

# Weeping at the Rivers

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[ 0 : 00 ] And then, after you find that, just scoot over to Proverbs 24, and I'd like you to keep your finger there in Proverbs 24, and we'll get there shortly.

So, Psalm 137, nine verses, and I've read this psalm, like many of you, read it many times, and I've always read this thing thinking, man, I feel their pain.

And I just kind of felt like the words they say here that we read are just a noble response to the cruel treatment and to the insensitivity of the captors, those that have taken Jews over to Babylon, and how they would require them to sing a song.

And I've always just felt like, man, that's just rough, and they've got it tough. But I recently read through this, and I just couldn't shake the feeling that I'm not reading it right, or there's something there.

It just, it wasn't clicking quite the same way. And so, I decided to take a new look at it and kind of refresh my perspective of this scene. And so, let's take a look at Psalm 137.

[ 1 : 18 ] And verse 1 says, 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, O 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, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem, who said, raise it, raise it even to the foundations thereof.

O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed, happy shall he be that rewarded thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

[ 2 : 23 ] Some pretty coarse language there from people that are held in captivity, that have experienced some extremely dramatic and horrifying situations.

Things they've viewed with their own eyes. And seeing their cities burned and seeing their loved ones killed and families being separated and dragged hundreds and hundreds of miles to a foreign land to be servants.

And they are not in a good way. And so, like I said, I used to read this and just feel like, man, they've got it so tough. And to hear them talk like that, we can't sing the songs of Zion in this strange.

I used to look at it and think, yeah, that's very noble of you. But I want to look at it differently tonight. And so now flip over to Proverbs 24. And I don't know, you've read that.

I'm sure that wasn't the first time through Psalm 137 for most of you. I'm sure you read that and you maybe have had similar thoughts. I don't know. But in Proverbs 24, take a look at this here.

[ 3 : 23 ] I don't want to take the time to give you the full passage here or what's going on. But Solomon takes a walk and he takes a look at a slothful man's vineyard and how there's no fruit there.

And there's a stone wall that's supposed to be kept up around the perimeter. And that's broken down. And there's thorns and nettles instead of a vine and fruit growing. And so in verse number, well, I'll read 30 through 32.

It says, And here's the verse I want to focus.

Then I saw and considered it well. I looked upon it and received instruction. And just like Solomon took a walk and observed something that day and received instruction from what his eyes beheld, I want to look at Psalm 137 and behold this situation and this scene a little bit differently and attempt, I think we can receive some real good instruction from this passage.

Instead of getting emotionally attached and feeling the pity, I think there's more to this. And let's take a look at it tonight. So back in Psalm 137, and we're going to stay there most of the night, I want to consider some things.

[ 4 : 42 ] First of all, I want to consider their place. And that is, this is a place of pain. In verse number one, by the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept. We sat there and just wept.

These people are in pain. They're hurting. And rightfully so. But this is the people of God we're reading about. Remember that. These are the children of Abraham. The people of promise.

The people of a covenant with God. And here they are in a place of pain. What are they doing in Babylon? That's a question we should ask in verse one.

By the rivers of Babylon, why on earth are you in Babylon crying your eyes out? It's a good, if you want to consider something, you want to receive instruction, this is the right place to start.

There's an obvious reason that they're in Babylon. The scripture lays it out as plain as day. If you read through your Old Testament, you know exactly why they're in Babylon. These people have rejected God.

[ 5 : 44 ] God redeemed them from Egypt with a great strong hand and terrible works and brought them all the way into this land and gave it to them. It's a land that flowed with milk and honey.

A land that was theirs for the keeping and inheritance for generations to come. Nothing but blessing would God give to them if they would follow him and walk according to his words.

But they rejected his words. They hated the prophets, despised the prophets that God sent to them. They said, we'll do it our way. We'll sacrifice our babies to other gods.

We'll learn that one of their kings even went to a foreign land and said, boy, I like that altar. I want to bring that. You know what? Give me the pattern for that altar. I'm going to build an altar like that and put that in place of the real altar that God described.

That belongs to the Jews only. He said, no, I like the one that's up there in Damascus. They've just decided we'll do it our way. And now look where they're at.

[ 6 : 45 ] They've exhausted the mercy of God. They've exhausted the long suffering of God to them. And now they've incurred the judgment of God. They're weeping.

And as you know, it's a result of their own sin. You want to consider something? You want to get some instruction? Consider the place they're at. It's a place of pain.

But they have no one to blame but themselves. You can feel sorry for them if you want to. And I'm not trying to nitpick and be nasty, but I can tell you this.

You can't feel sorry for them without realizing that they brought this upon themselves. This is their doing. It's not that God's unrighteous or he's unjust at all. He's more than merciful to these people.

I've said this a few weeks ago, and I would beg you to do this as a study. Try to find a portion of time where the Israelites actually followed the Lord, like with their hearts as a nation.

[ 7 : 42 ] Try to find it and just see how long of a time and all of their great long history. Find out it's windows, it's glimpses. It's not the overall. It's hardly the norm is what I'm saying.

So God was merciful to them for a long, long time. Very rarely did they actually turn to him and praise him and worship him. It was a rare thing when they did. It was like jumps off the page.

Wow, they're holding the Sabbath. It's been years and years. So you can feel sorry for them, but they're just reaping what they sowed. And God did not design this kind of place for this people.

That was not his intention for this people. He vocalized it. He wrote it in his word. His intention for this people was prosperity, was for them to be a kingdom of priests, a peculiar people.

He wanted something great for them. He wanted blessing for them. He wanted prosperity and wealth. He wanted health for them. He wanted domination for them and victory for them.

[ 8 : 47 ] And it was their choice. Obey my laws. Let me be your God. Be my people. And I'll take care of you. And they said no. And so instead of what God would have given them, they've gotten this place of pain.

This place of Babylon weeping, it doesn't match a people of promise or a covenanted people. So we need to consider.

And we need to learn something. We need to consider that the Lord is righteous for evil, and he's righteous for good. You decide which side of him you want to be on.

These people, he said, I set before you this day the blessing, and I set before you this day the curse. Which one do you want? And you know as well as I do, they're here because they chose to sin against God.

We need to consider why people, even today, are in the predicaments that they're in. Before we feel so filled with compassion and want to reach out and do what they would say is the Christian thing to do is help them out, is we need to at least first consider, why are you in that shape?

[ 9 : 55 ] You look at the junkie that's sitting on the corner, spaced out of their mind, and you can stop and you can consider and say, look kids, this is why you don't ever touch these substances, and you stay away from this stuff, and you always say no, and you take the wrong friends, and they'll lead you into things, and that's going to be you.

You look at their, before you start feeling sorry, you consider why are they in that shape? Go to jails and see all the people incarcerated, and you need to learn a lesson from that and say, listen, this is why you stay away from alcohol.

Because drugs and alcohol are still the number one and two things why people, men and women are in prison today. And you learn a lesson from watching where they're at and why they're where they are.

You see somebody lose all their money on some foolish scheme. Why? Because they were greedy. You learn a lesson from it. And you get a, you find out you messed up things in your life, you ought to learn a lesson.

Consider why you're weeping. Consider why you're in Babylon, and why you're sitting there crying. You need to learn some lessons. These things are for our instruction. So consider their place of pain.

[ 10 : 59 ] And you don't need to turn here, but the Apostle Paul has a warning to the church about something here. And I'm just going to read a little portion of it to you from Romans 11.

Because his warning is, you saw what God would do to his own people. You better tighten up. And you better be cautious. And you better fear, is the word he uses.

And in Romans 11, he says, he's talking about the, oh man, he talks about an olive tree being Israel and a wild olive tree being grafted in. And the comment he makes here is, says in verse 19, he says, Thou wilt say then, the branches were broken off, that means Israel, that I might be grafted in.

Meaning the church get in on the blessing of God. And he says, well, like you're right. Because of unbelief, they were broken off and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded.

Don't think you're somebody special. But fear, Paul says, for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed, lest he also spare not thee.

[ 12 : 05 ] You're a wild branch that he allowed to get into this thing. You've been saved by the grace of God, but don't take for granted that what he did to his own people that he loved, the apple of his eye, the one that he foreknew, the one that he made promises to that he's going to be and make good on in the future.

He hasn't changed his mind at all about Israel. But don't you think for a moment that because they rejected him that you got in, now you're better than them or that God's going to have mercy on you.

You better be fearful. That's the thought. Don't think that can't be you sitting by the river in Babylon, weeping, because of what you sow, you will reap just the same as they will.

So take that as a caution, Christian, by considering their place, the people of God, beloved of God. He called him my firstborn son. I redeemed him, brought out of Egypt, did all my miracles to prove to the world that I love this people.

And he said that, I love them. And then he let them go through some terrible, terrible things because of their sin. So they're in a place of pain.

[ 13 : 10 ] Consider their place. Secondly, I want you to consider something else. Consider their attitude. Look at verse 2, if you're in Psalm 137. And verse number 2 says, 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 one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

I say, Consider their attitude. What I see here is an attitude of self-pity. Poor us. Look how bad we've got. We're never going to play our music again.

How could we possibly play the songs of Zion here in Babylon? Look where we are. Look what's happened to us. What they've done is they've adopted this victim mentality.

An attitude of self-pity. And I used to pity them when I read this passage. I used to pity them. I did, but I'm not seeing it that way anymore. Should they hang up their harps upon the willows?

[ 14 : 10 ] Is that justified just because they're receiving the judgment of God that they should hang their harps up on the willows? Should they hang it up? That's the word we use today, derived right from the word of God.

Just quit. Just give up. Should we hang it up? Because we're in a bad place? Because we've incurred the judgment of God because of our sins? These victims?

Is that the right attitude? Why don't we compare it to somebody who's right beside them in Psalm 138? Here's a psalm of David. And it's placed right here.

This is a psalm that would have been written long before 137, but here it's placed right behind it. In verse number one, David says, I will praise thee with my whole heart. Before the gods will I sing unto thee.

I will worship, notice the word, toward. He's not in Jerusalem or he's not where the tabernacle of God was, is he? In verse number seven, he's talking about walking in the midst of trouble.

[ 15 : 11 ] And yet this man says, I'm going to worship toward thy holy temple and praise thy name for thy loving kindness and for thy truth. For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

Verse three says, In the day when I cried, thou answerest me and strengthenest me and with strength in my soul. All the kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.

Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord. For great is the glory of the Lord. What a different attitude from a man that knew trouble just very much the same.

An innocent man though, but he decided that people are going to hear him sing and praise the Lord. He decided that they're even going to know what he sings and they're going to learn what he sings and be able to repeat it.

They shall sing, verse five he said, in the ways of the Lord. What a different attitude from David to these Israelites that are crying by the rivers of Babylon.

[ 16 : 11 ] I want to consider their attitude tonight. I think that they've got an attitude of self-pity and it stinks. It's like going to a jail to visit somebody in prison and all they do is complain about the food and about how cold it is or how dirty it is and just how, woe is me and I miss everybody.

It's just such a tough life and you've got to say, but hey, why are you in here? You've got to take some blame, right?

You've got to deal with that first. You're not a victim here. You're to be blamed here. I listened to a brother preach. He's a pastor in Texas. He was out here on the West Coast preaching a meeting and somebody told me it was a good meeting and I listened to one of his messages and he said something that was interesting.

I didn't know him that well until he gave a little bit of his life story and he said, when I look back over my life, I see a lot of pain. And this guy's been in the ministry, I want to say, maybe 10 years.

He says, but I look back over my life and I just see this and I see that and I see this and I see that and he says, it took me a long time until I grew up and looked at it and finally realized I'm the one to blame for most of the tough things that I've been through.

[ 17 : 23 ] And when I owned it and I understood it, I changed my attitude about it. These people have an attitude of self-pity. And so before we feel sorry for them, I wonder, have they gotten their hearts right with God?

I wonder, have they repented of the reason they're in this place? They're sitting here by the rivers of Babylon weeping and they've hung it up. Consider their attitude.

It's a sorry attitude. I can't feel bad for them yet because I haven't seen anything in this passage that says they're sorry for why they're in the place they're at. That says, don't pity me, forgive me.

I don't see any cry to God for forgiveness. I wonder if they've owned up to what they've done that got them there in the first place because there's a reason they're in Babylon. And if you feel yourself in Babylon, there's a reason you're in Babylon.

First thing, figure out why. Own up to your part of it. If you're to be blamed, then take the blame and seek the mercy of God and humble yourself.

[ 18 : 35 ] If you have humbled yourself, it'll show in your attitude because your attitude will be of one of remorse and one of seeking restoration and seeking mercy and an attitude of waiting on the Lord to lift you back up instead of, oh, I quit.

Self-pity. Pray for me. It's God, I just got it so hard right now. Why? Because I'm in Babylon. It's time to own up to why you're in Babylon.

It's time to get your heart right with God so that he can lift you up in due time. Consider their attitude. You want to contrast this with somebody? Think about Acts chapter 16.

Remember two men, the Apostle Paul and his cohort, Silas? Those two men were in prison and they were victims because they didn't do anything wrong.

But they were imprisoned and at midnight, do you remember what the Bible says they did? They did two things. They prayed and they sang praises to God. What a different attitude.

[ 19 : 40 ] Guys that are actually victims of wrongdoing and they're not playing the pity card and they're not hanging it up and quitting, but they're singing praises to God.

And you know what happened? They led somebody to Christ. The jailer, and you know what happened? He took them home, washed their stripes, and they led their family to Christ. God got some glory out of that situation.

What a different attitude. A different outcome because of a different attitude. So here they are in Psalm 137 with an opportunity, get this, an opportunity to declare to the heathen the righteous acts, the truth of their holy God.

They requested of us mirth. When's the last time the world came to you and requested to hear you tell them about how good the Lord is? The world doesn't look for that, but here they had an opportunity to sing a song that would have glorified God, a song that would lift up their God and spoke and praised Jehovah, and they said, we can't do it.

How can we do such a thing? Their sorry attitude. God could have got some glory out of this situation. The heathen could have heard something they've never heard before.

[ 21 : 02 ] It sounds noble the way they're talking, but it's not. It's rotten. Their attitude is rotten. I want to consider something else beyond just their attitude, the attitude of self-pity.

I want to consider their statement in verses 4 through 6. It's a statement of hypocrisy. Look at verse 4. It says, how shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

Like, how could we possibly do this? It goes against everything we believe. Verse 5, if I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.

That means the ability to play on the instrument, all the years of practice, like it just disappears and I'll never be able to play again. Verse 6, 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.

I call this a statement of hypocrisy. Why? Because it sounds, it's such pious sounding language from somebody who's refusing to sing one of the Lord's songs in a strange land.

[ 22 : 08 ] It sounds good when they're declaring how much they care about their holy land. Yeah, it sounds really good. But is that the same way they talked when they lived in that holy land?

The land that they defiled with their abominations, their worship of other gods, their forsaking of the Lord and keeping his Sabbaths and his holy convocations, rejecting the word of God and his prophets that he sent to them, rising up early and sending.

And some of the kings told the prophet right there and there, he says, forbear. Don't say another word or I'll put you in jail or off with your head.

Boy, they sound awful pious in Babylon, but I don't think that's the way they talked about Jerusalem when they lived there. And you know who else is good at sounding pious and emphasizing things that sound good to the hearer?

Christians. It's easy for Christians that have been around the word of God a little bit, been around church a little bit, been around other believers, been around this lifestyle.

[ 23 : 17 ] They learn, you learn the lingo pretty quickly. You learn how to say, amen, brother. Pray it for you, brother. Praise the Lord. Oh, that's good to hear, brother. You learned how to, you learned how to talk about, pray for me and pray that God gets the glory in this and pray that the Lord does this and that and you learn how to talk the talk, but do you walk the walk?

Because these Jews didn't walk the walk. That's why they're in Babylon, but they're sitting there talking the talk. Oh, let my right hand forget her. I'll never play again. I'll never sing again if I can't sing about thee, oh, Jerusalem.

Does something sound off about that? Are you picking that up if you read that and read that and read that? Something sounds off that they're saying, if I forget thee, oh, Jerusalem, that holy city, the great city, Jerusalem, the city of peace.

Where's the Lord? Where's the word of or the mention of the name of God in their mouth here? If I forget thee, oh, Jerusalem, land.

their hometown, singing about a land and not singing about the God that bought them and gave them that land. Something's off here.

[ 24 : 43 ] If I don't do it for Jerusalem, if I don't do it for you, Jerusalem, if I don't or desire you or what's the word he used? If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy, what about the Lord?

I think he's missing in their tongue. Maybe their tongue should cleave to the roof of their mouth if that's all they can say. Where's the remembrance of him? If they would have remembered him, they wouldn't be in Babylon to begin with.

And here they are praising a city, singing about a city. I said to you that Christians are good at sounding pious too.

I wonder if your walk matches your talk or is it just some of the same hypocrisy that Christians are known for?

Because you do know that Christians have gained a reputation for being hypocrites. And I know, look, I get it. I know the world will do anything or say anything or use any excuse to not be accountable to God.

[ 25 : 52 ] And to avoid that so they'll find a flaw in anybody and they would try to overemphasize it so that they can justify their own sins or something.

I get that part. So I'm not stating this too hard, I don't believe. But there is a reason that there's a reputation among Christians of being hypocrites, of being accusing, quick to accuse.

And when, like Christ said, got a beam in their own stinking eye. It's easy to accuse others. It's easy to judge the actions of others and judge the actions of their families and not look at your own life and acknowledge your own sin.

It's easy to point the finger. It's so easy to point the finger and find fault with other people. And yet it's hard to humble yourself and admit, oh, it's me, oh Lord, in Babylon where I belong because of my sin.

I think this is just a bunch of piteous hypocrites refusing to play and sing. So we're looking at them and considering what we're seeing and trying to receive instruction.

[ 27 : 02 ] So I say consider their statement of hypocrisy. And there's one more thing, the last three verses I want us to consider their desire from their own mouth, from their own words.

What is their desire? What do you want more than anything? You know what they want? They want vengeance. A desire for vengeance. In verse 7, he says, Remember, O Lord, the children of Eden in the day of Jerusalem who said, Raise it.

That means, that's kind of, what is that? That's one of those contronyms. It could be lift up, but in this case, it's bring down, destroy, even to the foundations. O 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. What horrible language. A desire for vengeance above anything else.

Now, it's not always wrong, and you're going to see this in your Old Testament. It's an Old Testament theme, maybe, for the Jews to call upon their God and to expect their God to exact judgment upon their adversaries.

[ 28 : 10 ] When the Philistines attack, they're supposed to turn to God and pray to God and is to pray for him to work. So, this is a common prayer in the sense of a Jewish prayer of the Old Testament.

However, the only time they invoke the name of the Lord is to see their enemies destroyed.

In verse number seven, they're not praying for repentance or for an attitude of revival. They're not praying for forgiveness. They're not seeking mercy.

They're not praising or acknowledging their guilt or that God is right and they are wrong. What are they doing? They just want to pay them back. It's as carnal as can be.

It's the very, it's one of the most innate carnal drives inside of you when somebody does you wrong is to get them back and to make them pay. And they're calling on God to do that, to destroy them, to hurt them bad because they hurt us.

[ 29 : 14 ] It's selfish, it's carnal, it's vengeful. Consider their desire tonight. Look upon these Jews that are weeping at the rivers of Babylon and consider that their desire, it's not for the glory of God.

They're not calling on God to be glorified. They're not calling for righteousness or for truth. They're only speaking spite and revenge and they want to make their blood flow.

Kill them all, God. Just wipe them out. That's what's coming forth from this people. There's something horribly wrong. And I can say that with authority because I want you to turn to one more place tonight.

Go to Daniel chapter 9. Daniel, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea. Find Daniel chapter 9. We're considering their desire tonight.

The desire for vengeance. I can't pity them anymore. I can't feel sorry for them anymore when they reveal what's in their heart.

[ 30 : 20 ] And it's something very wrong about this people here. Weeping. Here's why. Somebody else was carried away to Babylon too. Somebody else was taken from his family and placed in a foreign land and demanded things of him that he shouldn't have to do.

Wasn't grown, raised, wasn't in his upbringing to do. But here he finds himself in Babylon. And as some years pass, I want to take a look at a prayer that Daniel makes to God.

And see if you can just pick up a little bit of difference from the words of Daniel compared to these of the Jews that are in Babylon. Look at verse number 3 and just follow with me.

We're going to read a little portion of this here. And hear his heart and his language. Verse 3, it says, And I set my face unto the Lord God to seek by prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

Didn't see that at Babylon, at the rivers. And I prayed unto the Lord, my God, and made my confession and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him and to them that keep his commandments.

[ 31 : 32 ] We have sinned and have committed iniquity and have done wickedly and have rebelled even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments.

Neither have we hearkened unto thy servants, the prophets, which speak in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day, to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to all Israel that are near and that are far off through all the countries whither thou hast driven them because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee.

O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee.

To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him. Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God to walk in his ways, which he set before us by his servants, the prophets.

Yea, all Israel have transgressed thy law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy voice. Therefore the curse is poured upon us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moses, the servant of God, because we have sinned against him.

[ 32 : 55 ] And he hath confirmed his words, which he spake against us, and against our judges that judged us, by bringing upon us a great evil. For under the whole heaven hath it not been done as hath been done unto Jerusalem.

As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil has come upon us. Yet made not we our prayer before the Lord our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand thy truth.

Therefore hath the Lord washed upon the evil and brought it upon us. For the Lord our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth, for we obeyed not his voice. And now, O Lord our God, that has brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and has gotten thee renowned, as at this day we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain, because of our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people, are become a reproach to all that are about us.

Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate for the Lord's sake.

[ 34 : 07 ] O my God, incline thine ear and hear, open thine eyes and behold our desolations in the city which is called by thy name, for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

O Lord, hear. O Lord, forgive. O Lord, hearken and do defer not for thine own sake. O my God, for thy city and thy people are called by thy name.

You see a difference? It's quite a different voice because it's coming from a completely different attitude. This man is wide open.

Repentant, admitting, acknowledging, and humbly seeking the mercy of God. You don't see any of that by the rivers of Babylon.

So when we look upon their pain and we look upon their attitude and we look upon their anger, we can receive instruction. One thing we can receive is that God is merciful, God is long-suffering, but it can be exhausted and his warnings can come to an end.

[ 35 : 25 ] And when they come to an end, the judgment can begin. And if it can happen to his own people, Israel, it can happen to the church just the same. If you're playing with sin tonight, you better consider and receive instruction.

So shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth and thy want as an armed man. You're not going to be expecting it and it'll be upon you. Your desolation, your destruction, you'll be weeping.

But if that is you and you find yourself in that place of Babylon, reaping what you sowed, then take from Daniel how to confess, how to acknowledge that you're wrong, how to pick up the word of God and walk with God patiently, waiting for him to lift you back up, to restore you.

Don't pretend to be somebody that you're not. Don't be a hypocrite. Don't be a faker. Don't come around talking the talk when you're not walking the walk.

Let's learn from these weeping Jews tonight and with God's help, let's not follow in their steps. Let's pray.

[ 36 : 38 ] Father, this lesson here tonight was eye-opening to me to consider a different look into this passage. And Lord, it's something that we can all take something away from.

Lord, help us to wake up and not play with sins. Help us to fear you. You've never changed. You're as righteous and holy as you've ever been.

God, have mercy on us. Remember that we're flesh. Help us to repent. Help us to take courage and seek your mercy.

God, help us not to be hypocrites. Help us not to try to save face around our brethren, but to take serious this warning tonight.

I just pray that we'll each learn something that we'll receive instruction from this passage in the word of God. I want to thank you for it. Thank you for my brothers and sisters here tonight.

[ 37 : 43 ] And Lord, I pray you'd grow us all. Help us to be, take courage and be strong and help us to please you as we go on our way tonight. Thank you for this evening service and for the word of God.

And we're grateful for this in Jesus' name. Amen.