

Read

Psalm 102

Consider

Life is certainly not dull, and full of challenges. In the past two years, every one of us has encountered many of these uncertainties. The COVID-19 has been around for more than two years and likely it is not going to subside soon. The Ukraine invasion by Russia causes the economy in the world to turn upside down. Even in our individual, family and church lives, there have been many unexpected and unwelcome crises.

When these events occur, the first thing people would take notice is their emotions and feelings. These cause them to feel despair, deflated, depressed, dejected, downcast, demoralized, and even desponded. When faced with these emotions, often they would feel helpless, and unable to think straight. They may develop many negative thoughts in their mind. They are stuck and unable to get out of the rut. As a result, their work, their relationship with people, and their daily routine may all be affected. Sometimes they may resort to using drugs and other substances to fill the inner void, and soon even these do not help anymore. What can be done?

We always encourage people when they are facing these difficulties to seek help and not to deal with them themselves. Psalm 102 that we are going to study this week offers one way to help us. It directs our attention to God. Please read the Psalm beforehand and let us study together as how it can motivate us to endure the difficult moments of our life.

In the book of Psalms, one group of psalms is lament/complaint psalms. Psalm 102 is an example of individual lament (there are also corporate lament psalms). Such psalms respond to crisis, grief, or despair in life. They are intended to move a believer from hurt to joy. This type of Psalm expresses that God is present even when human beings cannot discern His presence in the world due to their own sufferings. Laments normally are structured with the following format: address to God; complaint; confession of trust; petition; words of assurance; and vow of praise. When you read this psalm, see if you see these elements.

At the end of the sermon, please also spend some time to reflect on your own particular situation, and ask yourself how God has spoken to you and how you might make changes in your life. When it is appropriate, can you share with someone close to you also so that you can encourage one another in the Lord?

Looking forward to share with you on Sunday,

Rev. Dr. Vincent Poon

P.S. – 7 penitential psalms are Psalm 6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; and 143 – we have already studied Psalm 32 dealing with hiding our sins.

Pray

Heavenly Father, thank you for your Word and the Psalms. This Psalm speaks to my deep emotions and my experience. I thank you for the worship service today. May you use your very Words in the Bible, Your still small voice, and through the hymns to speak to me! May I feel your presence as I worship with other brothers and sisters and as we partake together the Holy Communion, Amen.

Diving Deeper

How does this Psalm remind you of one of your personal experience, or an experience that your relative or close friend has gone through?

The speaker talks about Psalms pointing us to Jesus Christ. How would this truth be of benefit to your particular situation?

How can we live closer **WITH GOD** in our lives?

How are we being **TRANSFORMED** to be more like Christ?

How is the Holy Spirit empowering us to imitate Christ in what we **DO** this week?