

## Psalm 147:1-11

### **Historical Background and Context:**

The author of Psalm 147 is unknown. This is a postexilic psalm. It is thought that perhaps Nehemiah or one of his contemporaries wrote the psalm. It is believed to be a postexilic psalm based on the description of the rebuilding of the temple.

Context of the Exile: In the 6<sup>th</sup> Century BCE, Babylon launched a series of attacks in the kingdom of Judah. Judah was defeated, and many of the Judeans were exiled to Babylon. The deportations dated 597 BCE, c. 587 BCE, and 582 BCE. Those who were left behind were put under the rule of Babylonian officials. Eventually Babylon fell to Persia and the Judeans were allowed, under the rule of King Cyrus, to return to Jerusalem around 539 BCE. Once they returned to Jerusalem, they began to rebuild the Temple.

### **Literary Nature and Application:**

Psalms are essentially songs and poetry written in the context of the Ancient Near East. Psalms often reflect different moods and are usually sorted into categories: hymns, laments, thanksgiving, and wisdom. The poetry of the Psalms does not have rhyme, but usually a specific rhythm. Psalm 147 can be broken into two points of God's concern: God cares for the Judeans who were exiled and that God cares for all of creation (Common grace).

The psalm calls for three specific responses: Praise, Fear, and Hope

Praise— “The Psalmists in telling everyone to praise God are doing what all men do when they speak of what they care about. . . I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment, it is its appointed consummation. . . the delight is incomplete until it is expressed.” –CS Lewis

Fear—“Unfortunately, many of us presume that the world is the ultimate threat and that God's function is to offset it. How different this is from the biblical position that God is far scarier than the world. . . When we assume that the world is the ultimate threat, we give it unwarranted power, for in truth, the world's threats are temporary. When we expect God to balance the stress of the world, we reduce him to the world's equal.” -William D. Eisenhower

Hope— “Hope is a function of struggle. People with the highest hopefulness have the knowledge that they can move through adversity. When we take adversity from our children, we diminish their capacity for hope.” –Brene Brown

