

Theme:
"Living With Integrity"
Psalms 101-102

Psalm 101

(New International Version)

¹ *I will sing of your love and justice;
to you, LORD, I will sing praise.*

² *I will be careful to lead a blameless life ♦
when will you come to me?*

*I will conduct the affairs of my house
with a blameless heart.*

³ *I will not look with approval
on anything that is vile.*

*I hate what faithless people do;
I will have no part in it.*

⁴ *The perverse of heart shall be far from me;
I will have nothing to do with what is evil.*

⁵ *Whoever slanders their neighbor in secret,
I will put to silence;
whoever has haughty eyes and a proud heart,
I will not tolerate.*

⁶ *My eyes will be on the faithful in the land,
that they may dwell with me;
the one whose walk is blameless
will minister to me.*

⁷ *No one who practices deceit
will dwell in my house;
no one who speaks falsely
will stand in my presence.*

⁸ *Every morning I will put to silence
all the wicked in the land;
I will cut off every evildoer
from the city of the LORD.*

Study Notes

The Story Behind the Psalm

When David was sworn in as the king, it is supposed that he wrote this Psalm. He had been anointed as king over all of Israel, and as he was sworn in, this Psalm was probably penned.

The Way It Was Used by God's People

It was used by God's people when one of them would assume a new responsibility or start a new job. It was also used at the anointing and swearing in of kings.

Theme: A prayer for help to walk a blameless path. To live with integrity, both our efforts and God's help are necessary.

Author: Believed To Be David

PSALM 101:1

David may have written this psalm early in his reign as king as he set down the standards he wanted to follow. David knew that to lead a blameless life he would need God's help (101:2). We can lead blameless lives if we avoid (1) looking at wickedness (I will refuse to look at anything vile and vulgar, 101:3), (2) evil thoughts (perverse ideas, 101:4), (3) slander (101:5), and (4) pride (101:5). While avoiding these wrongs, we must also let God's Word show us the standards by which to live.

PSALM 101:6

David said that he would keep his eye on the godly. In other words, he would choose as models and as friends those who were godly and truthful. Our friends and associates can have a profound influence on our life. Make sure to keep your eyes on those who are faithful to God and his Word.

(New International Version)

- ¹ *Hear my prayer, LORD;
let my cry for help come to you.*
- ² *Do not hide your face from me
when I am in distress.
Turn your ear to me;
when I call, answer me quickly.*
- ³ *For my days vanish like smoke;
my bones burn like glowing embers.*
- ⁴ *My heart is blighted and withered like grass;
I forget to eat my food.*
- ⁵ *In my distress I groan aloud
and am reduced to skin and bones.*
- ⁶ *I am like a desert owl,
like an owl among the ruins.*
- ⁷ *I lie awake; I have become
like a bird alone on a roof.*
- ⁸ *All day long my enemies taunt me;
those who rail against me use my name as a curse.*
- ⁹ *For I eat ashes as my food
and mingle my drink with tears*
- ¹⁰ *because of your great wrath,
for you have taken me up and thrown me aside.*
- ¹¹ *My days are like the evening shadow;
I wither away like grass.*
- ¹² *But you, LORD, sit enthroned forever;
your renown endures through all generations.*
- ¹³ *You will arise and have compassion on Zion,
for it is time to show favor to her;
the appointed time has come.*
- ¹⁴ *For her stones are dear to your servants;
her very dust moves them to pity.*
- ¹⁵ *The nations will fear the name of the LORD,
all the kings of the earth will revere your glory.*
- ¹⁶ *For the LORD will rebuild Zion
and appear in his glory.*
- ¹⁷ *He will respond to the prayer of the destitute;
he will not despise their plea.*
- ¹⁸ *Let this be written for a future generation,
that a people not yet created may praise the LORD:*
- ¹⁹ *◆The LORD looked down from his sanctuary on high,
from heaven he viewed the earth,
²⁰ to hear the groans of the prisoners
and release those condemned to death. ◆*
- ²¹ *So the name of the LORD will be declared in Zion*

and his praise in Jerusalem
²² *when the peoples and the kingdoms*
assemble to worship the LORD.

²³ *In the course of my life^{b1} he broke my strength;*
he cut short my days.

²⁴ *So I said:*

◆ *Do not take me away, my God, in the midst of my days;*
your years go on through all generations.

²⁵ *In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth,*
and the heavens are the work of your hands.

²⁶ *They will perish, but you remain;*
they will all wear out like a garment.

Like clothing you will change them
and they will be discarded.

²⁷ *But you remain the same,*
and your years will never end.

²⁸ *The children of your servants will live in your presence;*
their descendants will be established before you. ◆

Study Notes

The Story Behind the Psalm

Read it carefully, especially verse 13. It was obviously written at the close of the captivity; that is, at the close of the 70 years of captivity in Babylon. Notice especially verse 13, "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come." The time had come for deliverance of God's people. Though we have no evidence that Daniel returned to the land, we nevertheless feel that whoever wrote this Psalm (probably Daniel) was signaling the end of the captivity.

The Way It Was Used by God's People

This Psalm was used when sorrow was ending or a bad time was coming to an end. Perhaps a Jew was nearing the end of a serious illness or a time of crisis in his life. During such times this Psalm was very dear.

Theme

The cure for distress. Because God is living, eternal, and unchanging, we can trust him to help his people in the generation just as he helped his people in past generations.

Author: Believed To Be David

PSALM 102:3, 4

The psalmist felt so bad that he lost his appetite. When we face sickness and despair, our days pass blindly, and we don't care about even our basic needs. In these times, God alone is our comfort and strength. Even when we are too weak to fight, we can lean on him. It is often when we recognize our weaknesses that God's greatest strength becomes available.

PSALM 102:6, 7

These birds are pictures of loneliness and desolation. At times we may need to be alone, and solitude may comfort us. But we must be careful not to spurn those who reach out to us. Don't reject help and conversation. Suffering silently is neither Christian nor particularly healthy. Instead, accept graciously the support and help from family and friends.

PSALM 102:16-22

Christ's future reign on earth will encompass two events mentioned in these verses. Jerusalem (Zion) will be restored, and the entire world will worship God (Revelation 11:15; 21:1-27).

PSALM 102:25-27

The writer of this psalm felt rejected and tossed aside because of his great troubles (102:9, 10). Problems and heartaches can overwhelm us and cause us to feel that God has rejected us. But God our Creator is eternally with us and will keep all his promises, even though we may feel alone. The world will perish, but God will remain. Hebrews 1:10-12 quotes these verses to show that Jesus Christ, God's Son, was also present and active at the creation of the world.