

## Psalm 102

# A Prayer of the Afflicted, Reassuring Himself in Yahweh's Eternal Compassion for Zion

(A Prayer of the Afflicted, when he is faint, and pours out his complaint) (before the LORD.)

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### A1 THE PSALMIST'S PLEA FOR YAHWEH'S QUICK RESPONSE <sup>1</sup> 102:1-2

#### B1 Heed My Prayer! 102:1

C1 {1} Hear my prayer, O LORD!

C2 And let my cry for help come to You.

#### B2 Please Don't Hide from Me! {2} Do not hide Your face from me in the day of my distress; 102:2a

#### B3 Please Respond Quickly! 102:2b

C1 Incline Your ear to me;

C2 In the day when I call answer me quickly.

### A2 THE PSALMIST'S CRUSHING MALAISE 102:3-11

#### B1 The Symptoms of His Malaise 102:3-7

C1 Feeling as if Ravaged by Fire 102:3

D1 Perpetually burning: {3} For my days have been consumed in smoke,

D2 Body wracked with pain: And my bones have been scorched like a hearth.

C2 Emotionally Devastated: {4} My heart has been smitten like grass and has withered away, 102:4a

C3 Failed Appetite: Indeed, I forget to eat my bread. 102:4b

C4 Groaning and Emaciated 102:5

D1 {5} Because of the loudness of my groaning

D2 My bones cling to my flesh.

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<sup>1</sup> 102:1 - Heading: The four main headings for this psalm given by Allen P. Ross, *TBKC*: Answer Me Quickly (1-2); I Wither Away (3-11); He Will Not Despise the Destitute (12-22); Your Years Will Never End (23-28).

C5 Feeling Solitary and Rejected 102:6--7

D1 Isolated: {6} I resemble a pelican of the wilderness; 102:6a

D2 Worthless: I have become like an owl of the waste places. 102:6b

D3 Sleeplessly Lonely: {7} I lie awake, I have become like a lonely bird on a housetop. 102:7

**B2 The Causes of His Malaise 102:8-11**

C1 The Reproach of His Enemies 102:8-9

D1 Their abuse 102:8

E1 Ceaseless reproach: {8} My enemies have reproached me all day long;

E2 Blaspheming his name: Those who deride me have used my *name* as a curse.

D2 His response 102:9

E1 "Official" mourning: {9} For I have eaten ashes like bread <sup>2</sup>

E2 Ceaseless weeping: And mingled my drink with weeping. <sup>3</sup>

C2 The Indignation of Yahweh 102:10

D1 Yahweh's displeasure: {10} Because of Your indignation and Your wrath,

D2 Yahweh's discarding: For You have lifted me up and cast me away.

C3 The Mortality of the Psalmist 102:11

D1 Approaching twilight: {11} My days are like a lengthened shadow,

D2 Wasting away: And I wither away like grass.

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<sup>2</sup> 102:9 - eaten ashes like bread: ashes on one's head is an official, even if private, sign of one's mourning. Ashes represent a conscious decision to mourn in such a way that others know one is in mourning (see 2 Sam. 13:9). Eating ashes conveys a continual wearing of ashes -- the ashes become a steady diet, even as bread (see Isa. 44:20; see Ross, *TBKC*).

<sup>3</sup> 102:9 - mingled my drink with weeping: "Mourning and weeping were so continuous that they were like his daily diet." (Ross, *Psalms, TBKC*)

**A3 THE PSALMIST'S ASSURANCE OF YAHWEH'S ETERNAL COMPASSION FOR ZION 102:12-22**

**B1 The Assurance of Yahweh's Eternal Compassion for Zion 102:12-14**

C1 The Eternity of Yahweh 102:12

D1 {12} But You, O LORD, abide forever,

D2 And Your name to all generations.

C2 The Compassion of Yahweh 102:13

D1 The assurance of compassion: {13} You will arise *and* have compassion on Zion;

D2 The time for compassion

E1 For it is time to be gracious to her,

E2 For the appointed time has come.

C3 The Example of Yahweh's Servants 102:14

D1 {14} Surely Your servants <sup>4</sup> find pleasure in her stones

D2 And feel pity for her dust.

**B2 The Effect of Yahweh's Compassion for Zion 102:15-17**

C1 The Result: International Worship of Yahweh 102:15

D1 By the nations: {15} So the nations will fear the name of the LORD

D2 By all kings: And all the kings of the earth Your glory.

C2 The Cause: Yahweh's Glorious Restoration of Zion 102:16

D1 His activity: {16} For the LORD has built up Zion;

D2 His glory: He has appeared in His glory.

C3 The Means: Yahweh's Regard for the Prayer of the Destitute 102:17

D1 {17} He has regarded the prayer of the destitute

D2 And has not despised their prayer.

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<sup>4</sup> 102:14 - servants: An argument from the lesser to the greater -- if even Yahweh's servants find pleasure in the stones and feel pity for the dust of Zion, surely Yahweh will feel the same in an infinitely greater capacity.

**B3 The Commemoration of Yahweh's Compassion for Zion 102:18-22**

C1 The Objective of the Commemoration 102:18

D1 The target of the writing: {18} This will be written for the generation to come,

D2 The purpose of the writing: That a people yet to be created may praise the LORD.

C2 The Content of the Commemoration 102:19

D1 Yahweh's condescension 102:19

E1 {19} For He looked down from His holy height;

E2 From heaven the LORD gazed upon the earth,

D2 Yahweh's sympathy 102:20

E1 Listening to the prisoner: {20} To hear the groaning of the prisoner,

E2 Freeing the doomed: To set free those who were doomed to death,

C3 The Result of the Commemoration 102:21-22

D1 Praising Yahweh! 102:21

E1 In Zion: {21} That *men* may tell of the name of the LORD in Zion

E2 In Jerusalem: And His praise in Jerusalem,

D2 Serving Yahweh in His world-wide kingdom! 102:22

E1 {22} When the peoples are gathered together,

E2 And the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

**A4 THE PSALMIST'S RELIANCE ON ELOHIM'S UNCHANGING ETERNITY 102:23-28**

**B1 The Psalmist's Concern over His Brief Life 102:23-24**

C1 His Lament at Yahweh's Shortening of His Life 102:23

D1 Weakening his strength: {23} He has weakened my strength in the way;

D2 Shortening his days: He has shortened my days.

C2 His Plea to Elohim Not to Abbreviate His Life 102:24

D1 His plea for extension: {24} I say, "O my God, do not take me away in the midst of my days,

D2 His recognition of Elohim's timelessness: Your years are throughout all generations.

**B2 His Reliance on Elohim's Eternal Immutability 102:25-28**

C1 Elohim's Ancient Creation of the Earth and Heavens 102:25

D1 {25} "Of old You founded the earth,

D2 And the heavens are the work of Your hands.

C2 Elohim's Enduring Eternity in Contrast with the Decaying Universe 102:26

D1 The contrast stated: {26} "Even they will perish, but You endure;

D2 The decay of the universe illustrated

E1 And all of them will wear out like a garment;

E2 Like clothing You will change them and they will be changed.

C3 Elohim's Immutable Eternity 102:27

D1 His immutability: {27} "But You are the same,

D2 His eternity: And Your years will not come to an end.

C4 The Eternity of Elohim's Servants! 102:28

D1 Their continuity: {28} "The children<sup>5</sup> of Your servants will continue,

D2 Their establishment: And their descendants will be established<sup>6</sup> before You."

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<sup>5</sup> 102:28 - children: Heb. sons

<sup>6</sup> 102:28 - descendants ... established: Since Yahweh is eternal, those humans who serve Him will live eternally also!

Expanded Analysis of Psalm 102

Prepared by James T. Bartsch

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- B3 The Commemoration of Yahweh's Compassion for Zion 102:18-22

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#### Condensed Outline of Psalm 102

Based on the Expanded Analysis of Psalm 102

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