

Psalm 137 Lament of the Exiles

CHARACTERS: Ezekiel, All (exiles in Babylon), Babylonian, Edomite

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 137

Before you read: Ezekiel probably went into captivity in 597 B.C. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel was a priest. Nebuchadnezzar took hostages to Babylon, mostly children of the gentry, clergy, and aristocracy. His well-known vision of the dry bones prophesied of the return to the homeland and reawakening of a true relationship with God. As you read, imagine how it would feel to be taken to a foreign country as a slave when you were still a child of teen, separated from the familiar places, customs and people.

Z: By the rivers of Babylon— there we sat down and wept when we remembered Zion.

ALL: There we hung up our lyres on the poplar trees,

Z: for our captors there asked us for songs,

ALL: and our tormentors, for rejoicing:

BABYLONIAN: (bossy) Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

Z: (sadly) How can we sing the Lord's song on foreign soil?

ALL: If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill.

Z: May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you,

ALL: if I do not exalt Jerusalem as my greatest joy!

Z: Remember, Lord, what the Edomites said that day at Jerusalem:

EDOMITE: (gleeful malice) Destroy it! Destroy it down to its foundations!

Z: Daughter Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is the one who pays you back for what you have done to us.

ALL: Happy is he who takes your little ones and dashes them against the rocks.

NOTE: Assyrians were notorious for murdering children by slamming them into rocks. Hosea 10:14 the roar of battle will rise against your people, and all your fortifications will be demolished in a day of war, like Shalman's destruction of Beth-arbel. Mothers will be dashed to pieces along with their children. Hosea 13:16 They will fall by the sword; their little ones will be dashed to pieces, and their pregnant women ripped open.

See also Nahum 3:10 concerning this being done to the Assyrians - Her children were also dashed to pieces at the head of every street. They cast lots for her dignitaries, and all her nobles were bound in chains.

Psalm 138 A Thankful Heart

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 139

DAVID: I will give You thanks with all my heart;

ALL: I will sing Your praise before the heavenly beings.

DAVID: I will bow down toward Your holy temple

ALL: and give thanks to Your name for Your constant love and truth.

DAVID: You have exalted Your name

ALL: and Your promise above everything else.

DAVID: On the day I called

ALL: You answered me; You increased strength within me.

DAVID: All the kings on earth will give You thanks, LORD,

ALL: when they hear what You have promised

DAVID: They will sing of the LORD's ways,

ALL: for the LORD's glory is great.

DAVID: Though the LORD is exalted,

ALL: He takes note of the humble;

DAVID: but He knows the haughty from a distance.

ALL: If I walk into the thick of danger,

DAVID: You will preserve my life from the anger of my enemies.

ALL: You will extend Your hand;

DAVID:: Your right hand will save me.

ALL: The LORD will fulfill His purpose for me.

DAVID: LORD, Your love is eternal;

ALL: do not abandon the work of Your hands.

DAVID: You are our Father

ALL: we are the clay

DAVID: You are our potter;

ALL: we all are the work of Your hands.

Psalm 139 The All-Knowing, Ever-Present God

CHARACTERS: David, Jonah, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 139

V: Lord, You have searched me and known me.

ALL: You know when I sit down and when I stand up;

V: You understand my thoughts from far away.

ALL: You observe my travels and my rest;

V: You are aware of all my ways.

ALL: Before a word is on my tongue, You know all about it, Lord.

V: You have encircled me; You have placed Your hand on me.

ALL: This extraordinary knowledge is beyond me. It is lofty; I am unable to reach it.

JONAH: Where can I go to escape Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence?

ALL: If I go up to heaven, You are there;

JONAH: if I make my bed in Sheol, You are there.

ALL: If I live at the eastern horizon or settle at the western limits

V: even there Your hand will lead me; Your right hand will hold on to me.

ALL: If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me, and the light around me will be night"—

JONAH: even the darkness is not dark to You.

ALL: The night shines like the day; darkness and light are alike to You.

V: For it was You who created my inward parts;

ALL: You knit me together in my mother's womb.

V: I will praise You because I have been remarkably and wonderfully made.

ALL: Your works are wonderful, and I know this very well.

V: My bones were not hidden from You when I was made in secret, when I was formed in the depths of the earth.

ALL: Your eyes saw me when I was formless;

V: all my days were written in Your book and planned before a single one of them began.

ALL: God, how difficult Your thoughts are for me to comprehend; how vast their sum is!

V: If I counted them, they would outnumber the grains of sand;

ALL: when I wake up, I am still with You.

JONAH: God, if only You would kill the wicked— you bloodthirsty men, stay away from me—

ALL: They invoke You deceitfully. Your enemies swear by You falsely.

V: Lord, don't I hate those who hate You, and detest those who rebel against You?

ALL: I hate them with extreme hatred; I consider them my enemies.

V: Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns.

ALL: See if there is any offensive way in me; lead me in the everlasting way.

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Psalm 140 Prayer for Rescue

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 140

V: Rescue me, Lord, from evil men.

ALL: Keep me safe from violent men who plan evil in their hearts.

V: They stir up wars all day long.

ALL: They make their tongues as sharp as a snake's bite;

V: viper's venom is under their lips.

ALL: Protect me, Lord, from the clutches of the wicked.

V: Keep me safe from violent men who plan to make me stumble.

ALL: The proud hide a trap with ropes for me;

V: they spread a net along the path and set snares for me.

ALL: I say to the Lord,

V: You are my God. Listen, Lord, to my cry for help.

ALL: Lord God, my strong Savior, You shield my head on the day of battle.

V: Lord, do not grant the desires of the wicked; do not let them achieve their goals.

ALL: Otherwise, they will become proud.

V: When those who surround me rise up, may the trouble their lips cause overwhelm them.

ALL: Let hot coals fall on them.

V: Let them be thrown into the fire, into the abyss, never again to rise.

ALL: Do not let a slanderer stay in the land.

V: Let evil relentlessly hunt down a violent man.

ALL: I know that the Lord upholds the just cause of the poor, justice for the needy.

V: Surely, the righteous will praise Your name;

ALL: the upright will live in Your presence.

Psalm 141 Protection from Sin and Sinners

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 141

V: Lord, I call on You; hurry to help me.

ALL: Listen to my voice when I call on You.

V: May my prayer be set before You as incense,

ALL: the raising of my hands as the evening offering.

V: Lord, set up a guard for my mouth;

ALL: keep watch at the door of my lips.

V: Do not let my heart turn to any evil thing or perform wicked acts with men who commit sin.

ALL: Do not let me feast on their delicacies.

V: Let the righteous one strike me— it is an act of faithful love;

ALL: let him rebuke me— it is oil for my head; let me not refuse it.

V: Even now, my prayer is against the evil acts of the wicked.

ALL: When their rulers will be thrown off the sides of a cliff,

V: the people will listen to my words, for they are pleasing.

ALL: As when one plows and breaks up the soil, turning up rocks, so our bones have been scattered at the mouth of Sheol.

V: But my eyes look to You, Lord God.

ALL: I seek refuge in You; do not let me die.

V: Protect me from the trap they have set for me, and from the snares of evildoers.

ALL: Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I pass by safely.

Psalm 142 A Cry of Distress

CHARACTERS: David, All, B

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 1 minute

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 142, 1 Samuel 22:1 So David left Gath and took refuge in the cave of Adullam.

B A prayer by David when he was in the cave.

V: I cry aloud to the Lord;

ALL: I plead aloud to the Lord for mercy.

V: I pour out my complaint before Him;

ALL: I reveal my trouble to Him.

V: Although my spirit is weak within me, You know my way.

ALL: Along this path I travel, they have hidden a trap for me.

V: Look to the right and see: no one stands up for me;

ALL: there is no refuge for me; no one cares about me.

V: I cry to You, Lord; I say,

ALL: You are my shelter, my portion in the land of the living.

V: Listen to my cry, for I am very weak.

ALL: Rescue me from those who pursue me, for they are too strong for me.

V: Free me from prison so that I can praise Your name.

ALL: The righteous will gather around me because You deal generously with me.

Psalm 143 A Cry for Help

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 143

V: Lord, hear my prayer; in Your faithfulness listen to my plea,

ALL: and in Your righteousness answer me.

V: Do not bring Your servant into judgment, for no one alive is righteous in Your sight.

ALL: For the enemy has pursued me, crushing me to the ground, making me live in darkness like those long dead.

V: My spirit is weak within me; my heart is overcome with dismay.

ALL: I remember the days of old;

V: I meditate on all You have done;

ALL: I reflect on the work of Your hands.

V: I spread out my hands to You;

ALL: I am like parched land before You.

V: Answer me quickly, Lord; my spirit fails.

ALL: Don't hide Your face from me, or I will be like those going down to the Pit.

V: Let me experience Your faithful love in the morning, for I trust in You.

ALL: Reveal to me the way I should go because I long for You.

V: Rescue me from my enemies, Lord; I come to You for protection.

ALL: Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God.

V: May Your gracious Spirit lead me on level ground.

ALL: Because of Your name, Yahweh, let me live.

V: In Your righteousness deliver me from trouble, and in Your faithful love destroy my enemies.

ALL: Wipe out all those who attack me, for I am Your servant.

Psalm 144 A King's Prayer

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 144

V: May the Lord, my rock, be praised, who trains my hands for battle and my fingers for warfare.

ALL: He is my faithful love and my fortress,

V: my stronghold and my deliverer.

ALL: He is my shield, and I take refuge in Him;

V: He subdues my people under me.

ALL: Lord, what is man, that You care for him,

V: the son of man that You think of him?

ALL: Man is like a breath; his days are like a passing shadow.

V: Lord, part Your heavens and come down.

ALL: Touch the mountains, and they will smoke.

V: Flash Your lightning and scatter the foe; shoot Your arrows and rout them.

ALL: Reach down from heaven; rescue me from deep water,

V: and set me free from the grasp of foreigners whose mouths speak lies, whose right hands are deceptive.

ALL: God, I will sing a new song to You;

V: I will play on a ten-stringed harp for You—

ALL: the One who gives victory to kings, who frees His servant David from the deadly sword.

V: Set me free and rescue me from the grasp of foreigners whose mouths speak lies, whose right hands are deceptive.

ALL: Then our sons will be like plants nurtured in their youth,

V: our daughters, like corner pillars that are carved in the palace style.

ALL: Our storehouses will be full, supplying all kinds of produce;

V: our flocks will increase by thousands and tens of thousands in our open fields.

ALL: Our cattle will be well fed.

V: There will be no breach in the walls,

ALL: no going into captivity, and no cry of lament in our public squares.

V: Happy are the people with such blessings.

ALL: Happy are the people whose God is Yahweh.

Psalm 145 Praising God's Greatness

CHARACTERS: David, All

SETTING: bare stage

RUN TIME: 2 minutes

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Psalm 145

V: I exalt You, my God the King, and praise Your name forever and ever.

ALL: I will praise You every day;

V: I will honor Your name forever and ever.

ALL: Yahweh is great and is highly praised;

V: His greatness is unsearchable.

ALL: One generation will declare Your works to the next and will proclaim Your mighty acts.

V: I will speak of Your splendor and glorious majesty and Your wonderful works.

ALL: They will proclaim the power of Your awe-inspiring acts, and I will declare Your greatness.

V: They will give a testimony of Your great goodness and will joyfully sing of Your righteousness.

ALL: The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and great in faithful love.

V: The Lord is good to everyone; His compassion rests on all He has made.

ALL: All You have made will thank You, Lord;

V: the godly will praise You.

ALL: They will speak of the glory of Your kingdom and will declare Your might,

V: informing all people of Your mighty acts and of the glorious splendor of Your kingdom.

ALL: Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom;

V: Your rule is for all generations.

ALL: The Lord is faithful in all His words and gracious in all His actions.

V: The Lord helps all who fall; He raises up all who are oppressed.

ALL: All eyes look to You, and You give them their food at the proper time.

V: You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

ALL: The Lord is righteous in all His ways and gracious in all His acts.

V: The Lord is near all who call out to Him, all who call out to Him with integrity.

ALL: He fulfills the desires of those who fear Him;

V: He hears their cry for help and saves them.

ALL: The Lord guards all those who love Him, but He destroys all the wicked.

V: My mouth will declare Yahweh's praise;

ALL: let every living thing praise His holy name forever and ever.