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Psalm 102

(2019)

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Psalm 102.

Topics.

- Hear my prayer, O LORD; do not hide your face from me in my distress.
- My heart is struck down like grass my bones cling to my flesh.
- LORD, you are enthroned forever; arise and have pity on Zion.
- Nations will fear the name of the LORD, and appear in his glory.
- Record it for a generation to come, for those to be created.
- Take me not away you whose years endure throughout all generations.
- Earth and heavens will wear out like a garment, but God will remain.
- God's children will be established before the LORD.
- The glory of the spiritual temple God is building in Christ.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

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BOOK FOUR (PSALM 90-106)

PSALM 102:1-2

A prayer of one afflicted, when he is faint and pours out his complaint before the LORD.

Hear my Prayer, O LORD; Do Not Hide from Me in My Distress.

- **Psalm 102:1-2:** Hear my prayer, O LORD; let my cry come to you! ²Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress! Incline your ear to me; answer me speedily in the day when I call!

It is common for many of the writers of a Psalm to ask the LORD to listen to their prayer, they do not assume God is listening, it also shows that they come to God with humility and courtesy (v1), of course God hears all prayers, but He may choose not to respond to them, so the idea behind the words, hear my prayer O LORD is that God would accept it and respond to it. This Psalm can be read with the following two perspectives in mind:

1. With Jerusalem in focus: it appears Jerusalem is destroyed because the writer says God's people hold every stone of Jerusalem and her dust very dear (v14). He also mentions that at the appointed time God will rise up and have pity on Zion's (Jerusalem) destruction and favour her (v13). Jerusalem God's Holy city sits on Mount Zion, God's Holy

Mountain, and is sometime personified in the Old Testament as the mother of God's people so one aspect of the Psalm can be seen as the writer giving a voice or speaking as the voice of Jerusalem who God has judged and destroyed because of the rebellion of her inhabitants.

2. With the writer in focus: the writer himself is in distress, depressed, in despair, sick, not eating, is extremely thin, cannot sleep and is lonely. His enemies use his name for a curse word, they taunt and mock him. He is constantly crying tears of sorrow and feels he is near death and that his life is going to be cut short (v2-9). He is suffering all of this because of the LORD'S indignation and therefore says God in his anger has thrown him down and broken him in the middle of his life (v10-11; 23-24).

The practical application: the practical application would be to read the Psalm as applying to anyone in these circumstances, but also being aware of the underlying application to Jerusalem (all the emotions that apply to the writer can apply to Jerusalem when she is viewed as the mother of her children Israel).

PSALM 102:3-10

My Heart is Struck Down like Grass My Bones Cling to My Flesh.

- **Psalm 102:3-10:** For my days pass away like smoke, and my bones burn like a furnace. ⁴My heart is struck down like grass and has withered; I forget to eat my bread. ⁵Because of my loud groaning my bones cling to my flesh. ⁶I am like a desert owl of the wilderness, like an owl of the waste places; ⁷I lie awake; I am like a lonely sparrow on the housetop. ⁸All the day my enemies taunt me; those who deride me use my name for a curse. ⁹For I eat ashes like bread and mingle tears with my drink, ¹⁰because of your indignation and anger; for you have taken me up and thrown me down.

Each of the following can be applied to the life of the writer or to the city of Jerusalem personified as the mother of Israel.

- My days pass away like smoke: smoke is blown away in the wind and vanishes into thin air.
- My bones burn like a furnace: most likely refers to some type of burning fever.
- My heart is struck down like grass and withered: carries the idea of weakness and feebleness and near death.
- My bones cling to my flesh: means there is a lack of nourishment to sustain life and vitality.
- I am like a desert owl of the wilderness, like an owl of waste places: carries the idea of loneliness and darkness and of being spiritually dry and barren.
- I lie awake; I am like a lonely sparrow on the housetop: a sparrow sitting on a roof top sees as far as the eyes can see the idea is that all that is seen is barrenness, waste and ruin.
- I eat ashes like bread and mingle tears with my drink: carries the idea of great grief because all around him has been laid waste.

This is not only a picture of deep despair, depression and of great suffering and a serious wound, but also of a lack of rest and peace, because enemies have not only taken everything, but were also scoffing and mocking their victims' destruction.

Your anger has taken me up and thrown me down: (v10) this is a perfect example of Jerusalem. The inhabitants of Jerusalem set their hearts diamond hard against the word of God's prophets they rebelled against the LORD they turned to other gods and entered into gross sin so

the LORD used Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon (who He called His servant (Jer. 25:9) to bring the curses of the covenant upon them. The curses of the covenant are found in (Deut. 28:15-68) and the blessing of the covenant in (Deut. 28:1-14). The fierce armies of Babylon burned Jerusalem and pillaged the temple and carried the population in chains to Babylon. Archaeologists have found that all of the cities of Judah were completely destroyed at this time, thus ended the glorious kingdom of David and Solomon. Observers would have said that the Hebrew nation was annihilated, and indeed, the other nations conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians did cease to exist. But the prophets proclaimed a better hope for the chosen people. "A remnant shall return" Isaiah had said, and in time this remnant, purged and returned, became the basis on which a new Israel would be built.

PSALM 102:11-14

O LORD, you are Enthroned Forever; Arise and have Pity on Zion.

- **Psalm 102:11-14:** My days are like an evening shadow; I wither away like grass. ¹²But you, O LORD, are enthroned forever; you are remembered throughout all generations. ¹³You will arise and have pity on Zion; it is the time to favour her; the appointed time has come. ¹⁴For your servants hold her stones dear and have pity on her dust.

Jerusalem is laid waste as the dust of the earth, the writer calls upon God to arise and have pity on Zion (the hill Jerusalem is built upon and a symbol of the faithful). God answered this prayer in the following way. While Israel was in captivity to the Empire of Babylon God moulded them like a master potter moulds a beautiful clay jar, Israel and Judah went into Babylon as two unfaithful nations that had turned away from the LORD to idols and other gods. Seventy years later, Cyrus (King of Persia) who the LORD called His anointed shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) and took by His right hand (Isaiah 45:1) to conquer the Empire of Babylon gave written permission for Israel to return to Jerusalem. Under Ezra and Nehemiah God brought Israel and Judah back to their beloved city Jerusalem as one united nation faithful to only one God, the LORD their God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob (Israel never turned to idols or pagan gods again). Multitudes of Jewish families who had been scattered throughout the nations returned to Jerusalem and the land of Israel with triumphant joy and rejoicing. When the temple of God was completed their faith was once again established and a time of prosperity and peace followed. Sadly, Israel as a nation never recognised their Messiah the Christ when he came, but even this was in the LORD'S sovereign will. The prophet Zechariah tells us when, the Lord returns in glory:

- God will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn (Zech. 12:10-14).

PSALM 102:15-17

Nations will Fear the Name of the LORD, and Appear in His Glory.

- **Psalm 102:15-17:** Nations will fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth will fear your glory. ¹⁶For the LORD builds up Zion; he appears in his glory; ¹⁷he regards the prayer of the destitute and does not despise their prayer.

These verses can apply to the following two events, firstly, Israel's joyful and triumphant return from their seventy years of captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and the temple of God and secondly to the return of the Lord in glory as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to destroy the antichrist and his kingdom and establish

God's Kingdom on earth during his glorious millennial reign. The dead in Christ (Old and New Testament) and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-6) to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power.

The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

In Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

The great prophet Isaiah wrote:

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- They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:9).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev. 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second Resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

PSALM 102:18-22

Record it for a Generation to Come, for those to be Created.

- **Psalm 102:18-22:** Let this be recorded for a generation to come, so that a people yet to be created may praise the LORD: ¹⁹that he looked down from his holy height; from heaven the LORD looked at the earth, ²⁰to hear the groans of the prisoners, to set free those who were doomed to die, ²¹that they may declare in Zion the name of the LORD, and in Jerusalem his praise, ²²when peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to worship the LORD.

The thing to be recorded is that God looked down from heaven to the earth, and listened to the groans of those doomed to die and set them free. It was to be recorded so that generations to come and still to be created can declare from Zion and from Jerusalem the name of the LORD when people and kingdoms gather together throughout all generations.

The generation to come and the people yet to be created: (v18) can refer to the following two groups:

1. The generation of Israel that triumphantly returned with rejoicing and joy to their beloved city Jerusalem after their seventy years in captivity to the Empire of Babylon and to their offspring.
2. The promised seed of Abraham and David is Christ, all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only but extend and embrace all who belong to Christ because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew) so the people yet to be created can refer to this new nation God is creating in the Lord Jesus Christ made up of Jews and Gentiles. It is also called a new creature in Christ, the global body of Christ, the church and the Kingdom of Christ. For further information see the title: "The Commonwealth of Israel," at the end of this chapter.

PSALM 102:23-24

Take me Not away You who Endure throughout all Generations.

- **Psalm 102:23-24:** He has broken my strength in midcourse; he has shortened my days. ²⁴"O my God," I say, "take me not away in the midst of my days—you whose years endure throughout all generations!"

This can be seen as the cry of the Psalmist or the cry of Jerusalem since both are suffering and both feel that their days have been shortened before their time.

PSALM 102:25-27

Earth and Heavens will wear out Like a Garment; God will Remain.

- **Psalm 102:25-27:** Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. ²⁶They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, ²⁷but you are the same, and your years have no end.

The statement, "The foundation of the earth and the heavens will perish," immediately takes the mind of the New Testament student to the following verses:

- Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.
(Matthew 24:35) (Mark 13:31) (Luke 21:33).
- Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. (Rev. 21:1).

This does not mean that the heavens and the earth will be utterly destroyed and annihilated in such a manner that they vanish from God's created universe, but that they will be renovated. The climate of the earth will be totally changed so that the earth will not suffer storms, droughts, earthquakes, tornadoes, tsunamis or any type of damaging weather condition. It means that the climate will be so dramatically changed that

deserts will flourish with life, rivers and oceans will flow with fresh water the sun's rays will be harmless to human life and wild animals will be tame and eat vegetation. It means that the earth, its climate and all that affects it in the sky and the heavens will undergo a complete transformation perhaps much like it was before Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit.

They will all wear out like a garment: (26) the Psalmist contrast the earth and heavens which will wear out like a garment with the eternal life of God by saying that the earth and heaven are like a garment that eventually wears out and perishes and then is replaced by another garment, but God will be remembered forever He never changes He is enthroned in eternity and forever remains eternal. This shines a spotlight upon the following two truths:

1. The earth as we know it is not only destined to decay, but also subjected to death in the same way the human body is destined to decay and subjected to death.
2. The earth is going to be renovated in a most glorious manner in the same way that the body of the faithful is going to be utterly changed from what we know it to be today.

The apostle Paul wrote:

- Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. ⁵¹Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵²in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. ⁵³For this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵"O death, where is your victory?" (1 Corinthians 15:50-55).

PSALM 102:28

God's Children will Be Established before the LORD.

- **Psalm 102:28:** The children of your servants shall dwell secure; their offspring shall be established before you.

This of course would be of great encouragement, comfort and strength to all the pilgrims of the Old Testament who walked faithfully before God and knew His love and grace, but it should also be of great encouragement, comfort and strength to Christians today who faithfully follow Christ and trust in his righteousness and God's grace to be saved and not in ceremonial rites, holy days, or religious customs and traditions especially since Jesus said:

- Whoever comes to me I will never cast out. (John 6:37).

THE COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL

It is important to understand that the promised seed of Abraham and David is Christ, all the promises to Israel are now fulfilled in Christ therefore they are not limited to Israel only, but extend and embrace all those who belong to Christ. This is because God is now creating one new nation in Christ made up of both Jew and Gentiles. (Gentiles are everyone who is not a Hebrew or Jew). This means that Jews and Gentiles become one new nation in Christ (also called a new man, a new creation, the church, the body of Christ and the Kingdom of God).

The Apostle Paul said:

- Remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision (Jews), which is made in the flesh by hands—¹²remember that you (Gentiles) were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the *COMMONWEALTH OF ISRAEL* and *STRANGERS* to the *COVENANTS* of *PROMISE*, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you (Gentiles) who once were far off (from God) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our (Jews and Gentiles) peace, who has made us both *ONE* and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he (Jesus) might create in himself *ONE NEW MAN* (or Nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles), so making peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile us (Jews and Gentiles) both to God in *ONE BODY* through the cross, thereby killing the hostility (between the Jews and Gentiles). ¹⁷And he (Jesus) came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) who were far off (from God) and peace to those who were near (Jews). ¹⁸For through him (Jesus) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access in *ONE SPIRIT* to the Father. ¹⁹So then you (Gentiles) are *NO LONGER* strangers and aliens, but you are *FELLOW CITIZENS* with the *SAINTS* (the Jews) and members of the *HOUSEHOLD* of God, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone ²¹in whom the *WHOLE STRUCTURE* being joined together (Jews and Gentiles) grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²²In him you (Jews and Gentiles) also are being built together into a *DWELLING PLACE* for *GOD* by the Spirit (Ephes. 2:11-22).

Gentiles were separated from Christ, alienated from the, Commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus they have been brought to God by the blood of Christ. Jesus has made Jews and Gentiles both one by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances so that Jesus might create in himself one new man (nation) in place of the two (Jews and Gentiles). In Jesus both Jews and Gentiles are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Christ is the head of this new nation and its Jewish and Gentile citizens are now equal in status before God since in Christ we are all brothers and sisters in the same eternal family that God is now establishing in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout all nations of the world.

The practical application: of what this means to those who belong to Christ is that all the future and eternal promises God made to Israel also apply to them. The book of Revelation states:

- When Christ returns in glory every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth (Rev. 1:7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation (i.e., Jews and Gentiles) and he has made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Rev. 5:9-10).

THE GLORY OF THE SPIRITUAL TEMPLE GOD IS BUILDING IN CHRIST

Jews and Gentiles are being united together as one body in Christ to be a dwelling place for God by the Spirit. Believing Jews and Gentiles are being prepared by the prophets and apostles' teachings and by the influence of Christ and the Holy Spirit to become a majestic and glorious sacred temple in which God dwells for all eternity. When this majestic building is completed there will be nothing so worthy of reverence since God dwells in it; so ancient since the patriarchs and prophets laboured in building it; so solid since love cements it together; so closely united and indivisible since Christ is the corner stone; so exalted since it reaches as high as heaven and to God himself; so full of wisdom since its specifications are the word of God; so full of light since the Holy Spirit dispels every dark corner; so spacious since it is spread over the whole earth; so invincible and indestructible since it is being built by God, by Christ, by the Holy

Spirit and by the influence of God's eternal word; so divine since it is a living, vibrant, dynamic temple inhabited by the Holy Spirit, and so universal since all its unique stones though spread throughout the world are compacted together in Christ. God is the master builder of this majestic and glorious temple; Christ is the corner stone; faithful believers are the proper materials; the prophets and apostles are its foundation and the Gospel and love its pillars. Christ is the door and faith is the entrance into it. It is a spiritual building and through, faith and grace this living building is growing into an eternal house fit for the most Holy God to dwell in. It's beauty and radiance will surpass all temples that have ever gone before it since it will be adorned with a vast variety of rich colour made up of Jews and Gentiles of every age, country, sex, and condition: the mightiest of kings, the most renowned lawgivers, the most profound philosophers, the most eminent scholars and all those of whom the world was not worthy have formed this building (taken from an unknown brother in Christ who has gone before me).

Peter wrote:

- Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame (1 Pet. 2:6).

Every faithful brother and sister in Christ are represented as living stones that God is using to build this spiritual, majestic temple of eternal glory which will be manifested in splendour for all to see when: -

- The Lord himself descends from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ are raised then we who are alive are caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thess. 4:15-18).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
