

Series: Pathway Through the Psalms

# UNWAVERING HOPE

## PSALMS 102

Text:

Introduction:

Even in the midst of their darkest hours, believers always have a steadfast hope in God. Theirs is a positive confidence that is unshakable.

No matter how black the night, no matter how raging the storm, one's hope in the Lord should remain strong.

Whenever the outlook is bleak, the uplook remains bright. It is in the darkest night that the stars overhead glow with greatest luster.

So it is with one's hope in God. In every dark trial, there is a confident assurance in God—a sure expectation about the future that God will work for his own glory and for the good of his people.

Psalm 102 was written during a low ebb in the history of God's people. Its setting is the Babylonian captivity of God's chosen people, Israel, a time when God's work had seemingly come to a standstill. It was a time when God's word was not being preached, when God's

people were in the minority. It was a time when God's house lay in ruin, when God's holy city was in shambles, and when God's glory was veiled. It is a psalm that begins with tribulation, but it concludes with a note of triumph.

The main idea of this Psalm is that the psalmist depends upon God to intervene and deliver him in the midst of dark, difficult days.

Note:

## **1. THE PSALMISTS DESPAIR (VS. 1-11)**

### ***Psalm 102:1-11***

*<sup>1</sup> Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. <sup>4</sup> My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. <sup>5</sup> By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin. <sup>6</sup> I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. <sup>7</sup> I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top. <sup>8</sup> Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me. <sup>9</sup> For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, <sup>10</sup> Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.*

<sup>11</sup> *My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.*

Notice:

A. A Sincere Prayer (vs. 1)

**Psalm 102:1-2**

<sup>1</sup>

Hear my prayer, O LORD, and let my cry come unto thee. <sup>2</sup> 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.

The Psalmist 3 fold prayer:

Hear me!

Help me!

Hurry

The word "cry" indicates fervor, intensity. (James 5:16)

**James 5:16**

<sup>16</sup> *Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*

His plea is hurry up Lord, do it now.

## B. A Sad Predicament (vs. 3, 5)

### ***Psalm 102:3-5***

*<sup>3</sup> For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. <sup>4</sup> My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.*

*<sup>5</sup> By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin.*

Time flies. His days were evaporating like smoke.

Bones have become weak and soft.

Heart smitten. Emotions drained, purpose gone.

Forgetfulness, he forgot to eat.

He's nothing more than just skin and bones left.

## C. A Striking Parallel (vs. 6-7)

### ***Psalm 102:6-7***

*<sup>6</sup> I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. <sup>7</sup> I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top.*

- A pelican is an ugly bird.
- An owl is a strange night bird.

- A sparrow is lowly and common.

None of these birds are like the Eagle, Dove, Robin, Blue bird, Red bird, Falcon, or Hawk.

#### D. A Sworn Persecutor (vs. 8-10)

##### ***Psalm 102:8-10***

*<sup>8</sup> Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me. <sup>9</sup> For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, <sup>10</sup> Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.*

Note their Consistency

They left a bad taste in the psalmist mouth (ashes)

This all lead to him feeling of a shortness of days.

##### ***Psalm 102:11***

*<sup>11</sup> My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.*

Note not only his Despair but also:

## 2. THE PSALMIST DEVOTION (VS. 12-22)

### **Psalm 102:12-22**

*<sup>12</sup> But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations. <sup>13</sup> Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come. <sup>14</sup> For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. <sup>15</sup> So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory. <sup>16</sup> When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. <sup>17</sup> He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. <sup>18</sup> This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD. <sup>19</sup> For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth; <sup>20</sup> To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death; <sup>21</sup> To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem; <sup>22</sup> When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.*

Even in despair we see the psalmist devotion. His devotion partly is because of:

- Eternality of God (vs. 12)
- Mercy of God (vs. 13, 14)
- Terror of God (vs. 15)

- Glory of God (vs. 16)
- Faithfulness of God (vs. 17)
- Watchfulness and Compassion of God (vs. 19-20)

We too can be devoted in a time of despair because of who God is.

Notice not only the Psalmists Despair, and Devotion, but lastly:

### **3. THE PSALMIST DEPENDENCY (VS. 23-28)**

#### ***Psalm 102:23-28***

*<sup>23</sup> He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days. <sup>24</sup> I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all*

*generations. <sup>25</sup> Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.*

*<sup>26</sup> 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: <sup>27</sup> But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*

*<sup>28</sup> The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.*

Though the psalmist was crushed he was depending upon God.

Remember:

- God controls all (24)

***Psalm 102:24***

*<sup>24</sup> I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations.*

- God created all (25)

***Psalm 102:25***

*<sup>25</sup> Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.*

- God changes all (26)

***Psalm 102:26***

*<sup>26</sup> 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:*

- God changes not (27)

***Psalm 102:27***

*<sup>27</sup> But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*



- God cares for all (28)

***Psalm 102:28***

*<sup>28</sup> The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee.*

Close:

In this present hour, Christians find themselves living in a day much like that of the psalmist.

As Christians survey the state of the local church today, they see much of what the psalmist saw in his day.

In so many places, God's glory is being obscured, his Word is neglected, his house is abandoned, and his work is stalled.

In congregations today, exposition is being replaced with entertainment. Theology is giving way to theatrics. Doctrinally rich hymns, once focused upon the cross, are being replaced with crossover, contemporary music devoid of Christ-centered substance.

In all this, believers should have a heavy burden for the deteriorating of God's work in this day.

But we never lose hope; God will yet prevail.