

Sad Songs and Scattered Seeds

Written by Dr. Harold R. Carpenter - Last Updated Sunday, 28 August 2011 12:21



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TEXT: Psalm 137:1-6

1 By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept when we remembered Zion. 2 There on the poplars we hung our harps, 3 for there our captors asked us for songs, our tormentors demanded songs of joy; they said, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion!" 4 How can we sing the songs of the LORD while in a foreign land? 5 If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget [its skill]. 6 May my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not consider Jerusalem my highest joy (Psalm 137:1-6, NASB). INTRODUCTION:

There are stories that are just too sad to tell. There is a period in art and literature which is called the Romantic Period (@1820 - 1860) which delighted in this type of story. Among the most notable stories of this type is *Don Alvaro* also known as *La Fuerza del Sino*. It is the tragic story of a mysterious Indian from South America living in Sevilla Spain. He falls in love with a beautiful young lady from one of the elite families of Spanish aristocracy. When Don Alvaro requestos Dona Leonor's hand in marriage a scuffle breaks out between Don Alvaro and Dona Leonor's brothers. Her father is accidentally killed in the scuffle by one of the brothers but Don Alavaro is blamed. Don Alvaro and Dona Leonor both flee thinking that the other is dead. After a year in hiding Dona Leonor becomes a nun in a convent.

Meanwhile one of the brothers discovers Don Alvaro and challenges him to a duel. The brother is killed in the duel. Don Alvaro then takes refuge in a monstery and becomes a priest. He does not know that Dona Leonor is in the convent right next door.

The other brother discovers the hiding place of both and thinks that they have connived in the death of the father. He then kills his sister just as Don Alvaro discovers that she is in the convent. In bitter remorse Don Alvaro goes out into the mountains and commits suicide due to a broken heart and unbearable remorse.

Don't you just love a sad story?

Out text is also a sad story, but with a different outcome.

I. SAD SONGS IN A STRANGE LAND

A. The sad end of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah

B. A sad remnant in exile in Babylon--they are:

1. Torn from the land
2. Deprived of Solomon's beautiful temple
3. Deprived of their ritual and worship
4. Despondent Jews singing sad songs down by the riverside

C. A weeping prophet (Jeremiah):

1. Lamentations over Zion:

1 How lonely sits the city That was full of people! She has become like a widow Who was {once} great among the nations! She who was a princess among the provinces Has become a forced laborer! Lamentations 1:1, NASB).

1. Lamentations over a broken relationship with God:

5 The Lord has become like an enemy. He has swallowed up Israel; He has swallowed up all its palaces, He has destroyed its strongholds And multiplied in the daughter of Judah Mourning and moaning Lamentations 2:5, NASB).

1. Lamentations over multiple afflictions:

1 I am the man who has seen affliction Because of the rod of His wrath.

19 Remember my affliction and my wandering, the wormwood and bitterness

(Lamentations 3:1, 19. NASB).

1. Lamentations over the siege of Jerusalem:

4 The tongue of the infant cleaves To the roof of its mouth because of thirst; The little ones ask for bread, {But} no one breaks {it} for them.

10 The hands of compassionate women Boiled their own children; They became food for them Because of the destruction of the daughter of my people (Lamentations 4:4,10, NASB).

1. A woeful lament over the condition of the Jews:

1 "As for you, son of man, take a sharp sword; take and use it {as} a barber's razor on your head and beard. Then take scales for weighing and divide the hair. 2 "One third you shall burn in the fire at the center of the city, when the days of the siege are completed. Then you shall take one third and strike {it} with the sword all around the city, and one third you shall scatter to the wind; and I will unsheathe a sword behind them. 3 "Take also a few in number from them and bind them in the edges of your {robes.} 4 "Take again some of them and throw them into the fire and burn them in the fire; from it a fire will spread to all the house of Israel. 5 "Thus says the Lord GOD, 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her at the center of the nations, with lands around her. 6 'But she has rebelled against My ordinances more wickedly than the nations and against My statutes more than the lands which surround her; for they have rejected My ordinances and have not walked in My statutes.' 7 "Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have more turmoil than the nations which surround you {and} have not walked in My statutes, nor observed My ordinances, nor observed the ordinances of the nations which surround you,' 8 therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I, even I, am against you, and I will execute judgments among you in the sight of the nations. 9 'And because of all your abominations, I will do among you what I have not done, and the like of which I will never do again. 10 'Therefore, fathers will eat {their} sons among you, and sons will eat their fathers; for I will execute judgments on you and scatter all your remnant to every wind (Lamentations 5:1-10).

D. Depression and discouragement are tools of the devil

1. Don't let discouragement sap your victory.
2. Remember it was in the Babylonian captivity that four of the great prophetic books of the Old Testament were written!

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3. Remember the Lost Battalion of WWI:

a. Cut off by the enemy;b. No food;c. No water;d. Down to the last shell;e. A message from the sky; "Don't give up. We are coming!"

1. Thomas Edison and the search for a filament for the electric lamp:

a. Aren't you discouraged because you have failed 1000 times?b. I haven't failed 1000 times. Now I know 1000 things that won't work!

1. Tommy Dorsey and the birth of the song, "Precious Lord Take My Hand":

a. Wife Nellie pregnant;b. A call to sing in a revival in St. Louis;c. Enthusiastic crowdsd. A dead wife and baby;e. Alone with God in Malone's Poro College;f. "Precious Lord Take My Hand is born";g. God gave the words, the music, and healing for Tommy's heart. **II. SCATTERED SEED**

A. The Babylonian Captivity is known as the Diaspora (scattered seed).

1. Israel was commanded to be a priesthood to the nations but never went.
- 2.
3. The Babylonians took them to the nations.
4. The Synagogue was born.
- 5.
6. The Hebrew Old Testament was translated into Greek (The Septuagint).

B. The Synagogue became the revival centers of the Roman Empire and brought:

1. A concept of a monotheistic God;
2. A concept of ethical righteousness;
3. A sacred scripture from which to preach.

C. God's hidden agenda revealed after six centuries:

1. God is omniscient.
2. God knew why he sent Joseph to Egypt.
3. God knew why he sent Esther to Persia.
4. God knew why he sent the Jews to Babylon.

CONCLUSION:

Testings and trials are difficult. But it is in the trials and tests that our faith purified. Can you be confident enough in God to trust His will for your life? Paul, the ambassador in chains, could write,

28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to {His} purpose (Romans 8:29, NASB). Job

shouted in the midst of his tribulations,

15 Though he [God] slay me, yet will I trust in him... (Job 13:15, KJV).

12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. 13 He had also seven sons and three daughters (Job 13:15; 42:12-13, KJV).

God tested and purified Old and New Testament saints. God then blessed them and made them a blessing to billions of people--and continues to do so.

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This is the outline of the sermon Dr. Harold Carpenter preached 19 January 2003 in the evening worship service. Dr. Carpenter and his wife served as missionaries for twenty years. Dr. Carpenter also taught missions for twenty years at Central Bible College. He now serves as Pastor of Fair Grove Assembly of God, Fair Grove MO.

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