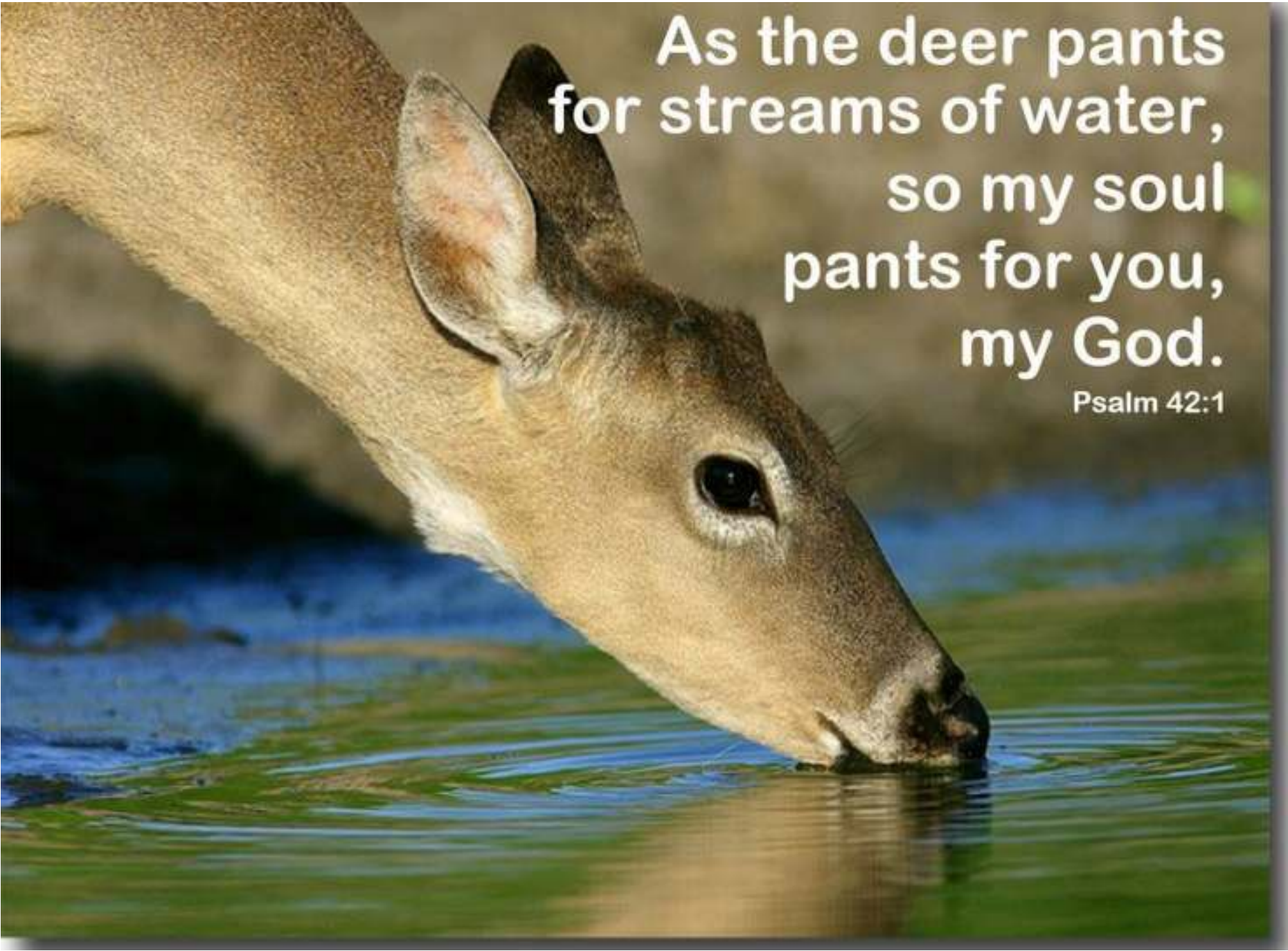


WHAT DOES

WORSHIP

MEAN TO YOU?



As the deer pants
for streams of water,
so my soul
pants for you,
my God.

Psalm 42:1

WORSHIP

What
Worship
Meant to
Abraham

- It was the **PRIORITY** for him.
 - Genesis 12:7, 8; 13:3-4, 18
 - Psalm 95:1-6; Matt. 6:33

WORSHIP

What
Worship
Meant to
David

- **It brought him GLADNESS.**
 - Psalm 122:1; Malachi 1:13
- **It brought him COMFORT.**
 - 2 Sam. 12:18-20; 2 Cor. 1:3-4

The Sunday After

Jesse Flowers

- I mentioned earlier, Dad died on a Thursday, the funeral was on Saturday, and then of course came the Lord's Day. When we arrived at services that morning, I soon realized that this was the "therapy" and "counseling" that my heart so needed.
- When I joined my family members and fellow brethren in worship to God, the thick gray clouds that had been resting upon me finally lifted. Being back at the place where my father had preached since I was a small boy meant a lot to me. I pictured him standing in the pulpit as he gave what would be his final sermons that ironically came from the

- Book of Ecclesiastes. Singing hymns of praise helped revive my dampened spirit (Col. 3:16). “Sing praise to the Lord, you saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name” (Ps. 30:4). All of God’s children gathered that day sent up unified prayers that brought me “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding” (Phil. 4:6-7). Feeding upon the eternal words of life (John 6:68) provided me the nourishment my spirit was craving (Matt. 4:4; 5:6). I remember doing the Scripture reading that morning. Just reading the words of God aloud to the saints provided an inner healing that I was in great need of. “I will praise you forever, because You have done it; and in the presence of Your saints I will wait on Your name, for it is good” (Ps. 52:9). I will never forget, and I will always cherish in my memories the Sunday after.

WORSHIP

What
Worship
Meant to
Ethiopian
Eunuch

- He was **COMMITTED** to traveling a great distance.
 - Acts 8:26-28
 - Luke 14:16-20, 26-27, 33

WORSHIP

What
Worship
Meant to
Matthew
Bassford

- It meant **EVERYTHING** to assemble with the saints.
 - Hebrews 10:24-25; 12:22-23

Shut In

Matthew W. Bassford (7/10/23)

- Last Sunday morning was the last time I will ever attempt to assemble with the saints. I say “attempt” because I did not succeed in assembling. It was a debacle. About midway through the debacle, I resolved that I wasn't going to put myself or my wife through such misery anymore. Then, it got worse. I'm simply not capable of going anywhere, even to worship.
- This is bitter. If there is anything on earth that I love, it is the assembly. All of the things that we trivialize with the label “the five acts of worship” fill me with profound joy. I also love the opportunity to connect with my brethren before and after worship. Even when I am visiting an unfamiliar congregation, you might as well give me a key, because when the time comes to lock up, I'll still be

- These times have become even more precious to me since my diagnosis. I knew that the time would come when I couldn't make it out anymore, so I strove to make my remaining opportunities to assemble as meaningful as I could. I worked to sink myself into each hymn and prayer. After services, I shunned small talk in an effort to speak to the hearts of my Christian family. Even when I wasn't talking to somebody, I would look around the auditorium and pray for each member I saw.
- No more. Now, I am left with the livestream, which is as much like the actual assembly as a photograph of a loved one is like the loved one. You would rather have the photo if you can't have the loved one, but it's not the same.
- After I returned home in defeat last Sunday, I turned on the livestream. One of the hymns led that morning was "Each Step I Take". In my ever-so-humble opinion, the verses of the hymn aren't much, but the chorus makes a

- Each step I take, I know that He will guide me;
To higher ground He ever leads me on;
Until one day the last step will be taken,
Each step I take just leads me closer home.
- In other words, even if, like Abraham, I don't know where I'm going, I still know where I'm going. The steps of the faithful are always bringing them closer to God. In the words of Romans 13:11, salvation is nearer to us than when we first believed.
- This is true even for shut-ins. I've spent hundreds of hours visiting shut-ins, but during that time, it never crossed my mind that one day I would be a shut-in myself. However, I suspect that most Christians must endure a season of being unable to assemble.
- In this season, I must remember the wise counsel of "Each Step I Take". I may feel further away from God and His people than ever before. but paradoxically. I am

- It is not any earthly assembly to which I am drawing near, but to the great assembly around the throne of God in heaven. Rather than fixing my mind upon a God I cannot see, I will fix my eyes upon the great King in His beauty. I will gather not with a few hundred believers, but with myriads of angels, the souls of the righteous made perfect, and with beings I cannot now comprehend. Neither I nor anybody else will need a key to lock up, because the glory and the joy will never end.
- There have been times in my life when I traveled some distance to join a particular assembly, whether it be to gather with my home congregation over the holidays or join in the singing on the first night of Florida College Lectures. The journeys themselves were tedious, unremarkable, but the delight at the end was worth it.
- I am on another journey now, a journey that everyone undergoes. I anticipate that mine will take months, though it may be shorter. It will be tedious; it may be considerably worse. However, I am convinced that the assembly at the end will be worth it too.

WORSHIP

What Does Worship Mean to YOU?

- Is it the **PRIORITY** in your life?
- Does it bring your heart **JOY**?
- Does it give you **COMFORT** and assurance?
- Are you **COMMITTED** to assembling for worship?
- Does it mean **EVERYTHING** to you?
- Do you long to worship God now and in **HEAVEN**?

WORSHIP

- ***Then Samuel said: “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel 15:22).***
- ***“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3).***