

Intro:

Our psalm has a unique characteristic that reminds us of another Biblical character. The characteristic is that the sufferings of the one praying are unexplained. Who does that remind us of?

Job

Notes:

I. The days of the distressed (1-11)

The psalmist is in deep distress, but he uses words we all have been familiar with at various times in our lives.

- A. We have felt as if God is hiding his face from us (2)
- B. We have known the experience of days literally wasted by trouble (3)
- C. We have felt ‘that sinking feeling’ as trouble comes upon us (4)
- D. We have endured the privations of fever and sickness (5-6)
- E. We have had sleepless nights because of our trouble (7)
- F. We have experienced the reproach of enemies (8)
- G. We have known the sorrows that makes our meals listless (9)

From the psalmist’s perspective, it is all the Lord’s doing that he endures these troubles. (10-11)

II. The days of Zion’s relief (12-22)

- A. “But You, O Lord” marks a transition in thought (12)
 - 1. An emphasis is made by contrasting words of time
 - a. The Lord is eternal (12)
 - b. Now is the time to be gracious to Zion (13)
 - 2. The attitude of the servants of God towards Zion: love, devotion, hope, in the midst of stones and dust (14)
 - 3. The anticipated result of God’s compassion to Zion (15-17)
 - a. The nations will take note of the glory of God
 - b. Because of the response of God to the prayers of Zion

- B. The days of Zion, needed now, are yet future to the psalmist (18)
 - 1. The Lord's hearing is for a generation to come (18-19)
 - 2. The thing that calls God's attention is the groaning of the prisoner (20)
 - 3. This thing is to be done for the glory of God and his renown in Jerusalem and among all the peoples of the earth (21-22)

III. The days of the Lord extolled (23-28)

- A. The repeated contrast of the days of men and the days of the Lord (23-24)
 - 1. Men: short and full of trouble (23, *cf.* 11, 3)
 - 2. God: everlasting, through all generations (24, *cf.* 12)

This contrast is a major theme of the psalm.

- B. The Lord is not like his creation – he never wears out or comes to an end (25-27)
 - 1. The earth was founded of old (25)
 - 2. The old creation will itself perish (26)
 - 3. But You will endure (26b)
 - a. You are the same (27a)
 - b. Your years will not end (27b)
- C. The Lord's children will endure, not because of their strength, but because of their Lord (28)

IV. The messianic connection

- A. Hebrews 1.10-12 quotes 25-27 almost exactly
 - 1. Follows LXX in adding 'Lord' to 25a – 'you, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation ...'
 - 2. Slight change of word order also
- B. This reference in Hebrews makes the psalm Messianic
 - 1. The address of the Father to the son: "You Lord" is the key
 - 2. The uncalled for sufferings of the early psalm become the unjust sufferings of the Messiah (1-11)

3. The eager anticipation of the kingdom is the goal and desire of the son of David (12-22)
4. The final segment gives perspective to the work of Messiah (23-28)
 - a. His sufferings are short, even compared to his work of creation
 - b. His sufferings are nothing, compared to his eternity of days

Conclusion:

The psalms often have either a messianic or an eschatological view – they see something far off, something men have often longed for.

This longing is in every effort of men to rally around various leaders who seem to be the answer for this innate longing.

This longing is in every effort of man to bring about a world free from want and suffering.

Every effort of man of this sort will only fail. We really need the Man, the King, to come in order for these things to be accomplished.