

“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.

We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof.

For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song, and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

How shall we sing the LORD’S song in a strange land?

If I forget thee, Oh Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.

If I do not remember thee let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth. If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.

Remember, Oh LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem: who said, “Raise it, Raise it, even to the foundation thereof!

Oh daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us!

Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones!”

Before we go into the Text of this Psalm we need to deal with the end of it first so that this Psalm isn’t thought to be disqualified from being worthy of the Sacred Text, and it definitely belongs to the rest of it. We see in the Book of Psalms several examples of what normally is considered as being songs of vengeance or retributive justice. So, this is not the only place this type of idea occurs. This is definitely included in the song and prayer book of Israel, as well as the Book of Revelation, as in chapter 18:5&6, “For her (the apostate church) sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities, Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works, ...” Also seen in Revelation 6:10, “And they (the martyrs) cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, Oh Lord, holy and true, doest Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” Notice this is not expressed in a tone of hate, but instead, it is a plea that justice may be done. We are not to harbor hatred in our hearts, but we also are to seek righteousness and that involves seeking justice. There is therefore room for praying for justice before the Throne of Grace. Also, this is a rather public Psalm, not just shared by a few, and therefore it was no doubt heard by the Babylonians who held the entire nation of Israel captive and in derision. The position here expressed is that the Babylonians were to listen and perhaps see how they would feel if all the atrocities spoken of here, were in fact done to them. It was not, therefore, just a plea for justice but empathy. Indeed how would the Babylonians feel if everything they owned, including their families, homes, possessions and hoped for future were all taken away, and base cruelty was openly displayed? Truly, how would they feel about seeing their own little ones slammed against rocks before their very eyes? The feeling is beyond description, and

therefore, the Babylonians needed to consider what they had done. These are the reasons this part was included in this Psalm of captivity.

:1. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down..." The internal evidence written into this Psalm indicates that it was composed during the Babylonian Captivity (dates approximately 608-538 B.C by most modern experts in archeology) brought about by Nebuchadnezzar, the antichrist of his day. The main river that flowed through the center of the city of Babylon the Great was the Euphrates River. It was this river that was diverted that permitted the enemies of Babylon to go under the great thick walls of the city, resulting in a surprise attack from within that led to its downfall. Babylon fell in the year 539 BC. Ultimately, the city would be destroyed and never rebuilt, even to this day. It is questionable that it will ever be rebuilt since the reference to a future Babylon is written in highly symbolic language found in Revelation 17:4&5, "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name, written, Mystery Babylon the Great..." There, it is safe to say, that Mystery Babylon represents not a physical city, but the apostate church that rides on the popularity of the masses. Sadly, this apostasy reigns in many, many churches. They have a fake gospel, fake ministers, fake conversions, and therefore fake churches. This is a total departure from the Faith once delivered unto the Saints which all faithful people of God uphold. What will actually happen is not a new reformation, a new revival, but a giant revolution to overthrow this horrible monstrosity, as it states in Revelation 17:16, "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore (church)and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." So, the organized apostate church shall be crushed by the political government of the world as the ten signifies total or complete, and horns is symbolic of heads of governments. These aren't ten heads of government from a resurrected Roman Empire, but it simply pictures all the heads of world political powers, or the New World Order. It is probably the Man of Sin of the Book of Thessalonians that is then revealed that brings the leadership to all of this. Now, after that happens, the state becomes the religion, so that all worship the beast unabated, with no fake outside church to compete with it. It is its own religion and that is probably not in the form of what we would consider a regular church. It will be viewed as the new and "best" only way to God, somewhat eclectic from all but holding the state as supreme. in their case the g in God is only a small case letter. This brings us to the fact that true believers are to flee from open membership of the visible apostate church, for when the Beast comes with its sharp teeth to devour it, they need to be safely gone. Those with the 501C3 tax exempt designation are easy hits, and will have the eye of the Beast upon them. It is best to be forewarned and prepared, and in

this case, not hedge your welfare on your eschatological interpretations, which may prove to be sadly wrong due to the complications of prophecy.

So, here on the banks of the rivers of Babylon God's people are found resting in a very depressed way, far, far from home. Sitting by and listening to the ever flowing river waters, they contemplated their miserable situation. Silent was everyone, with no songs left in the heart to sing. Over the lingering memories of home, and of the dead, minds quietly pondered. The hanging of their musical instruments into limbs of trees was an act of significant symbolism. There would be no songs sung, since what they once sang and rejoiced about was completely gone. Some would not live long enough to ever see any of it again. Some would die in misery in a land of confinement. Then, to make things worse, their captors, turned tormentors, mocked them and their songs pretending to have a happy interest in their music. Their sacred music wasn't sacred to the Babylonians but something to be laughed at. The Davidic Psalms were in existence and were probably included in the mockery. Biblical critics have pointed out that the willow tree doesn't grow in that area of the world, however, this is very short sighted and misinformed. There actually is historic evidence of the willow tree growing there in ancient times. As climates and terrain change over centuries, so do the plants. One doesn't need to panic over changes in climate or topographics because they will all go in various cycles of ebb and flow for as long as the earth turns. In verses four and five we see the remarkable resilience of faith, Though Christians get struck down to the dust, and humbled to the dirt, yet God lives in them. He gives them eternal life, and therefore, eternal hope. We never give up or ever give in. Struck down, we rise back up with the power of the Resurrection, this no enemy will ever conquer, for God is in us, and who or what can overcome God? How could anything oppose the First Cause of the Universe or the Source of their own power of life? It's an impossibility so then, we see that those who are in God's Family, are on the winning side of everything. Though there are times of our own sitting by the rivers of Babylon, and we linger, with unanswered questions, but even in the darkest of these hours, God's Light is there, even when it looks to be ever so small. When the music stops, and all is quiet, and the heart is deeply crying silently to itself for no one else to hear, it is then, only between you and God. "Remember..." as verse six states, remember your faith and with Whom you have faith in. "If I do not remember Thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!" As time like a river flows us ever closer to eternity, remembering our faith and our God as God becomes ever more important. The sound of the rushing Babylon rivers could smother out all other distractions, and so the contemplator could silently remain undisturbed with the LORD, but this is not the time to remain silent nor let your tongue cleave to the roof of your mouth. We will not die as miserable captives of the evils of this world. We, by the power of Christ will rise above this decaying earth, to meet Him in the clouds. If you are going to say or do anything for the LORD, it is time.

