

**Psalm 102**

This morning's reading from Psalms is a very personal song.

And the message makes for a great Bible study.

The Psalmist is lamenting in personal distress & national problems (Zion)

He's suffers greatly.

His sorrow, pain and despair are on the verge of overwhelming him.

He can't even eat.

**PP**- "I am too wasted to eat my bread".

He even feels shunned by God:

**PP**- He says "you have lifted me up and thrown me aside."

There is also trouble with his nation (Zion),

and he feels it very personally.

In this darkness then, he begins to write:

**PP**- "Hear my prayer, O Lord, let me cry for you. Do 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."

He hasn't forgotten his upbringing...his heritage...

he hasn't forgotten his faith.

In his desperation, he turns to perhaps his last hope:

God!

We all suffer a variety of heartaches and disappointments in various degrees.

We all grow discouraged...despondent...

Personal problems have a way of seeking us out. Don't they?!

Sometimes life beats us down so much...we feel we just can't cope.

We may want to cry out with this Psalmist:

**PP-** "My days are like an evening shadow; I wither away like grass."

(Pause) One of the original messages of Christianity is :

God is eternally with us.

Regardless of the sorrow...regardless of the pain and anguish

Regardless of the uncertainties....God is there!

God is enthroned forever ...for all generations.

As Christians, we are reminded of this often, right?

From another Psalmist:

**PP-**"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." 23 Psalm

Both Psalmist remember their creator....eternal God.

So must we!

In the midst of our distress....(Pause) can we know comfort?

In the midst of anxiety...(Pause) can we experience peace of mind?

In the midst of heartache....can we feel hope?

In the midst of fear....can we have courage?

The Psalmist, the writer, seems to say "YES!!"

(Pause) Lets take a look for a moment into the soul and  
anguish the author is experiencing:

He is alone...he's friendless:

**PP-** "I am like a lonely bird on the housetop"

"Like a little owl of the waste places."

His personal sorrow is deafening:

**PP-** "Because of my loud groaning, my bones cling to my skin"

"I mingle tears with my drink"

His spirit is broken:

**PP-** "My heart is stricken and withered like grass"

And he's surrounded by enemies:

**PP-** "All day long my enemies taunt me; those who deride me use my  
name for a curse"

I think it's safe for us to conclude that this fellow is having a bad day.

Things are not going well for him.

(Pause) but then he takes a quantum leap:

He remembers his faith...he remembers his religion...

he remembers his belief...

He remembers his history, his heritage....(Pause)

He remembers his God!....and he prays!

**PP-** "Hear my prayer O Lord; let my cry come to you."

In distress don't cry to yourself, don't cry alone...cry to God!

I think the message to us is:

We must be able to call upon His name.

We must to be able to seek His power and glory

We must be able to seek His love and mercy

We must be able to seek and know His comfort

In our anxiety and apprehension we need to look  
beyond to a greater & wider creation.

To an eternal Kingdom...to a far greater glory.

Beginning with verse 12 we get a glimpse of the Psalmist's  
confidence in God:

**PP- "He will rise up..."**

**"He will appear..."**

**"He will regard the prayer of the destitute."**

This is assurance!

This is confidence

There's no limp wristed milk toast faith here!

There's no anemic trust!

There is no wishy washy hope!

No way...this is a positive expression of absolute confidence.

PP (still up) - "He will rise up"

"He will appear"

"He will regard the prayer of the destitute."

Then he goes on to say:

**PP-** “Let this be recorded for the generation to come so that the people yet unborn may praise the Lord.”

(Pause) He is writing this Psalm to us!

We are the unborn he writes to!

Obviously, he thinks all of this is important!

This is valuable information that needs to be remembered!

He wants us to never forget our mighty friend.

He wants us to have a living hope.

He wants us to have an inner comfort

He wants us to have a confidence that dominates over any distress!

He wants us to be able to see a reality beyond -

the reality of our own distress.

He wants us to see an eternal power above our own weakness.

He wants us to see eternal order beyond our fragile world.

The Psalmist shares with us his faith in an eternal creator God,

who cares about his creation!

A God who cares about you & me!

A God who will listen to you and me.

He points to a solid...steadfast foundation!

Here is a Psalmist that goes beyond the great Christian concept-

of hope- to absolute confidence!

Thus...he can go forward with confidence.

He can face the shadows of life...with confidence

He is confident in tomorrow... he is confident of the future.

There are no illusions of hope here....no lofty dreams

The sun will rise tomorrow

The stars will shine tonight

God in all his loving power and glory is there...and will always be there!

(Pause) Look- Our distress is real....

but so must be our confidence in God,

We need to awaken our sleeping confidence.

Our confidence needs to breathe.

As we journey through the valley of the shadows,

we are to live and breathe confidence and fear no evil!

Our distress cannot outweigh our confidence in God.

The final verses...maybe even the final days:

**PP** - "Long ago you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you endure; they will wear out like a garment. You change them like clothing, and they pass away; but you are the same, and your years have no end. The children of your servants shall live secure; their offspring shall be established in your presence."

So....(Pause)...the earth will pass away...the heavens will pass away...all will perish....they will wear out.

(Pause) but in spite of this rather disastrous happening:

The children of God....the sons and daughters of God are secure!

(Pause) and this absolute security is extended to our posterity:

Our children...our families...our grandchildren

Here is confidence!

Why?

Because he knows a far greater Kingdom.

He knows an all-powerful eternal God.

And he records all of this in the confidence that we can and will grasp it.

Amen.