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Psalm 126

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



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Bible
at Home

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Psalm 126.

Topics.

- The LORD restored the fortunes of Zion and filled us with joy.
- The history of Judah's and Israel's seventy-year captivity.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

INTRODUCTION

Psalms are songs and prayers offered to God by the nation Israel, they cover the range of human emotion, expressing praise, faith, victory, sorrow, despair, depression, frustration and the troubled heart of a mourner. They contrast the righteous with the wicked, and include the wisdom and the treasure of God's word. Psalms were written at the beginning of the 15th century BC and probably collected in their final form in the 3rd century.

BOOK FIVE (PSALM 107-150)

PSALM 126:1-6

A Song of Ascents.

1

The LORD restored the Fortunes of Zion and Filled us with Joy.

- **Psalm 126:1-6:** When the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we (Judah and Israel) were like those who dream. ²Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them." ³The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad. ⁴Restore our fortunes, O LORD, like streams in the Negeb! ⁵Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! ⁶He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him.

Ascents: means a climactic progression or journey to a higher place, it carries the idea of a thought arising.

Like streams in the Negeb (v4) the Negeb has rolling hills which abruptly terminate in the desert region, it is a land where the water supply is scarce, because of a very meager amount of rainfall in the summer months, but at other seasons of the year streams flow across its desert sands and new life springs up so much so that the nomads use it for pasturage.

THE THEME OF THE PSALM

This Psalm appears to be an expression of the enormous joy Israel felt as they marched toward Jerusalem their beloved city after their seventy years in captivity to the Empire of Babylon. Their freedom seemed so impossible it was something they could only dream of and when it came, their laughter and happiness was so great that the surrounding nations confessed Israel's God had done great things for them. The LORD answered the prayer and restored the fortunes of Israel they returned to

their land, built their homes, re-built the city of Jerusalem, the temple of God and restored their farm land so that they flourished like the flowing streams of the Negeb that brought new life to the barren and dry ground of the desert. They went into captivity with great grief and sorrow and for seventy years sowed tears of repentance until that glorious and miraculous day of their freedom came and their shouts of joy could be heard amongst all the sounding hills and mountains as they marched home with their families, their children and their possessions. Those who had sowed crops with weeping and sorrow in Babylon left with shouts of joy carrying seed for sowing to plant in their own land and after a day's work sowing the seed in their own farmland would go home singing songs of joy and praise and the seed they sowed would bring forth and abundance of produce.

THE HISTORY OF JUDAH'S AND ISRAEL'S SEVENTY YEAR CAPTIVITY

God sent prophet after prophet to warn Judah and Israel of impending doom if they did not change their wicked ways, but they set their hearts diamond hard against the word of God's prophets (Zech. 7:12). They rebelled against the LORD and turned to other gods and entered into gross sin so the LORD used Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon (who He called His servant (Jer. 25:9) to bring the curses of the covenant upon them. The curses of the covenant are found in (Deut. 28:15-68) and the blessing of the covenant in (Deut. 28:1-14). The fierce armies of Babylon invaded the land of Judah, laid their farm land waste, attacked Jerusalem (the two tribes of Judah) and pillaged the temple. Zedekiah was blinded and carried to Babylon, and the great bulk of the population was taken in chains there with him (around 587 B.C.).

Later Babylon conquered Assyria who had previously taken Israel (the ten tribes in the land of Samaria) captive. They went into captivity to the Empire of Babylon as two rebellious nations who had turned from God to idols and who were even sacrificing their own children to pagan gods and were under Babylonian rule for the next seventy years. Archaeologists have found that all of the cities of Judah were completely destroyed at this time, thus ended the glorious kingdom of David and Solomon. Observers would have said that the Hebrew nation was annihilated, and indeed, the other nations conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians did cease to exist. But the prophets proclaimed a better hope for the chosen people. "A remnant shall return" Isaiah had said, and in time this remnant, purged and returned, became the basis on which a new Israel would be built.

2

NOW HERE IS THE GOOD NEWS

While in captivity God moulded them like a master potter moulds a beautiful clay jar, Israel and Judah went into Babylon as two unfaithful nations that had turned away from the LORD to idols and other gods. Seventy years later, Cyrus (King of Persia) who the LORD called His anointed shepherd (Isaiah 44:28) and took by His right hand (Isaiah 45:1) to conquer the Empire of Babylon gave written permission for Israel to return to Jerusalem. Under Ezra and Nehemiah God brought Israel and Judah back to their beloved city Jerusalem as one united nation faithful to only one God, the LORD their God, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob (Israel never turned to idols or pagan gods again). Multitudes of Jewish families who had been scattered throughout the nations returned to Jerusalem and the land of Israel with triumphant joy and rejoicing. When the temple of God was completed their faith was once again established and a time of prosperity and peace followed. Sadly, Israel as a nation never recognised their Messiah the Christ when he came, but even this was in the LORD'S sovereign will. The prophet Zechariah tells us when, the Lord returns in glory:

- God will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn (Zech. 12:10-14).

GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT

Throughout the Bible Babylon is often pictured as a symbol of the world's system, many faithful Christians experience times of struggle and sorrow under the oppression and difficulties of living in this corrupt, sinful and fallen world as Israel did during their seventy years in captivity, but, the faithful should never lose hope, just as God delivered His people from the Babylonian oppression the Lord Jesus Christ will return in glory to deliver all who belong to his global family from the oppression of this world and exalt them to eternal life and glory and everlasting happiness and peace and like the people of Israel returning to their homeland they will forever be filled with shouts of joyful praise and laughter.

- Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused you to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, ⁵who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 1:3-7).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
