

Psalm 102 — “Forming a Theology of Suffering: In the Days of Distress, How Do You Transition from Me-Centered Pain to God-Centered Peace?”

Indeed, afflicted saints pray! Troubled believers pray!

“Hope can see heaven through the thickest clouds!” (Thomas Brookes)

We need to FORM a Theology of Suffering:

WHY?

- ✓To Guide
- ✓To Guard
- ✓To Go
- ✓To Gladden
- ✓To Glorify God

THESIS — How do you pray in dark days of distress? 2 components in “forming a theology of suffering.” ***That is, we’ll see 2 simple (yet crucial) parts to this prayer to cope through your afflictions...***

In your afflictions...

1. UNASHAMEDLY PRESENT YOUR PRAYER
2. UNFAILINGLY PONDER GOD’S POWER

I. UNASHAMEDLY PRESENT YOUR PRAYER! (1-11)

Your Brevity! Your Cry! Your Distress!

1. Hear me (1-2)

2. See me (3-11)

THE PSALMIST'S AFFLICTION:

II. UNFAILINGLY PONDER GOD’S POWER! (12-28)***V.12 - the transition/the break/the hinge!**

“But You, O LORD”

Verse 12 is the great ‘*but God*’ (Rom 3.21; Eph 2:4) = hope!

- The key transition verse/hinge/the key that unlocks the door = v.12: **But You, O LORD!**
 - Vv.1-11 - **me**-centered pain (I, my)
 - Vv.12-28 - **God**-centered peace (You, LORD, He)

❖ *The bible doesn’t deny suffering, it gives you hope in your suffering.*

❖ *The bible doesn’t ignore pain, it instills hope & assurance in your pain.*

God’s Sovereignty! (vv.12ff) (see also **Ps 119.71**)

➔ *ATTRIBUTES of God in these verses...*

1. Sovereign (12)

2. Eternal (12)

3. Compassion (13)

4. Glorious (16)

5. Transcendent (17)

6. Imminent (17b)

7. Praiseworthy (18)

8. Creator (25)

9. Unchanging - Immutable (27)

10. Unfailing/Unending (27)

“Come fire and cross and grapplings with wild beasts, the rending of my bones and body . . . only let it be mine to attain Jesus Christ”!

—Ignatius of Antioch, 2nd century martyr & disciple of the Apostle John

Psalm 102 — “Forming a Theology of Suffering: In the Days of Distress, How Do You Transition from Me-Centered Pain to God-Centered Peace?”**Sing Psalm 102: Scottish Psalter**

Tune: “How Deep the Father’s Love” or “The Doxology” or “Jesus Shall Reign”

- 1 Lord, hear my pray’r, and let my cry
Have speedy access unto thee;
- 2 In day of my calamity
O hide not thou thy face from me.
- Hear when I call to thee; that day
An answer speedily return:
- 3 My days, like smoke, consume away,
And, as an hearth, my bones do burn.
- 4 My heart is wounded very sore,
And withered, like grass doth fade:
I am forgetful grown therefore
To take and eat my daily bread.
- 5 By reason of my smart within,
And voice of my most grievous groans,
My flesh consumed is, my skin,
All parched, doth cleave unto my bones.
- 6 The pelican of wilderness,
The owl in desert, I do match;
- 7 And, sparrow-like, companionless,
Upon the house’s top, I watch.
- 8 I all day long am made a scorn,
Reproached by my malicious foes:
The madmen are against me sworn,
The men against me that arose.
- 9 For I have ashes eaten up,
To me as if they had been bread;
And with my drink I in my cup
Of bitter tears a mixture made.
- 10 Because thy wrath was not appeased,
And dreadful indignation:
Therefore it was that thou me raised,
And thou again didst cast me down.
- 11 My days are like a shade away,
Which doth declining swiftly pass;
And I am withered away,
Much like unto the fading grass.
- 12 But thou, O Lord, shalt still endure,
From change and all mutation free,
And to all generations sure
Shall thy remembrance ever be.

- 13 Thou shalt arise, and mercy yet
Thou to mount Zion shalt extend:
Her time for favor which was set,
Behold, is now come to an end.
- 14 Thy saints take pleasure in her stones,
Her very dust to them is dear.
- 15 All heathen lands and kingly thrones
On earth thy glorious name shall fear.
- 16 God in his glory shall appear,
When Zion he builds and repairs.
- 17 He shall regard and lend his ear
Unto the needy’s humble pray’rs:
Th’ afflicted’s pray’r he will not scorn.
- 18 All times this shall be on record:
And generations yet unborn
Shall praise and magnify the Lord.
- 19 He from his holy place looked down,
The earth he viewed from heav’n on high;
- 20 To hear the pris’ner’s mourning groan,
And free them that are doomed to die;
- 21 That Zion, and Jerus’lem too,
His name and praise may well record,
- 22 When people and the kingdoms do
Assemble all to praise the Lord.
- 23 My strength he weakened in the way,
My days of life he shortened.
- 24 My God, O take me not away
In mid-time of my days, I said:
Thy years throughout all ages last.
- 25 Of old thou hast established
The earth’s foundation firm and fast:
Thy mighty hands the heav’ns have made.
- 26 They perish shall, as garments do,
But thou shalt evermore endure;
As vestures, thou shalt change them so;
And they shall all be changed sure:
- 27 But from all changes thou art free;
Thy endless years do last for aye.
- 28 Thy servants, and their seed who be,
Established shall before thee stay.

—The numbers correspond with the verses in the Psalm.