

PONDERING HIS WORKS

Psalm 107 ends with this simple phrase: “Let the wise ones consider the steadfast love of the LORD.” This line is a reflection on all that’s been said from 102 until 107, a little unit specifically is united by the theme of Yahweh’s “works.” This sermon series will go through each of these Psalms bringing us through a season of intentionally reflecting upon God’s work of creation and salvation despite continual human failure. God still does mighty things to bring people out of the darkness and into his light. Praising Yahweh is the proper response.

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PSALM 102: LAMENT AND AFFLICTION

Lament and affliction is the context by which we consider the steadfast love of the Lord. Experience of evil is often the starting point.

Hear my prayer, O LORD; let my cry come to you! Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress! Incline your ear to me; answer me speedily in the day when I call! For my days pass away like smoke, and my bones burn like a furnace. My heart is struck down like grass and has withered; I forget to eat my bread. Because of my loud groaning my bones cling to my flesh. I am like a desert owl of the wilderness, like an owl of the waste places; I lie awake; I am like a lonely sparrow on the housetop. All the day my enemies taunt me; those who deride me use my name for a curse. For I eat ashes like bread and mingle tears with my drink, because of your indignation and anger; for you have taken me up and thrown me down. My days are like an evening shadow; I wither away like grass. But you, O LORD, are enthroned forever; you are remembered throughout all generations. You will arise and have pity on Zion; it is the time to favor her; the appointed time has come. For your servants hold her stones dear and have pity on her dust. Nations will fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth will fear your glory. For the LORD builds up Zion; he appears in his glory; he regards the prayer of the destitute and does not despise their prayer. Let this be recorded for a generation to come, so that a people yet to be created may praise the LORD: that he looked down from his holy height; from heaven the LORD looked at the earth, to hear the groans of the prisoners, to set free those who were doomed to die, that they may declare in Zion the name of the LORD, and in Jerusalem his praise, when peoples gather together, and kingdoms, to worship the LORD. He has broken my strength in midcourse; he has shortened my days. "O my God," I say, "take me not away in the midst of my days—you whose years endure throughout all generations!" Of old you laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will change them like a robe, and they will pass away, but you are the same, and your years have no end. The children of your servants shall dwell secure; their offspring shall be established before you. — Psalm 102

1. The heading on this Psalm says that it can be used to pour out a complaint before the Lord. In your conversations with the Lord, what's the difference between lament and sinful complaining (Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world — Philippians 2:14-15)?
2. Share with your family, friend or small group a time in your life where you felt as lonely as "an owl in the waste places (ancient ruins)."

3. What does this Psalm teach us about the character of God?

4. In this Psalm, the circumstances of the lament never seem to be changed. How is the Psalmist able to get to the hope of verse 25-28? How do we move from lament to hope in our lives?