GOD'S GRAND VISION FOR A MULTI-ETHNIC CHURCH
LIFE IN A FOREIGN LAND
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!”

Psalm 137:1-9
4 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.

Psalm 137:1-9
7 Remember, LORD, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. “Tear it down,” they cried, “tear it down to its foundations!”
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.

Psalm 137:1-9
48 out of 150 psalms have anonymous authorship
The psalms are not ordered chronologically, but theologically.
1) Lament to the Lord
(vs. 1-3)
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!”

Psalm 137:1-3
The Bible covers the whole range of human emotions and experiences.

The Psalms are songs for all seasons of life, not just some seasons.
We will never fully understand the plight of a displaced people until we become one.
Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

Romans 12:15
Christian worship ought to include, “Something old, something new, something borrowed and something blue. Every worship service need not have every element. But if over the course of the weeks and months, a congregation regularly looks back to the past, stays relevant and local, honours the global church, and gives space for grief and lament, it will go a long way toward tapping into the power of language.”

- Debra & Ron Reinstra, *Worship Words* -
His wife said to him, “Are you still maintaining your integrity? Curse God and die!

He replied, “You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?”

Job 2:9-10
Lament is an appropriate act of worship, played or sung out of a right view of God.
2) Long for the Lord
(vs. 4-6)
How can we sing the songs of the LORD while in a foreign land? If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its skill. 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 137:4-6
God is present even in the most foreign and darkest places
The true worship of God is not location-specific.
7 Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? 8 If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. 9 If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, 10 even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

Psalm 139:7-10
Sometimes we can get so stuck longing for God in old familiar places that we miss God in new unfamiliar places.
1 I will extol the LORD at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.  
2 I will glory in the LORD; let the afflicted hear and rejoice.  
3 Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together.

Psalm 34:1-3
3) Leave it to the Lord (vs. 7-9)
7 Remember, LORD, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. “Tear it down,” they cried, “tear it down to its foundations!”
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.

Psalm 137:7-9
Daniel Estes, a wisdom literature commentator, defines imprecatory psalms as “distinguished by language that invokes divine judgment upon the psalmist’s enemy or the enemy of God.”
Because of the violence against your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame; you will be destroyed forever. On the day you stood aloof while strangers carried off his wealth and foreigners entered his gates and cast lots for Jerusalem, you were like one of them.

Obadiah 1:10-14
12 You should not gloat over your brother in the day of his misfortune, nor rejoice over the people of Judah in the day of their destruction, nor boast so much in the day of their trouble. 13 You should not march through the gates of my people in the day of their disaster,

Obadiah 1:10-14
nor gloat over them in their calamity in the day of their disaster, nor seize their wealth in the day of their disaster. 14 You should not wait at the crossroads to cut down their fugitives, nor hand over their survivors in the day of their trouble.

Obadiah 1:10-14
It is often the people closest to us that hurt us the most.
17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. 
18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord.

Romans 12:17-19
Sometimes people who do not know you hurt you
Therefore this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “I will punish the king of Babylon and his land as I punished the king of Assyria. But I will bring Israel back to their own pasture, and they will graze on Carmel and Bashan; their appetite will be satisfied on the hills of Ephraim and Gilead.

Jeremiah 50:18-20
In those days, at that time,” declares the LORD, “search will be made for Israel’s guilt, but there will be none, and for the sins of Judah, but none will be found, for I will forgive the remnant I spare.

Jeremiah 50:18-20
God first deals with the sins of His people before dealing with the sin of other peoples
This is what the LORD Almighty says: “The people of Israel are oppressed, and the people of Judah as well. All their captors hold them fast, refusing to let them go. 

Yet their Redeemer is strong; the LORD Almighty is his name. He will vigorously defend their cause so that he may bring rest to their land, but unrest to those who live in Babylon.

Jeremiah 50:33-34
God is fighting for us and will redeem your lost years!
Our faith must go ahead and beyond what it feels like
34[Your] Redeemer is strong; the LORD Almighty is his name.

Jeremiah 50:33-34
WE ARE ONE

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