

Finding Yourself in the Psalms
Psalm 137
A Psalm When You Have No Song to Sing

One of the Darkest Psalms

Frequently used as a polemic against Scripture

We should study this:

1. To teach us the anguish of sin. Here, God's people respond *after* they had sinned. ASK Gov. Spitzer "was it worth it??"
2. To embolden us regarding the weakness of the atheists arguments.
3. To remind us that there are *consequences* for doing wrong. In our culture, everyone is right. We are a nation of *victims*. *We do not punish wrongdoing.*

The SETTING: Captives in Babylon

BEREAVEMENT. 137:1-6

Torn away from Jerusalem.

They were not able to worship.

BETRAYAL BY A FRIEND. 137:7

Edom = descendants of Esau

They Betrayed Judah:

1. Watched while Jerusalem was invaded. Obadiah 11
2. Rejoiced over Judah's captivity. Obadiah 12
3. Participated in sacking the city. Obadiah 13
4. Helped set up road blocks to prevent the Jews from escaping. Obadiah 14
5. Ezekiel 25:12-14
6. Joel 3:19

BELIEVING 137:8

Their hope was in the JUSTICE of GOD.

In this dispensation, justice was measured "eye for eye, tooth for tooth"

(Exodus 21:24) "*eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,*"

(Leviticus 24:20) "*fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. As he has injured the other, so he is to be injured.*"

(Deuteronomy 19:21) "*Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.*"

(Matthew 5:38) "*You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'*"

Isn't this inappropriate language for the BIBLE?

Other writings from this era. . .

Words against a library book thief. "*The gods of heaven and earth, and the gods of Assyria, may all these curse him with a curse which cannot be relieved, terrible and merciless, as long as he lives; may they let his name, his seed, be carried off from the land, and may they put his flesh in*

a dog's mouth."

The Vassal-Treaties of Eharhaddon
(ANET, VOL 2, 53 ff)

What can we learn??

The ANGUISH of SIN

There is no fear of God
There is no hatred of sin
There is no discernment on the part of God's people
There is a time for justice
There is a time for righteous anger
There is a time for judgment

God does NOT tolerate sin

Every Act will be accounted for.

(Matthew 10:26) *"So do not be afraid of them. There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known."*

(Hebrews 4:13) *"Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account."*

(1 Corinthians 4:5) *"Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God."*

(Galatians 6:7) *"Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows."*

(Colossians 3:23-24) *"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."*

(Hebrews 10:36) *"You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised."*

(Psalm 62:12) *"and that you, O Lord, are loving. Surely you will reward each person according to what he has done."*