



Study Texts: *Psalm 126:1-6, 14:7, 137: 1-6, John 7:37-39, 4:14*

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. 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. The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. Turn again our captivity, O LORD as the stream in the south. 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. (Psalm 126; 1-6)

This is a special Psalm to the children of Israel and to those who are in the Church of Jesus Christ because it reminded them of the Lord's past works in saving them (and us), His plan to bless us and of His promise for us for future glory. As the Israelites began this hymn of praise, they did so by remembering the great grace of God, how they had been oppressed and held captive by their enemies and God in His great power had delivered them. They praise Him for the day He set them free and brought them back to their homeland.

Lesson: *It should be our constant practice to remember where we were when the Lord found us, Ephesians 2:1-5; and how He delivered us from our lost and hell bound condition by His matchless grace, Ephesians 2:8,9. He deserves our praise for setting us free, changing our lives and altering our destinies.*

They could hardly believe what had happened to them because they were amazed at the grace, love and power of their God. They felt like people who were dreaming. But, when it finally dawned on them that what they were experiencing was real, they were filled with joy and they lifted their hearts and their voices in praise to the Lord. Even some of the sinners around them recognized the work of God in their lives and gave God the glory. These saints simply agree with the assessment of the heathen. **“The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad”**. And they simply cannot hold back their praises, but they exalt the Lord for His grace, His goodness and His blessing in their lives. **Lesson:** What a lesson for the children of God! We have been delivered from death and Hell by the grace of God. Our names have been written down in glory. We are children of the living God! We have a reason to rejoice and quick to proclaim His goodness, His grace and His salvation as the bible teaches us in *Psalm 47:1, 113:1-3, 135:1-3, Hebrews 13:15*.

Also, as these people think about all they had received from the Lord, they made a decision and say, **“whereof we are glad”**. They made a conscious decision to be happy in the Lord who redeemed them!

Lesson: *There is much to be distressed about in the world today, crime, war, disease, famine, death, sin, evil, disappointments, failure etc all combine to cause our hearts to despair. However, if we can learn to keep our hearts focused on the Lord and all that He has done for us, it will go a long way toward giving us joy even in the midst of trials. After all, the Lord has promised His children joy, 1 Peter 1:8, Galatians 5:22. The bottom line is this; if you allow your happiness to depend on the circumstances around you, there is a good chance you will be sad and defeated. If however, you make God and His gracious gifts the focus of your joy, then you can rejoice regardless of what is happening around you, Habakkuk 3:18.*

Jesus is our life, a source of strength, a very present help in trouble, an everlasting solution to every predicament of mankind. In fact, He is a fountain of living water to those who are thirsty and truly believe and focus their attention on him in whatever situation and circumstances that surround them. He is extending an invitation to every sinners and every captives being in your ministry, family marriage, academics, finances, health etc to come and take the water of life freely, Isaiah 55:1-3, Psalm 46:1, John 7:37-39, 4:14, Jeremiah 2:4,-7,13.

A. THE CAPTIVITY OF ZION: *Psalm 126:1, 137:1-3, Romans 8:20-22, Judges 6:1-6, Jeremiah 50:33, Romans 7:15-24,*

Captivity is when somebody comes under the load of affliction, oppression, and under the wickedness, the cruelty, and the calamity of Satan. A person who is in captivity is a captive and he's under a mighty power that he couldn't shake off. When a mighty personality keeps you down and a mighty power that you couldn't resist binds you and you are helpless under a person who is terrible and oppressive, that's captivity.

The land of Israel and the holy city of Jerusalem are both referred to as Zion while the inhabitants of Jerusalem are personified as the daughter of Zion. In a symbolic form, everyone who is of one heart, one mind, and dwelt in righteousness are referred to as Zion.

Satan is a mighty foe, skillful predator, and an oppressor that enslaves people and compels them to do whatever he commands. Satan compels people to stay in sicknesses, losses, in affliction, misfortunes, attacks etc and because it's not your choice, Almighty God is going to deliver you completely today and He will set you free. We shouldn't be surprised today that many of the believers in Christ are in one captivity of the other though they are truly born again, they are not enjoying total and all round liberty, they have to realize it and seek the Lord for total intervention and freedom, Judges 6:1, Job 42:10, Genesis 32:24-28.

Few of the types of captivity are itemized below:

i.) **The captivity of Sin:** *Proverbs 5:22, 2 Timothy 3: 6, Romans 7:14-20, 22-24.* When Adam and Eve sinned, they became prey to the enemy of souls. According to the penalty, they were to suffer the consequences of sin. The world, the atmosphere and everything in it were cursed; they became prey to death because of their disobedience, Ezek 18:4. When we talk about sin, sin captivates and enslave. Satan binds and kicks to captivity, when somebody goes into iniquity and then later goes on until it becomes a habit. It's like cords that bind him and he cannot help himself anymore, Proverbs 5:22.

ii) **Captivity of Sickness:** *Luke 8:43-48.*

Today, many are oppressed, captivate and bind under the siege and yoke of sickness. Lives of many are short live, destiny thwarted and send into untimely grave as a result of the cankerworm called 'sickness' John 11:14,32-35. Sickness is always

accompanied with sorrow, suffering, pains, poverty etc. But whatever your situation is, believe that deliverance is coming your way. You must recover, and you will not die in that condition of sickness in Jesus mighty name.

iii) **Captivity of Satan Bondages:** *Luke 13:11-13, 4:18-21,33-36, Mark 5:1-8.* Here, we see in Luke Chapter 13, a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years and was bowed together and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he said unto her woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid His hands on her and immediately she was made straight and glorified God. What is your situation or challenges today? Are you oppressed, and enemy had bound up your business, academic, health, marriage, family, finance, children and you cannot lift up nor gather yourself? Almighty God will touch you and you will experience a glorious and miraculous deliverance in Jesus name.

iv) **Captivity of the World System:** *1 John 2:15-17; 2 Peter 1:4; James 4:4; 2 Timothy 4:10;* Many believers are entangled with the world system, the Fashion, politics, fame, immoral and indecent dressing, social media bondages, false prophet and so on, it can be said of the church that she has turned herself to Ichabod through cheer disobedience to God's commandment and today, the Glory is already departing. Satan oversees many lives in the name modernized Christianity *Revelation 2:20.* The world passes away only the true worship of God will abide.

Ways out of Captivity

- ***Be dissatisfied with your present ugly situation, be resolute and sin not,*** *Psalm 42:1-3; Psalm 137: 1-6; Job 1:14-22.*
- ***Acknowledge, humble yourself and turn from your wicked way.*** *2 Chronicles 7:13-15; Psalm 25:18; Romans 7:24;*
- ***Confess positively.*** *2 Kings 4:26, Philippians 4:13.*
- ***In your situation forgive, pray and show mercy to others.*** *Job 42:10, Jeremiah 29:7; James 5:13-16.*
- ***Rejoice and glorify God through praises*** *James 1:2; 2 Chronicles 20:20-23,*
- ***Seek and call upon the Lord*** *Psalm 34:4-6; Nehemiah 1:4-11; Isaiah 45:22; Jeremiah 29:7,11-14; Judges 6:1,2,7,8.*
- ***Hope and wait for God's salvation.*** *Job 14:7-9,14, Psalm 42:5,11*

B. CHRIST POWER TO DELIVER: Psalm 126:1,3, 1 Samuel 2:6-10, Deuteronomy 5:15, 26:8, Psalm 66:3,5-7a,11,12, Jeremiah 50:33-36, Act 12:5-11, ***“When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,....The Lord had done great things for them,”*** (Psalm 126:1,3). From the scripture above, the total turn around and great deliverance of the people of God was attributed wholly to the power of the almighty God. He is the source of their strength, a merciful God who always doing wonder and show mercy to everyone that trust in Him, *Exodus 15:11, Deuteronomy 7:9*. He is great in power, mighty to save from every situation however tough and difficult it might be. God as the Chief Captain of the Host is ever ready to fight the battle for His children, *Joshua 5:14, 15*. The Lord can kill and make alive. He gives hope for the hopeless. He makes impossibility possible. He is the final authority that rules over the affairs of men, His word is the final, *I Samuel 2:6-10*. God has a million and one way of delivering His children. For instance, he delivered Peter from prison and from evil expectation of King *Herod Act 12:5-11*. He provided quails to feed His people in the wilderness Psalm 105:40. Just like a dream, He delivered the children of Israel out of the land of captivity of Egypt by His strength out arm *Exodus 14:8,-10, 15, 20-31*. Always acknowledge the presence of the saviors in whatever circumstances and challenges you are. No matter how long, difficult and sympathetic your situation is, as he remembered Israel and brought them out with His mighty power, He will surely bring you out, *Jeremiah 29:10*. Difficult time is neither the time to continue in your sin, to murmur, crying, discourage, doubt non reduce your consecration but is a period to search out your life, rebuild your faith, study the scripture, pray and remain focus serving the Lord. *Psalm 34:4-6*.

C. COUNTLESS JOY AWAIT THE PEOPLE OF GOD: Exodus 15:1, Psalm 14:7; Isaiah 35:10; Psalm 66:1, 2, 4. ***‘when the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. 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...whereof we are glad’.*** Psalm 126:1, 2, 3.

When hopeless situation receive hope, long frustrating years of barrenness were met with children, spiritual dryness and backsliding condition receive life and strength from the Lord, long years challenges were met with answers and impossibility becomes possible then overwhelming joy is always the aftermath.

This was the case of the children of Israel that have been in captivity and hopeless

situation. They have been estranged from the Lord, carried away captive by the enemy, now in a strange land and glory has departed, *Psalms 137:1-4*. But by the mercy and stretched out arm of the almighty God turned around their captivity and were restored. It is unbelievable like a dream unto them; they were overwhelmed with joy, laughter and with the song of victory.

In fact, their victory was unhidden but noticeable to the heathen to the extent that they have to give glory to God on their behalf that Jehovah, the God of Israel has done great things for them. This is your time of celebration, may Christ glory be celebrated in you in Jesus name.

‘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’ *Isaiah 35:10*.

Moses and the children of Israel sang the song unto the Lord the day they triumphed gloriously over the Egyptians at the red sea *Exodus 14:29, 31, 15:1*. Therefore, refrain from weeping, it’s your time to sing, to rejoice and to testify, *Jeremiah 31:16, 17*.