

All Hail Beyond the Rivers of Babylon

by [Joseph Olamide Babalola](#) in the [February 2023](#) issue

When the teeth of the harps bit our fingers hard,
sorrow lamed our tongues, the cloud lingered,
the psalmist in us rehearsed a slow death in sadness
falling off-key, fainting fast, grunting hums in lowness.

When our lips added weight in want of good news,
tears soiled us wet in a desert of unfallen dews,
darkness poked fun at the rhythm in our souls,
reproach conducted us in an orchestra of silence.

When the crickets spectated our night of gloom,
our captors laughed out a cacophony of doom,
our harps on the willows—a symphony of defeat
our teeth clattering wild—a progression of dead beat.

Then came Zion's dawn breaking in victory
in melodies of mercy swallowing our misery.
On Mount Zion we bow our heads to the almighty.
How shall we be so blessed and not adore his majesty?

Blow the horns, assemble in his great presence,
weigh his blessings, magnify his excellence,
raise your voices O favored, look above.
The air we breathe reeks of his steadfast love.