



THE BOOK OF
PSALMS

PSALM 137

How Shall We Sing the Lord's Song?

By the waters of Babylon,
there we sat down and wept,
when we remembered Zion.

2 On the willows[a] there
we hung up our lyres.

3 For there our captors
required of us songs,
and our tormentors, mirth, saying,
“Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”

4 How shall we sing the Lord's song
in a foreign land?

5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand forget its skill!

6 Let my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth,
if I do not remember you,
if I do not set Jerusalem
above my highest joy!

7 Remember, O Lord, against the Edomites
the day of Jerusalem,
how they said, “Lay it bare, lay it bare,
down to its foundations!”

8 O daughter of Babylon, doomed to be destroyed,
blessed shall he be who repays you
with what you have done to us!

9 Blessed shall he be who takes your little ones
and dashes them against the rock!

Psalm 137 is an Imprecatory psalm of Lament.

1. Read 2 Chron 36:15-20 and Daniel 1 for the context of this psalm. What is the setting of psalmist's Lament and how do these verses explain how they find themselves there?

2. Read Psalm 42:1-3;10; 79:9., Nehemiah 2:3. How do the Israelites respond to their memories of Jerusalem and why can they not sing about Zion?

3. Compare the pronouns used in verses 1-4 to those in verses 5-6. How are they changed and what is the significance and implications of the change?

4. What do the following verses tell us about the Edomites? Who do they represent?
 - a. Gen 36:9
 - b. Ezekiel 35:5-7
 - c. Is 34:5
 - d. Amos 1:11-12
 - e. Obadiah 8-14

5. Note how often the psalmist uses the word 'remember'. What is he remembering in each instance and what is he calling God to remember in the final instance?

6. The word translated "blessed" in verse 8 is a word that means 'straight,' 'right' or doing the 'right thing.' What is the thought process behind the shocking request the psalmist makes in verse 9? Who is the only one who ultimately can do the "right thing?"

7. As a Christian, can you identify with the plight of the Israelites presented here? Have you ever lamented your situation and found yourself calling out for Justice from God? As you look at the plight of the World without Christ, how might your consideration of Luke 13:1-5 temper your cry for immediate justice?

8. How has the study of this Psalm impacted your thinking and living this week?