

CHRIST In The Psalms

by

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*All things must be fulfilled, which were written . . .
in the Psalms concerning me" (Luke 24:44)*

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The One-Hundred-And-Second Psalm

"Jesus Christ the Same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Psalms 102

1. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee.
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.
3. For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth.
4. My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread.
5. By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin.
6. I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert.
7. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top.
8. Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me.
9. For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping.
10. Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down.
11. My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass.
12. But thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.
13. Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.
14. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof.
15. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.
16. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.
17. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.
18. This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created

shall praise the Lord.

19. For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from Heaven did the Lord behold the earth;

20. To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;

21. To declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;

22. When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord.

23. He Weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.

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

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

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:

27. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.

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

In this series of studies we pass over the Seventy-second and the Eighty-ninth Psalms, both of which are confessedly Messianic, but neither of which is actually taken up in the New Testament and quoted there and applied to our LORD the Messiah. In passing, however, we may look briefly at these two Psalms.

The Seventy-second Psalm is a vivid description of the Kingdom of Messiah when it shall have been set up on the earth, with Messiah Himself occupying the throne of His Father David. In many respects it is similar to the 11th chapter of Isaiah, and if the reader will read that chapter along with this Psalm this similarity will be apparent to them. The words of the closing verse: **"The prayers of David the son of Jesse are ended"** (Psalm 72:20), for, as the Psalm indicates, the prayers of David for the future Kingdom will find their complete answer in that Kingdom.

The Eighty-ninth Psalm should be read in connection with the Davidic covenant of II Samuel 7:9-14, of which covenant it is an exposition.

The Seventy-second Psalm closes Book II of the Psalter, and the Eighty-ninth closes Book III.

Coming now to the 102nd Psalm we find a truly Messianic Psalm, identified for us as such in the quotation from verses 24 to 26 in Hebrews 1:10-12. Let the reader turn to Hebrews and carefully read it, from the first verse of the first chapter through the fourth verse of the second chapter. There will be found in that passage many quotations from the Old Testament Scriptures, showing that the Scriptures thus quoted from have the Messiah Himself at their heart.

From Hebrews 1:10-12,

"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

The words beginning with, **"thy years are throughout all generations"** (Psalm 102:24), and going on through verses 25-27, are words addressed by the Father to His SON. To get the whole of the passage quoted in Hebrews 1:10-12 we must begin with the 12th verse of the Psalm, using the first four words of that verse, and joining those words with the latter part of the 24th verse, and then reading on through the 27th. Thus we would have it:

"But thou, O Lord, . . . thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 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: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end" (Psalm 102:12, 24-27).

With this key in our hands, we shall find ourselves able to solve the mysteries concerning this wonderful Psalm which could not otherwise be solved.

What we have in the Psalm is a dialogue carried on between the Father and His SON, and it is evident that the scene of this dialogue is laid, for the most part, in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The New Testament accounts do not give us much detail as to what was said between the Father and His SON in that garden of agony. But here in the Psalm we find ourselves treading on holy ground as we are introduced into the solemn scene.

The Psalm really opens with the note preceding the first verse, for that note is a part of the inspired record: **"A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before the Lord."** Then as the Psalm proceeds we hear His prayer, reaching from the first verse to the seventh inclusive.

"Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. 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. For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin. I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top" (Psalm 102:1-7).

It would be impossible to imagine a more graphic picture of the utter loneliness of the Son of GOD as He had moved among men, the object of their hatred and derision. **"He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not"** (Isaiah 53:3).

"Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me. For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping. Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down" (Psalm 102:8-10).

It was not the Father's indignation and wrath for His beloved SON as such, but rather His indignation and wrath against our sins, which had brought this suffering upon His holy SON.

Here again, as in other Messianic Psalms, we find the LORD JESUS identifying Himself with us, and confessing our sins as His own.

"My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass" (Psalm 102:11).

He was old before His time. Artists have frequently sought to paint His portrait, but of course none of us can tell what He looked like. We may only know that His terrible sufferings, even before the Cross, had left their mark upon Him. His enemies said, **"Thou art not yet fifty years old"** (John 8:57), when He was only a little past thirty; and in the Word of prophecy it is written that, **"His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men"** (Isaiah 52:14).

Down to this point we have only the minor chord in our Psalm as the suffering Son of GOD poured out His complaints before His Father. But now there comes a great change as the Father replies to His SON, beginning at verse 12.

"But thou, O Lord, shalt endure forever; and thy remembrance unto all generations."

The Son of GOD was about to die, but He was also to arise out of that death; and by His death and resurrection He was surely having mercy upon Zion, and favoring her in the set time, the time appointed of the Father. The sacrifice of Calvary was primarily for Israel, even as Paul wrote **"to the Jew first, and also to the Greek"** (Romans 1:16). The LORD JESUS was first of all, **"a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the Fathers"** (Romans 15:8). That is to say, GOD had made certain promises to Israel through the Father, and in order to fulfil these promises it was necessary that the LORD JESUS should come and die on the Cross of Calvary. It was to vindicate the truth, or, the truthfulness of GOD. Of course He died for us Gentiles also, but this was in order **"that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy"** (Romans 15:9). To Israel it was a matter of righteousness in the fulfillment of promises; to the Gentiles it was a matter of pure mercy, since no promises had been made to the Gentiles. The time to favor Zion had truly come.

"For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof" (Psalm 102:14).

Where is there another city in the world whose very stones are the object of interest on the part of GOD's people, and who examine with such fervor "the dust thereof"?

"So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth thy glory" (Psalm 102:15).

The word "heathen" has in this context, is speaking of the Gentile nations. The nations of the earth and their kings and rulers are to be brought into universal blessing through Zion, that is, Jerusalem, Israel's holy city.

"When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory" (Psalm 102:16). This is indeed a significant word in view of the present rebuilding of Jerusalem. Zion is being built up and prepared for the return of her KING in all His glory.

"He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer" (Psalm 102:17).

When He is on the throne the prayer of the destitute will be heard, for **"with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth"** (Isaiah 11:4).

"This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord" (Psalm 102:18). Are we not glad that it was written for a generation to come, and that we ourselves are that generation, we who have been, by regeneration, created anew that we might praise the LORD?

"For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from Heaven did the Lord behold the earth; To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death; To declare the name of the Lord in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem; When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the Lord" (Psalm 102:19-22).

The word "people" in verse 22 is plural. In that day the people of the earth will be gathered together, and the kingdoms to serve Him.

Here again we come to a change in the Psalm. The Father has been addressing His SON in reply to that Son's petition, and now the SON for a moment speaks again, saying, **"He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days: thy years are throughout all generations"** (Psalm 102:23-24).

Here we may find an answer to the much discussed question as to what our LORD meant, when in the garden He cried out, saying, **"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me"** (Matthew 26:39).

To what cup did He refer? By many it is held that our LORD was praying to be delivered from dying on the Cross. Others who reject this theory teach that our LORD was praying to be delivered from having His Father hide His face from Him while on the Cross. Our own conviction is that our LORD was praying to be delivered from dying in the garden, and thus failing to reach the Cross. To us it is evident that in Gethsemane Satan made an attack upon the Son of GOD and sought to kill Him there and thus prevent the fulfillment of the prophetic Word that the LAMB of GOD should die on the Cross. The Twenty-second Psalm predicts and depicts His death by crucifixion, and He Himself prophesied concerning the manner of death He should die, in being lifted up from the earth (John 3:14, 15; 8:28; 12:32-34).

When He was arraigned before Pilate, that ruler said, **"Take ye him, and judge him according to your law"** (John 18:31). If they had done this they would have stoned Him to death according to their law, but they refused to do it, and John explains that this was in order **"that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die"** (John 18:31-32).

So if Satan could kill Him in the garden then the Word of GOD should be broken.

Coming back now to the Psalm we have the Father again replying to the SON in the latter part of the 24th verse. The SON had said, **"O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days,"**

and the Father replied, saying: "**thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. 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: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee**" (vss. 24b-28).

Here we see the Son of GOD as the CREATOR and PRESERVER of all things, and we see also that He who made all things, and without whom nothing was made that was made (John 1:3), He who created all things that are in Heaven and that are in earth, He by whom and for whom all things were created, and who is before all things, and in whom all things consist (Colossians 1:16-17). He who upholdeth all things by the Word of His power (Hebrews 1:3) - that He will continue even after the works of His hands have perished and been replaced by the renewed Heaven and the new earth which also shall be created by Him, that when they have all passed away He will still continue, for He is the same, yesterday, today and for ever (Hebrews 13:8).

He changed not! From everlasting to everlasting He is our LORD and our GOD!

How good it is to know Him who ever abideth, who one day loved us enough to die for us, who loves us today just like He loved us then, who would die for us again if He needed to, who would die for us a thousand times if it were necessary, and who a million years from now will love us just like He loves us now.

"Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou who changest not, abide with me!"

~ end of chapter 12 ~

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