

Psalms

The Book of Praises



Lesson 6

Individual Lament Psalms:

Part II

Individual Laments



- Psalm 70:1-5
- Plead for God's help
- Express the deepest needs of the heart
- Can learn a lot about prayer from these

Lessons from Last Week



- It is often in life's darkest moments that we are reminded of our great need for God.
- Sinful behavior can have life-long consequences.
- Turn to God in times of distress; use the power of prayer and trust in God to deliver you.
- Do not take sin too lightly; it should cause us grief before God when we sin.

Lessons for Today



- God's eternal nature should give us confidence - He is unchanging and ever-merciful
- As great as our problems may seem to be, we should be concerned about the plight of others and do what we can to help
- Let us be more open to rebuke and correction

Psalm 102

"This is a patriot's lament over his country's distress. He arrays himself in the griefs of his nation as in a garment of sackcloth, and casts her dust and ashes upon his head as the ensigns and causes of his sorrow. He has his own private woes and personal enemies, he is moreover sore afflicted in body by sickness, but the miseries of his people cause him a far more bitter anguish, and this he pours out in an earnest, pathetic lamentation. Not, however, without hope does the patriot mourn; he has faith in God, and looks for the resurrection of the nation through the omnipotent favour of the Lord; this causes him to walk among the ruins of Jerusalem, and to say with hopeful spirit, 'No, Zion, thou shall never perish. Thy sun is not set for ever; brighter days are in store for thee.'" (Charles Spurgeon)



Psalm 102



Outline

- Introduction - "hear me" (vv. 1-2)
- Situation/Lament - sick, weak, saddened, lonely, enemies reproach him, mourning (sackcloth, ashes), cast off by God in His wrath (vv. 3-11)
- Praise to God - everlasting; merciful to Zion; will favor Zion again and rebuild it - causing all nations to fear Him (vv. 12-17)
- This psalm written for the next generation - He will relieve them (vv. 18-22)
- Lament and request - "do not take me away ..." - shortened life (vv. 23-24)
- Praise - God's enduring nature (vv. 25-28)

Psalm 102



- Vv. 1-2
- Q1. Notice how the first two verses start this psalm. This type of beginning is typical to psalms of lament. Why does the psalmist make such statements? Does he think he won't be heard?
 - Expresses the earnest desire for help; a way of recalling that God IS ready to hear
 - Asking to be heard – not out of doubt
- Vv. 3-4
 - Physical affliction must have been great

Psalm 102

- Vv. 5-7
 - Groaning, emaciated, lonely, insomnia
- V. 8
 - Enemies make a mockery of him
- V. 9
 - Likely sitting in ashes to mourn his affliction
- Vv. 10-11
 - Believes he is being punished; implies sense of guilt
 - Feels like his life is fading away due to God's wrath



Psalm 102

- Q2. Based on vv. 12-22, where might the psalmist (and his people) have been when this was written?
 - Possibly in exile in Babylon, shortly before the return
 - Or, perhaps at the rebuilding of Jerusalem
- V. 12
 - Stark contrast – God is in control
- V. 13
 - God will act as He has been known to act
 - Jer. 29:10 – “... after seventy years are completed ...”
- God’s eternal nature should give us confidence - He is unchanging and ever-merciful!

Psalm 102



- Vv. 14-17
 - His great love for even the rubble of God's holy city
 - Motivation for rebuilding – that all nations should fear
 - Confident God will hear
- Vv. 18-22
 - All this written for the generation to come
 - Extending this personal lament to a broader one for the nation (see 2 Cor. 11:28)
- As great as our own problems may seem to be, we should be concerned about the plight of others and do what we can to help

Psalm 102



- Vv. 23-28
- Q3. What does the psalmist request of God?
 - Pleads to have the affliction removed and have continued life
- Q4. The psalm closes out with praise of God's eternal and unchanging nature.
 - God's eternity stands out clearly as opposed to man's frailty and the earth's impermanence

Psalm 141

- "Few psalms in so small a compass crowd together so many gems of precious and holy truth." (Barton Bouchier)
- Possibly written as memorial to 1 Sam. 24 – the cave incident
- Has been regarded as the "evening prayer"
- Throughout, a fear that his soul would be drawn away from the loyalty to God
 - The enticements of the ungodly
- Desires protection in speech, thought and action



Psalm 141



Outline

- A plea to be heard (vv. 1-2)
- A petition to be guarded against ill-advised words and wicked deeds (vv. 3-7)
- A final plea for protection and for downfall of the wicked (vv. 8-10)

Psalm 141



- Vv. 1-2
 - “Make haste ...” - Not a demand, but an urgent desire for help
 - David’s insight
 - The essence of incense was prayer
 - The essence of sacrifice was praise
- Vv. 3-4
- Q5. What is the petition David makes to God in vv. 3-4?
 - Help in controlling his speech and action
 - “Set a guard over my mouth” (Ps. 39:1; James 3)

Psalm 141



- V.5
- Q6. What does David desire in v. 5? How do people often react to such actions?
 - Reproof; admonition from a righteous person with good spiritual insight
 - Denial, argumentation, fighting back, unreceptive
 - Prov. 9:8 - "Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you."
- May we be more open to rebuke and correction

Psalm 141

- Vv. 5b-7
- Q8. Bonus. Explain Vv. 6-7.
 - “David’s humanity towards Saul, in giving him his life at two several times, when he had it in his power to destroy him as he pleased. ‘Their princes have been dismissed in safety, when I had them at an advantage in those rocky deserts; and only heard me expostulate with them in the gentlest words.’” (Charles Peters)
 - “David surely means that when their leaders fell never to rise again, they would then turn to him and take delight in listening to his voice. And so they did: the death of Saul made all the best of the nation look to the son of Jesse as the Lord’s anointed; his words became sweet to them.” (Charles Spurgeon)

Psalm 141

- V. 7 – two views
 - The bitter lot of David and the group he represents
 - A statement of hope – belief in resurrection
- Vv. 8-10
 - Though reassured, he is not yet free from danger
 - Still feels the need for an earnest cry for protection
 - Similar to Ps. 140:4-5
- Q7. David asks God to keep him from temptation (v. 9). Give a New Testament reference(s) that speaks to temptation and what God will do for us.
 - 1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Pet. 2:9; Jms. 1:13

Psalm 141

To the tune “Let the Lower Lights Be Burning”

Lord, please hasten to my pleading;

Listen to the prayer I bring;

Let it be like fragrant incense,

Like the evening offering.

Keep my lips from speaking evil

And my heart from loving sin

Lest I share the work of sinners

Or partake with wicked men.

Psalm 141

To the tune “Let the Lower Lights Be Burning”

Let the just rebuke me kindly,

As with oil upon my head;

May I not refuse their wisdom

But condemn the proud instead.

God will overthrow their judges;

He will hurl them from their height;

Then the people all will hear me

And regard my words as right.

Psalm 141

To the tune “Let the Lower Lights Be Burning”

As the plow turns up a furrow,
So the wicked strew our bones;
Lord, my eyes are longing for You;
Do not leave me here alone!
Keep me from the traps they fashion;
Guide me safely past each snare;
Tangle them in their devices
While You lead me in Your care.

Other Individual Laments



- Psalm 70 - "Make Haste"
- Psalm 86 - A prayer of deliverance from enemies
- Psalm 88 – "An agonized outcry"
- Psalm 120 – "A Prayer for Help Against Slander"
- Psalm 140 – "Prayer for Protection Against Persecutors"
- Psalm 142 – "A Cry for Help in the Midst of Trouble"
- Psalm 143 – "Prayer for Deliverance from Enemies and for Guidance"

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