

Biblical Horror Story Vol 2 Ep 4

– Happy Shall He Be

BIBLICAL HORROR STORY

BUMPER

Welcome to Redemption Church. My name is Chris Fluitt and I say hello to everyone joining us in person and everyone joining us online.

Biblical Horror Story vol 2

We have been reviewing the shocking, violent, and gross stories of the Bible. Stories that we often turn past because they make us feel strange and bring up some tough questions. However horrific we may find these stories; they are still the Word of God. We are told by Jesus,

that God's words are Spirit and life. As we look into any area of Scripture, we should study to find the Spirit and the life within that scripture.

Today's story is likely to bring up some questions! We like questions.

Anonymous text line

You can send your questions into our Anonymous Text Line! 214 856 0550. This line is completely anonymous.

Today I invite you to turn to the book of Psalms chapter 137 for a short story I am calling "Happy shall he be."

"Happy is the one"

In our Christian culture we have grown to love inspirational Bible verses. It is not

unusual to see a piece of artwork with a scripture verse on it. Perhaps you have a pretty poster or a decorative piece in your home with an inspirational verse on it. They even have daily calendars that each feature an inspirational Bible verse for every day of the year...

Real quick someone shout out an inspirational Bible verse...

All things work together for the good of them who love the Lord Romans 8:28.

I can do all things through Christ Phil 4:13.

The Lord is my shepherd Psalm 23.

Our Bible verse today has never been featured on artwork. It has never been

made into a t-shirt or bumper sticker. In fact, if I were to pick a passage out of the Bible that would be the most brutal, repulsive, and unsettling scripture... it would be what I am about to share with you.

Psalm 137:8-9 8 Daughter Babylon, doomed to destruction, happy is the one who repays you according to what you have done to us. 9 Happy is the one who seizes your infants and dashes them against the rocks.

Verse 9 is a horrific verse. Perhaps you see why no one selects this verse as there “life verse” or why Hobby Lobby does not sell wall art with psalm 137 blazoned upon it.

Baby

Verse 9 gives us the gruesome picture of someone taking small babies and killing them by dashing them against rocks, and it says they do it happily.

Speaking for myself, when I am confronted with such things as this... I find myself in a hurry to move on quickly... “hurry let’s turn the page in our Bible to a happier, brighter, and familiar psalm.” I am also tempted to break the uncomfortable ambiance with a comic deflection.

God would have us to really contemplate the awful gory picture of Psalm 137:9, because it is the Word of God. These are

not just the words of someone who has had a bad week and in frustration throws his fist up towards to the sky and complains about his boss. This is the Spirit and life Word of God. This is Truth straight from heaven. Heaven and Earth will pass away, but not this word... not even Psalm 137:9.

Happy is the one who seizes your infants... innocent little babies who have done nothing wrong... and dashes them against the rocks.

I have logged many hours holding babies, and I am still nervous to hold a baby. It is because I fear that I would accidentally drop them... To hold a baby in your hands is to hold hope, joy, innocence, and possibility in your hands. To hold

something so precious in your hands is humbling. ...Now from that perspective, one of the worst thoughts I can conceive would be to purposefully throw a baby towards destruction. Anyone who would do such a thing must be evil.

Why is this in my Bible?

We have a lot to learn today. Let's quickly learn about the context of Psalm 137.

Psalms is a diverse book. Psalms is filled with songs of worship and songs of lament and mourning. Psalms is filled with prophecy and prayer. The Psalms are written by different authors called psalmists. The earliest psalm is thought to be Psalm 90 and is attributed to Moses with an estimated date of 1489 BC. Psalm 137 is thought to be one of the

youngest Psalms written around 539 BC. That is a span of nearly 1000 years.

We do not know who wrote Psalm 137. Some guess that it could be the prophet Jeremiah.

This Psalm was written during the time of exile under the rule of Babylon. Israel had been conquered and captured by King Nebuchadnezzar's army. Jerusalem and the beautiful temple that had been built by king Solomon had been destroyed. People were chased from their homeland, and many were captured and forced to live as servants in the northern kingdom of Babylon.

This exile period is where we get stories of Daniel, Shadrach Meshach and

Abednego, and prophets like Jeremiah & Ezekiel...

Psalm 137 is believed to be written in this period of Exile in Babylon.

Psalm 137:1-3(NIV) 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!"

There is no doubt this Psalm is speaking of exile in Babylon. These verses share a sad moment when the captured Israelites sat and wept. As they sat & wept their captors and tormentors demanded them

to sing songs of joy as a way of humiliating them further. At this humiliation they hung their harps, the instruments for music, upon the poplar trees.

This Psalm is sharing what actually happened to the exiled Israelites. Israel had been crushed...

Psalm 137 :4-6 How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land? 5 If I forget you, 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.

Nothing left but tears and memories

All they could do was to cry and remember.

They could not resist their captors.

They could not start over and rebuild a temple in Babylon.

They could not bring sacrifice to the house of God or celebrate a feast.

All they could do was sit, cry, and remember.

Have you ever been in a place where all you could do is cry and remember?

- You remember that stage of life with children running through the house, but now that stage of life is gone and all you

can do is remember as tears begin to form.

- The promising opportunity comes to an end and all you can do is remember the hope you once had and you cry.
- You remember the one you lost and all you can do is cry.

This chapter is really about tears and memories. And at this point in the chapter there is a turn from lamentation towards remembering.

Psalm 137:7 Remember, LORD, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. "Tear it down," they cried, "tear it down to its foundations!"

The Edomites were from the lineage of Esau and they would always wait for a nation to attack Israel from the North, and as Israel was busy on the northern frontier they would opportunistically attack and pillage Israel from the south. The Edomites happily attacked Israel from the south.

On the day that Jerusalem fell to Babylon, the Edomites were there cheering on the Babylonian forces. They happily called out for the Babylonian forces to “tear it down to its foundations.”

These Israelites, sitting on a riverside in a strange land remembered, and they asked the LORD to remember.

And then they remembered what Babylon did...

Psalm 137:8 Daughter Babylon,
doomed to destruction, happy is the
one who repays you according to
what you have done to us.

They remembered what Babylon did to them... and they declared that someone will one day happily repay you with the exact same treatment. Then they reveal beyond doubt what had been done to them...

Psalm 137:9 Happy is the one who
seizes your infants and dashes them
against the rocks.

The Babylonians had taken the babies of the Israelites and the countless babies of other nations they had conquered, and

the Babylonians happily had dashed them against the stones.

The Israelites in their tears and memories declared a coming destruction upon Babylon. They specifically declared that Babylon would be repaid in the same way they had delivered destruction to others.

The Israelites did not just remember the persecution, but also the promise.

Psalm 137:8 says Babylon is doomed to be destroyed. How did they know this?

It had already been prophesied by the prophets that Babylon would be destroyed and that the exiled would return to Israel in 70 years.

Jeremiah 29:10(NIV) 10 This is what the Lord says: “When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my good promise to bring you back to this place.

Does anyone know the next verse... you might have Hobby Lobby wall art on your wall with this verse...

Jeremiah 29:11(NIV) 11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

These Israelites may have been remembering other promises of God as well.

They were likely remembering the promise God made to Abraham.

Genesis 12:3 (NIV) I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

That is a promise for Israel still today. This is also a promise to those that are children of Abraham by faith – me and you!

Nothing left but tears and memories

Your tears and your memories are enough when you cry over and remember the promises of God.

Those that bless you will be blessed.
Those that curse you will be cursed.
All people will be blessed through you.

What Psalm 137:8-9 does not say

This verse does not say God desires
infanticide.

This verse does not say God is happy
about death.

This verse is not permission to return evil
to those that have done evil to you.

This verse is not a prayer that God will
carry out evil acts.

This verse is a declaration and a
remembrance of the promise of God.

This verse is a reminder that we reap
what we sow.

Galatians 6:7 (NIV) Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

This is an unbreakable supernatural law.

If you plant a harvest of death, destruction and evil, you will reap a harvest of death, destruction and evil.

If you plant a harvest of life, blessing and Godliness, you will reap a harvest of life, blessing and Godliness.

Sow Wrath = Reap Wrath

The Babylonians reaped exactly what they had sowed. They happily destroyed others, and they were, in turn, happily destroyed.

If you sow wrath you reap wrath. The wrath you harvest is the same wrath you planted. Does this make sense?

This is an important concept because we often misunderstand the term “wrath of God.” We incorrectly think that the wrath of God is caused because we have made God angry; perhaps we have not worshipped him enough or kept his rules well enough. The thought that we have some way ticked God off and that is why wrath has come is prevalent among people who are learning to follow God.

That view makes God a petulant, ill-tempered, somewhat self-centered child rather than the self-sacrificial loving Lamb we know Him to be. I would argue that this view is more like the Greek and

Roman pantheon of false gods. Humanity had to keep them all appeased or else they might rain down wrath.

Personally, I am not able to make my children happy most of the time... what chance do I have of making a deity happy?

What if I were to tell you that God's wrath did not originate with him... think on that as we turn to Romans 2:5.

Romans 2:5(NIV) But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

Stubborn unrepentant evil becomes stored up wrath. This wrath is stored up for the day of God's wrath. What do you think stored up wrath looks like? What do you think the day of God's wrath looks like?

In the book of Revelation, chapters 15 & 16 describe 7 bowls that are filled with the 'stored-up' wrath of Romans 2:5. The wrath that was planted by multitudes of earth's people is harvested and stored in these bowls. In Chapter 16 of Revelation God pours out some of the stored-up wrath upon the earth... and it says in that chapter that they "refused to repent (v9 & 11)."

Let's get some understanding. We read Romans 2:5. Let's back up one verse.

Romans 2:4(NIV) Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

Notice that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance... but what happens when we REFUSE TO REPENT? Does God keep giving us kindness?

Romans 2:5(NIV) But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

When you refuse to repent you are not storing up kindness, but wrath.

Sow Wrath = Reap Wrath

This is at the heart of that horrific verse in Psalm 137.

Babylon has walked past the goodness of God. It is the goodness of God that is intended to bring us to repentance.

Babylon has done evil. They have crushed and broken many nations. They have captured and enslaved many people. They have taken babies and happily dashed them against the rocks. All the while they are REFUSING TO REPENT and storing up wrath.

Psalm 137:8-9 is a declaration and a prophecy that the wrath they have stored up will one day be poured out upon them.

Non-Christians may call this karma... but karma is like a cosmic justice. The wrath that is poured out is not cosmic justice, but it is God giving people yet another opportunity to repent.

Only God could store up wrath, pour out wrath, and do it in a merciful and loving way. This is how loving our God is.

If we will only repent

Had Babylon repented, God would have forgiven them and blessed them.

In the story of Jonah, the evil city of Ninevah was doomed to receive wrath... but the city of Ninevah repented and God withheld the wrath. Ninevah was an Assyrian city that would later become a Babylonian city. Oh

Do we understand how powerful repentance is? Repentance can stop the wrath of God from being poured out. Repentance can stop the gates of hell from overcoming you. Repentance can make you a citizen of heaven. Repentance causes the angels in heaven to stand to their feet and applause. Repentance moves the very heart of God. Is anyone thankful for a God who allows us to repent?

We are going to pray soon. I would love to pray a prayer of repentance with someone tonight in this altar and with someone online. Maybe you have never prayed a prayer of repentance... tonight is your night! When I open this altar for a

time of prayer, I want you to come right up here and have your life changed forever.

Our God is loving and full of mercy. His mercy endures forever.

Nothing left but tears and memories

Maybe I am speaking to someone who has nothing left but tears and memories. You go ahead and cry those tears. You go ahead and remember, but make sure you remember the promises of God. Every promise of God is true.

I taught you about the supernatural law of reaping and sowing... but what happens when you sow tears? If you sow tears do you reap more tears?

In Psalm 126, a chapter about God's promise of restoring His people, we find this verse...

Psalm 126:5(NIV) Those who sow with tears will reap with songs of joy.

Don story

Don brought his tears to an altar and received grace instead of wrath & freedom instead of imprisonment.

All of humanity had wrath coming our way... Jesus took our wrath on the cross.

Do you have wrath coming your way?
Come bring your tears to this altar. Come remember the promises of God. Come repent.