

May 29

Scriptures: Read Psalms 101 & 102

Key Verse: “But You are the same, and Your years will have no end.” (Psalm 102:27)

Overview

Psalm 101 is a pledge that king David made before the lord to rule God’s people righteously. He made strong resolutions to serve as a worthy king under the kingship of God. He determined to behave wisely and blamelessly in his own house (101:2). The man who administers his home and family wisely by leading them spiritually and being a good spiritual example, will also be successful in other areas of his life (cf. 1 Tim. 3:1-5, 12). It is often much easier for people to walk uprightly and blamelessly among strangers and in public than among their own families, but David resolves to show himself upright and among those he knows best.

In his home and the courts of his palace, King David declared that no wicked thing would come into sight. The wickedness that King David was likely referring to are idols and the sin of idolatry which was so prevalent in his day. He hates the sins of the apostate, and asserts that they will have no influence on him. We, likewise, must resolve to guard our homes from any objects that might come in and have a bad influence on us, so that we can also exclaim: “a perverse heart shall depart from me; I will not know wickedness.”

David is determined to eradicate wickedness from his kingdom, from Jerusalem because it is the city of the Lord, and from his own palace since he is the Lord’s representative. David detests those who slander their neighbour, lie, work deceit, and who have proud hearts, for such people never humble themselves before God or the king, and cannot be trusted. They deserve to be severely punished. David would never consider such people to be in his service, for if they do not obey God, they will likewise not be faithful and obedient servants to him. Those who are faithful to God, however, will be looked upon with favour and will be raised to honoured positions in his service, for they could be expected to be faithful and trustworthy.

Psalm 102 is the only psalm with such a unique title. All other titles have either an historical or musical reference, but this one describes the condition and circumstance around its composition. This psalm is anonymous but it may have been composed by a faithful Jew who had desired to see the city of Jerusalem rebuilt after it had been destroyed but was suffering persecution from the opposition (Ezra or Nehemiah are among the possible authors).

With great urgency, the psalmist cries out to God to answer him. He feels like his days will soon be over and they are passing quickly and vanishing like smoke without accomplishing anything (102:3, Ha). He feels very much alone, as is evident from the metaphors of the solitary birds. He feels weak, wasted away and useless as the metaphor of the cut down (“stricken”) and withered grass indicates (102:4, lib). Even though he has humbled himself before God and openly showed his sorrow (covered with ashes), his enemies still reproach him (102:8-9). He believes that all his troubles are because of the wrath of God against him, for once he was in an exalted position, but now he feels like an outcast (102:10).

Thinking of his own transitory nature makes him remember the eternality of God whose Name will be known in every generation. Because of God's immutable and eternal nature (102:12, 26-27), the psalmist has faith that the time has come when God will "arise and have mercy on Zion" (102:13). The solution to the psalmist's own personal problem seems to be tied up with the Lord's mercy on Zion by building her up. Jerusalem's scattered stones are looked upon with favour as God's servants seek to do His will and rebuild the city. Confident that it will soon be accomplished, the tone of the psalmist drastically changes to joyously praising God.

In a prophetic fashion the psalmist declares the restoration of Zion and the sovereign reign of the Lord when all the kings of the earth will be in subjection to Him, and all kingdoms will serve Him (102:15-16, 21-22). At that time He will descend with justice to set the prisoners free and deliver His people from certain death (102:20). This pictures well the coming Messianic reign of Jesus Christ and such an interpretation is affirmed by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews who quotes 102:25-27 as referring to Jesus (Hebrews 1:10-12). He participated in the creation of the world, which will perish (Isa. 65:17), but He will never change for He is eternal (Heb. 13:8). All those who come to love, believe in, and put their faith in Jesus the Messiah will remain and be established in the eternal inheritance (89:36; Isa. 66:22; Gal. 3:7).

Prayer

Father what an honour and privilege to be living in this time of Your grace. Our hearts have tasted of Your goodness and we look forward with excitement and expectation to our final dwelling place with You where justice and righteousness rule.