

Psalm 102 Continued

Psalm 102:15 “So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory”

Whose name is reverend, and to be feared.

Especially the glorious and fearful name "Jehovah".

Expressive of the divine existence, of his eternity and immutability.

Though the name of the Lord frequently signifies himself, and here particularly the Messiah, the Son of God.

In whom the name of the Lord is; the King of saints, whom all men will fear in the latter day.

When the set time to favor Zion is come; will stand in awe of him, be careful of offending him, and will serve and worship him.

Even the very Heathen, who knew not God, and had no fear of him before their eyes, or even in their hearts.

The Pagan nations, whose kingdoms will become the kingdoms of our LORD, and of his Christ (see Rev. 11:15).

"And all the kings of the earth thy glory":

Which may be supplied thus.

Either "all the kings of the earth shall see thy glory", or shall fear thee because of "thy glory".

The glory of Christ's person, as the Son of God.

The glory of his offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King.

And especially the glory of his kingly office, to which we see that of the kings of the earth is not to be compared.

The glory of his works of creation, providence, and redemption.

And as it will be held forth in the Gospel, with which the earth will now be full, and so be filled with the glory of the LORD (Psalm 72:19).

And will be so remarkable and conspicuous as to be taken notice of by the kings of the earth.

Even by all of them, who, when the glory of the LORD shall be risen in Zion, will come to the brightness of it, and look upon it, and admire it, and fear because of it (Isaiah 60:1).

Psalm 102:16 “When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.”

The church of God, fallen down, and in a ruinous condition, as it may be said to be when the doctrines of the Gospel are departed from.

The ordinances of it are corrupted and altered, or not attended to.

The worship and discipline of the LORD's house are neglected.

Great declensions in faith, love, and zeal, among the professors of religion, and but few instances of conversion.

And it may be said to be built up again, as it will be in the latter day, when the doctrines of grace will be revived.

The ordinances will be administered in their primitive purity; great spirituality, holiness, and brotherly love, among the saints.

And large numbers converted and brought into it.

And this will be the work of Christ, the great master builder.

The materials of this building will be the saints, those lively stones which will now be laid with fair colors.

The ministers of the word will be the instruments that Christ will make use of in the rebuilding his church.

It is his Spirit, power, and grace, which will make all effectual; and he will have the glory, which it follows.

The Targum is, "for the city of Zion is built by the Word of the LORD."

"He shall appear in his glory":

Or "shall be seen in his glory", which will be upon his church and people, and on which there will be a defense, so that it shall continue.

And this will lie chiefly in the purity of Gospel truths, ordinances, and worship.

In the number of converts; in the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God upon them; in their peace, prosperity, unity, and spirituality.

And in the presence of Christ with them, who will be seen in all the glory and majesty of his kingly office.

He will now reign before his ancients gloriously.

That is, when he will have drawn his church out of the darkness of death.

His glorious power, and wisdom, and goodness shall be manifested to all the world

Psalm 102:17 “He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.”

Of the destitute of human help and support, protection and defense.

As the church in the wilderness; of the "poor", as the Syriac and Arabic versions, both in spirit and in purse.

Of the "humble", as the Septuagint and Vulgate Latin.

The word signifies a low shrub or plant; it is rendered, the heath in the wilderness (Jer. 17:6).

And designs the saints in their low and afflicted state, during the reign of antichrist, and while the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth.

These are the elect that pray day and night, and give the LORD no rest till he establishes and makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

And the prayers of these are regarded and looked to by the LORD.

His eyes are upon and his ears are open to these praying ones.

And all the glorious things which shall be done for the church of God will be in consequence of their prayers.

"And not despise their prayer":

Not reject it with contempt and abhorrence.

More is intended than is expressed: the meaning is, that he will receive it with pleasure, and return an answer to it.

The prayer of these poor destitute ones is delightful to him (Prov. 15:8).

Not treat it with contempt; nor pass it by unheard.

This is stated as one of the reasons why the nations would be struck with awe.

That God, the infinite God, would hear the prayers of those who were so poor, so powerless, and so friendless.

There is, in fact, nothing more suited to excite wonder than that God does hear the prayer of poor, lost, sinful man.

Psalm 102:18 “This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.”

This prayer, as the Targum paraphrases it, is a directory to saints in distressed circumstances.

Or that which was just now said, and that the LORD will regard, and not despise the prayer of the destitute.

This shall stand on record, for the encouragement of praying souls in all generations.

Or this whole prophecy, concerning the glory of the church in the latter day.

This shall be written for the next generation, and so on until it is accomplished, to keep up the faith and expectation of the fulfilment of it.

“Written”:

The psalmist had a sense of the perpetuation of his literary effort.

"And the people which shall be created":

Born at the time when all this shall be done.

Or who shall become new creatures; be created in Christ Jesus, and made new men.

"Shall praise the LORD": When he shall arise and have mercy on Zion.

When he shall favor and rebuild her, in answer to the prayers of his people.

Then their prayers will be turned into praise.

Then will those voices be heard among them.

Hallelujah, salvation, glory, honor, and power unto the Lord our God (Rev. 19:1).

The deliverance of the Church is an excellent benefit, and therefore he compares it to a new creation for in their banishment the body of the Church seemed to have been dead.

Which by deliverance was as it were created anew.

Psalm 102:19 “For he has looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;”

From heaven, as it is explained in the next clause, which is the LORD's sanctuary, or holy place, where he dwells, even in the height of it.

The transcendent omniscience of God is in view.

It is both high and holy, as he himself is.

Yet he condescends to look down from there on sinful mortals.

"From heaven did the LORD behold the earth":

The inhabitants of it, good and bad.

It designs the general notice he takes of men and things in a providential way.

He beholds the world, that lies in wickedness, and all the wickedness committed in it.

And will one day, call to an account, and punish for it.

He beholds good men, not only with an eye of providence, to take care of them, protect and defend, but with an eye of love, grace, and mercy.

He has a special and distinct knowledge of them, and it may here particularly regard the notice he takes of his people, under antichristian tyranny.

He sees all the barbarity and cruelty exercised upon them, and will requite it.

Before long, to their adversaries, and free them from it, as follows.

God's true sanctuary is the heaven of heavens wherein he dwells.

Earthly sanctuaries are but shadows of this.

As God in the days of old had looked down on the affliction of his people in Egypt, so did he now "look down" and "behold" their sufferings in Babylon.

Psalm 102:20 “To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death;”

Not of a single person only, but of many, who lie in prisons in dome Popish countries, especially in the Inquisition.

Where they lie and groan, in darkness and misery, under dreadful tortures.

Their cries and groans the Lord hears; his heart yearns towards them; he looks with pity on them.

And, because of the sighing of these poor and needy ones, he will arise in due time, and set them in safety from him that puffs at them.

It is true also of such who are prisoners of sin, Satan, and the law.

And, when sensible of it, groan under their bondage, and cry to the Lord for help.

Who hears them, and directs them, as prisoners of hope, to turn to Christ, their strong hold (see Zechariah 9:11).

"To loose those that are appointed to death":

Delivered to death, as the Targum.

Delivered over to the secular power, in order to be put to death.

Who are arraigned and condemned as malefactors, and have been put into the condemned hole, in order for execution.

These the Lord will loose, and save them from the death they are appointed to by men.

For this is not to be understood of persons which are appointed by the Lord to death, either corporeal or eternal.

From which none can be loosed, so appointed: in the original text the phrase is "children of death"; the same as "children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3).

That is, deserving of death, and under the sentence of it; as all men are in Adam.

Even the Lord's own people; and who are, in their own apprehension, as dead men, when awakened and convinced of their state by the Spirit of God.

These Christ looses from the shackles and fetters of sin.

From the bondage of the law, from the tyranny of Satan, and from fears of death.

And puts them into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

To release his poor captives out of Babylon, and, which is more, from the chains and fetters of sin and Satan, and from eternal destruction.

Who now in their banishment could look for nothing but death.

Psalm 102:21 "To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem;"

That is, that the prisoners and persons appointed to death, being loosed, might declare, in the church, what great things the Lord has done for them.

And so speak well of his wisdom, power, grace, and goodness, in their deliverance.

Profess his name, and confess him before men, and express a value for his name, and show forth the honor of it, and seek his glory.

"And his praise in Jerusalem":

The Gospel church state, the same with Zion; when it shall be the praise of the whole earth.

Then and there will those, that are delivered from the antichristian yoke, praise the LORD, sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, and glorify God for all that he has done for them.

That his name might be declared in Zion, or that his praise might be set up in Jerusalem again.

That his people might be returned there, and his praise will be celebrated in the holy city.

Psalm 102:22 “When the people are gathered together, and the kingdoms, to serve the LORD.”

When the people of the Jews shall be gathered together, and seek the LORD their God. And David their King, the Messiah, and appoint them one head, even Christ.

And when the Gentiles shall gather together again, in great numbers, to the church of God (Hosea 1:11).

"And the kingdoms to serve the LORD":

Even the kingdoms of this world, which will become his, and will serve him in righteousness and holiness, freely and cheerfully.

With one shoulder and one content.

Their kings will fall down before the LORD, and all nations shall serve him (Psalm 72:11).

And then will be the time when the prisoners shall be loosed, and the Lord shall be praised in Zion.

This will ultimately be fulfilled in Christ's messianic reign over the world (compare psalm 2).

He shows that God's name is never more praised, than when religion flourishes and the church begins to increase.

Which is chiefly accomplished under the kingdom of Christ.

Verses 23-28:

Bodily distempers soon weaken our strength, then what can we expect but that our months should be cut off in the midst.

And what should we do but provide accordingly?

We must own God's hand in it; and must reconcile this to his love, for often those that have used their strength well, have it weakened.

And those who, as we think, can very ill be spared, have their days shortened.

It is very comfortable, in reference to all the changes and dangers of the church, to remember that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

And in reference to the death of our bodies, and the removal of friends, to remember that God is an everlasting God.

Do not let us overlook the assurance this psalm contains of a happy end to all the believer's trials.

Though all things are changing, dying, and perishing, like a vesture folding up and then hastening to decay.

Yet Jesus lives, and thus all is secure, for he hath said, Because I live ye shall live also.

Verses 23-24:

The psalmist desires to live longer but acknowledges his mortality compared to God's eternity.

The psalmist emphasizes the suffering and discipline often associated with sin.

This lament arose out of a situation where the godly, together with the wicked, were exiled from the land.

Psalm 102:23 “He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days.”

The psalmist here returns to his complaint of his afflictions, weakness, and frailty, which ended (Psalm 102:11).

After which some hints are given of the latter day glory, which though he despaired of seeing, by reason of his frailty and mortality.

Yet comforts himself with the eternity and immutability of Christ.

And that there would be a succession of the church, a seed of true believers, who would see and enjoy it.

As for himself, he says that God (for he is that "He", and not the enemy, as some), had "weakened" his "strength in the way".

By afflictions, as the word signifies; which weakens the strength and vigor of the mind, and discourages and dispirits it, and enfeebles the body.

Many are the afflictions which the people of God meet with in the course of their life, in their way to heaven, which have such an effect upon them.

Through many tribulations they pass to enter the kingdom, as the Israelites in their way to Canaan, and Christ to glory.

"He shortened my days":

Which he thought he should live, and expected he would.

And which, according to the course of nature, and the common term of man's life, he might, in all human appearance, have lived.

Otherwise, with respect to the decree of God, which has fixed the bounds of man's days, they cannot be shorter or longer than they are (Job 14:5).

The church lament that they see not the time of Christ, which was promised.

But have but few years and short days.

He made me grow old prematurely.

Psalm 102:24 "I said, O my God, take me not away in the middle of my days: thy years are throughout all generations."

Which was always reckoned as a judgment, as a token of God's sore displeasure, and as what only befell wicked men (Psalm 55:23).

In the Hebrew it is, "cause me not to ascend"; either as smoke, which ascends, and vanishes away; or rather it designs the separation of the soul from the body at death.

When it ascends upwards to God that gave it; so Aben Ezra compares it with (Eccl. 12:7).

The Targum is, "do not take me out of the world in the midst of my days, bring me to the world to come:"

"Thy years are throughout all generations":

Which are not as men's years, of the same measure or number; but are boundless and infinite.

The phrase is expressive of the eternity of God, or Christ.

Which the psalmist opposes to his own frailty, and which he illustrates in the following verses, by setting it in contrast with the discontinuance and changeableness of the heavens and the earth (see Job 10:5).

“The middle of my days”:

Literally at the halfway point of life.

Verses 25-27:

Eternal God created the heavens and earth, which will one day perish (verse 26).

Hebrews 1:10-12, applies this passage to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is superior to the angels because:

- (1) He is eternal, while they had a beginning; and He created, but they were created.
- (2) This passage clearly affirms the eternity and deity of Christ.

The unchangeable God will outlast His creation, even into the new creation (compare Mal. 3:6; James 1:17; 2 Peter chapter 3; Rev. chapters 21 and 22).

Psalms 102:25 “Of old have you laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.”

The lower part of the creation, the Lord's footstool, called the earth beneath.

This has its foundation.

Though what it is cannot be well said, it cannot be searched out.

It is sometimes said to be founded upon the waters, and yet so as not to be removed forever (Jeremiah 31:37).

This shows the wisdom of God, as a wise master builder.

And the stability of the earth; and is a proof of the deity of Christ, to whom these words belong.

This is said to be done "of old", or "at" or "in the beginning", as Jarchi and the Targum state.

And so in (Heb. 1:10), where they are applied to the Messiah, the Son of God.

And this, as it proves the eternity of Christ, who must be in the beginning, and before all things.

So it confutes the notion of the eternity of the earth, received by some philosophers. Besides, the words may be rendered, "before", "thou foundest the earth"; and so refers to the preceding, "thy years", etc. were before the earth was.

That is, from eternity, and so fully express the eternal existence of Christ.

"And the heavens are the work of thy hands":

These are the airy and starry heavens, and the heaven of heavens.

Which are creatures, and not to be worshipped.

Made by Christ himself, and are expressive of his power, wisdom, and glory.

The eternity of God looks both backward and forward.

It is both without beginning and without end.

The former is affirmed and illustrated (Psalm 102:24, 26-27).

The latter is clearly implied in this verse.

Thou was a being before the creation of the world, when there was nothing but eternity, but the earth and heavens had a beginning given them by thy almighty power.

Psalm 102:26 "They shall perish, but thou shall endure: yes, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shall thou change them, and they shall be changed:"

Both the heavens and the earth, though so well founded, and so firmly made.

They shall be dissolved, melt, and pass away.

Not as to the substance, but as to the quality of them.

"But thou shalt endure":

As the eternal God, from everlasting to everlasting.

And, even as man, he will die no more; and, as Mediator, will ever remain.

He will be King forever; his throne is for ever and ever; his kingdom is an everlasting one.

He is a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.

His sacrifice is of an eternal efficacy, and he ever lives to make intercession for his people.

He will always continue, as the Prophet, in his church, to teach by his Spirit, word, and ordinances, in the present state.

And hereafter will be the light of the New Jerusalem, and of his saints, forever.

"Yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment":

Not only the heavens, which are as a curtain and garment about the earth, but the earth itself (see Isaiah 51:6).

Will lose their beauty and glory, and become useless, as to the present form of them.

"As a vesture shall thou change them, and they shall be changed":

As to their form, as a garment that is turned or folded up, and laid aside, as to present use.

This seems to favor the above sense given, that the earth and heavens will not perish, as to the substance of them.

But as to their form, figure, fashion, and scheme.

And as to the qualities of them, all noxious ones being purged away by fire, the curse removed, and new heavens and new earth arise out of them.

"The coming destruction of the world that now is, is very frequently declared in Holy Scripture (see Isa. 51:6; 65:17; Matt. 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33; 2 Peter 3:7, 10, 12).

If heaven and earth perish, much more man will perish.

But the Church by reason of God's promise endures forever.

Psalm 102:27 "But you are the same, and thy years shall have no end."

That hast created them, as the Targum adds; or "thou art He", the everlasting I AM, the unchangeable Jehovah.

Immutable in his nature and perfections.

In His love and affections to His people; in His power to protect and keep them.

In His wisdom to guide and direct them; in His righteousness to clothe them, and render them acceptable to God.

In His blood to cleanse them, and speak peace and pardon to them; in His fullness to supply them, and in His intercession for them.

"And thy years shall have no end" (see note on Psalm 102:24).

Now He that made the heavens and the earth, and will be when they will not be, especially in the present form they are, must be able to rebuild His Zion, and bring on the glory he has promised.

And from his eternity and immutability may be concluded the continuance of his church and interest in the world, until all the glorious things spoken of it shall be fulfilled, as follows.

"Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away (Matt. 24:34-35).

Psalm 102:28 "The children of your servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee."

The "servants" of the Lord are the apostles of Christ, and ministers of the word, in all of the successive generations.

With whom Christ will be to the end of the world.

Their "children" are such whom they have begotten again, through the Gospel, to whom they are spiritual fathers.

Regenerated souls are meant; of these there will be a succession in all ages, until latter day glory takes place.

These are the church's seed, and her seed's seed, from whom the word of the Lord, the Gospel, will never depart (Isa. 59:21).

Or these "shall inhabit", as the word may be rendered, the earth, as the Targum adds.

That is, the new heavens, and the new earth, when the old ones are passed away.

Here they shall dwell with the Lord, who is the same today, yesterday, and forever.

"And their seed shall be established before thee":

The same with the children, the spiritual seed of the church and of faithful minister.

These, with the church, in which they are born and brought up, shall be established in Christ.

The church will be no more in an unstable and fluctuating state, but will be as a tabernacle, that shall not be taken down.

Yea, shall be established upon the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills (see Isa. 2:2).

The realistic hope of one who perceives that though he is about to die, God's purposes on earth will be accomplished in future generations.

In the place of thy gracious presence, either here in thy church, or hereafter in heaven.

Seeing you have chosen your Church out of the world, and joined it to you, it cannot but continue forever: for you are everlasting.

Psalm 102 Continued Questions

1. What shall the heathen fear?
2. Who is the great master builder?
3. What materials does he use?
4. What is one of the reasons why the nations would be struck with awe?
5. From heaven did the _____ the _____?
6. Where is God's true sanctuary?
7. Whose name might be declared in Zion?
8. When is God's name never more praised?
9. What does the middle of my days mean?
10. Who is superior to the angels?
11. What is the Lord's footstool?
12. The heavens are the _____ or they _____.
13. Who is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek?
14. What will pass away, but my words will not pass away?
15. Who are the servants of the Lord?