

Psalms 102:0 ¶ A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the LORD.

“afflicted” = depressed, in mind or circumstances, needy, poor

The word “afflicted” covers a wide variety of troubles that can affect a person, including mental and physical. This psalm is a prayer from one who is overwhelmed to the point of fainting under the pressure of his affliction. He has wisely chosen to pour out his complaint before the LORD, the only one who knows our needs and can deliver us from any affliction.

Philippians 4:19 “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

In reading through this chapter, I think the psalmist is suffering both mentally and physically.

Psalms 102:1 ¶ Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee.

Psalms 102:2 Hide not thy face from me in the day *when* I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day *when* I call answer me speedily.

Psalms 102:3 For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.

The psalmist opens by pleading with the LORD to listen to his plea for help. He wants to know that God hears him and wants evidence of that fact quickly. He feels like his days are disappearing like smoke as he suffers from a great fever that he fears is killing him.

Spurgeon on verse 2: “We may ask to have answers to prayer as soon as possible, but we may not complain of the Lord if he should think it more wise to delay. We have permission to request and to use importunity, but no right to dictate or to be petulant.”

Psalms 102:4 My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.

Psalms 102:5 By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin.

Psalms 102:6 I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.

Psalms 102:7 I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top.

The psalmist is so sick at heart that he forgets to eat and has lost a lot of weight. He feels like a lonely bird in a desolate place that can only lead to its destruction. He paints a picture of great loneliness as he lay suffering.

Spurgeon: “Grief often destroys the appetite, and the neglect of food tends further to injure the constitution and create a yet deeper sinking of spirit. As the smitten flower no longer drinks in the dew, or draws up nutriment from the soil, so a heart parched with intense grief often refuses consolation for itself and nourishment for the bodily frame, and descends at a doubly rapid rate into weakness, despondency, and dismay.”

Psalms 102:8 Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me.

It seems no one is there to give him comfort. He is surrounded by enemies that rejoice in his suffering.

Psalms 102:9 For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, Psalms 102:10 Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.

Psalms 102:11 My days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.

Crying and lying in ashes or covering one's head in ashes are signs of mourning and great suffering. He has concluded that God is angry at him and is responsible for bringing him to the point of death.

Interestingly, unlike Job or David, the psalmist offers no words either questioning God's actions or confessing any sin. He knows his fate in God's hands.

Psalms 102:12 ¶ But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.

Psalms 102:13 Thou shalt arise, *and* have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.

Psalms 102:14 For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.

The psalmist turns from his own troubles to remind himself of the truth about the LORD. He is the self-existent eternal God and will be remembered throughout the ages—past, present and future. He knows that the time is coming when the LORD will again have mercy upon Zion (representing Israel) and show her favor once again. He even knows that such a time has already been determined in the mind of God. Those that serve God rejoice in that truth.

Psalms 102:15 So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.

Psalms 102:16 When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.

Psalms 102:17 He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.

When that time comes, the heathen will fear the LORD, and all the rulers on earth will stand in awe of His glory. When the LORD returns in the fulness of His glory, He will build up Zion. This is in reference to the return of the LORD Jesus to set us His kingdom and rule from the throne of David at the end of the tribulation.

Revelation 19:11 "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war....and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.... And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

I think that verse 17 could be a reference to the call of the people of Israel for the return of Jesus their Messiah to deliver them from the oppression and persecution of the Antichrist.

Matthew 23:37–39 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

Psalms 102:18 This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.

Psalms 102:19 For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;

Psalms 102:20 To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;

Psalms 102:21 To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

Psalms 102:22 When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

The psalmist declares a message to future generations, to a group of people that are yet to be created to praise the LORD. I think this is very possibly a reference to those that will make up the bride of Christ, the church, spiritual Israel. The apostle Paul declared this truth.

Romans 11:24–25 “For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.”

Galatians 3:29 “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

From His throne in heaven, the LORD watches all that occurs on planet earth. He hears the groanings of those that are bound by sin and headed for destruction. He provided a way to free those that were bound for hell by sending Jesus to be our Savior. When Jesus returns to set up His kingdom, He will rule from Mount Zion in Jerusalem. People and kingdoms will gather together there to praise the LORD and serve Him.

Psalms 102:23 ¶ He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.

Psalms 102:24 I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations.

The psalmist believes that God has determined that he should die young. He pleads with the eternal God to relent of that decision.

Psalms 102:25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands.

Psalms 102:26 They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed:

The psalmist acknowledges God as the Creator of heaven and earth. Though they shall perish, he knows that God will endure. He states that he knows that heaven and earth will deteriorate to the point that the LORD will one day “change” them, renew them. Though I don’t know how the psalmist knew this, scripture supports that truth.

Mark 13:31 “Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.”

2 Peter 3:10–13 “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.” “new” = especially in freshness

In the days of Noah the earth was given a fresh beginning after purging by water. Following the 1000-year reign of Christ, both the heavens and the earth will be given a fresh beginning after being purged by fire. It will be free from the taint of sin.

Psalms 102:27 But thou *art* the same, and thy years shall have no end.

Psalms 102:28 The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.

The eternal God, however, is unchanging; He is always the same.

Malachi 3:6 “For I am the LORD, I change not....”

Hebrews 13:8 “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

I think the psalmist is referencing the children of Israel that enter the kingdom—all of whom will be saved, as will all of their descendants.

Romans 11:26–27 “And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.”