

## Psalm 126

Probably written after the exile in Babylon, but apropos of any spiritual deliverance. The "turning of our captivity" in Babylon was a type of our redemption by Christ.

And, it can be interpreted as looking forward to future final victory at the end of time.

**Psalm 126:1** - "When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream."

Or more specifically, according to the Targum: "we were like the sick that are recovered"

Their affliction in exile became like a dream that flies away upon awaking, like a sickness hazily remembered.

The proclamation by Cyrus was "A restoration so complete, so strange and unlooked for, brought about at once, without any endeavors on the side of Israel, seemed, in all these respects, as a dream." Cyrus issued a decree for them to return to their own country, and to rebuild their city and temple, and he even sent them home laden with gifts (**Ezra 1:1-4**).

This shocking turn of events is how we should see our own salvation - a miracle against all odds.

**Psalm 126:2** - "Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them."

It could be rendered in the future, as the Targum:"then shall our mouth be filled with laughter"

- **Isaiah 35:10** - "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

True also for the final redemption:

- **Revelation 21:4** - "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

**Psalm 126:3** - "The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad."

The first part of the psalm - the absolutely pure joy-song - here ends; and the second part - the mixed joy and sorrow - begins.

**Psalm 126:4** - "Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south."

Or, turn our captivity completely, complete our release from exile. A portion of the exiles, in fact, returned under Cyrus; a part later under Darius; a part under Xerxes and his successors.

Only a few returned to the Promised Land originally. Others remained in exile. This is a plea for God to bring them all back, pouring into their inheritance like streams flooding through desert wadis in the rainy season to refresh the land.

Targum: "as the land is turned, when streams of water flow out in a time of drought."

Personally, we can be released from a spiritual exile only to find ourselves still partially captive to sin or subject to deception. So we look for help to be completely free from bondage.

**Psalm 126:5-6** - "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

- **Hosea 10:12** - "Sow for yourselves righteousness; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, For it is time to seek the LORD, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you."

Prayer, doing good deeds and preaching are all forms of sowing the Word - often they are accompanied by tears, tribulation, and hardship. The results are sometimes not apparent, or are delayed. But this verse is a promise that they will come to fruition.

- **John 12:24** - "Verily, verily I say unto you, unless a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

- **John 4:35** - "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

The meaning of this whole psalm is expanded by the prophet Amos:

- **Amos 9:13-14** - "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when the plowman will overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes, the sower of seed. The mountains will drip with sweet wine, with which all the hills will flow. I will restore My people Israel from captivity; they will rebuild and inhabit the ruined cities. They will plant vineyards and drink their wine; they will make gardens and eat their fruit"