

# Speaking to the soul



## Spiritual strength

**IA**s the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. I thirst for God, the living God. When can I go and stand before him? Psalm 42:1-2

Having spent a couple of years in India, I am very familiar with the challenges of living with intense heat. One lesson I learned very swiftly is that you need to carry a drink with you at all times. But, inevitably, I sometimes forgot. I can

remember occasions when I was craving a drink and was happy to drink anything to slake my thirst. Deer are just the same. They can only bound around the countryside for so long before they need to search for a stream of cool, refreshing water. King David used the image of thirsty deer as an illustration of his longing for the living God.

This psalm suggests that David was feeling deeply discouraged. Nothing seemed to be going right. It was a time of struggle and confusion, but he knew that God could satisfy him in a way that nothing else could. Many things give us satisfaction for a short while: possessions, success, relationships, sex, status. But ultimately none of those things, important and precious as they may be, can give us the lasting satisfaction that our eternal God and loving heavenly Father can give us.

Getting dehydrated isn't merely unpleasant but medically dangerous. It needs to be avoided at all costs. But becoming spiritually dehydrated is even more perilous. Without the spiritual strength to face life's challenges there is every possibility of us making foolish and destructive choices that are likely to be damaging for those around us as well as ourselves. This means that it is vital to ensure that we are drinking regularly from the streams that God provides.

We will all find spiritual strength in different ways but prayer, reading the Bible and enjoying Christian fellowship are crucial elements. We need to reflect carefully on our daily pattern of life to ensure that we are getting the nourishment that we need. Our spiritual life and vitality depend upon it.

## **QUESTION**

What are the streams that refresh your Christian life?

**PRAYER**

Dear Lord, thank you that you are always ready to satisfy my spiritual thirst. Amen

*Photograph - Choir of Belfast Cathedral Christmas 2024*