUDENT: Students should learn that even when we go through painful moments in life, the Lord's presence brings us hope.

FOR THE LEADER: To help students see that the presence of pain in life doesn't mean the Lord is not present with us. He is our hope, and we can run to Him in times of trouble.

X Explore the Bible