

PRAYING PSALM 137

How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land" (Psalm 137:4).

This was a song of the exiles after their return from Babylonian captivity in 536 B.C. 1. RECOLLECTION OF BABYLON (1-3). The Jews had a painful recollection of sitting by the canals and weeping. Their captors taunted them and asked them to sing their songs of faith. Their captivity exposed them to the criticism of their enemies. 2. DEVOTION TO JERUSALEM (4-6). How shall we sing a song in a strange land? Is it possible? 2. IMPRECATIONS AGAINST THEIR ENEMIES (7-9). The psalm calls for the destruction of Israel's enemies.

If you substitute the church for Jerusalem (5-6), you can see a vivid application. This song is an exhortation to remember. Backsliding happens when you forget the blessings of God. Not remembering can be good, but here it is bad. It is a sin against grace. When we forget God's grace, we open ourselves to backsliding. Life is filled with memories you would like to forget, as well as those you can't forget. Carnal Christians are great forgetters, but they forget the wrong things. The Christians at Ephesus (Revelation 1:1-7) left their first love, because they forgot their first love. Peter wrote to remind believers of their calling in grace (II Peter 1:11-15). One reason for reading the Bible through regularly is so we won't forget what it says. When you find yourself in a foreign land, you can do nothing but wait on God to teach you lessons you have forgotten. Pray ahead. Ask God to help you remember important things, so you won't find yourself trying to forget things you can't forget. Sometimes the only response to troublesome memories is regret. Begin there, and allow the Holy Spirit to lead you.