

The Weeping Prophet and the Weeping Apostle

(Acts 20:19-31)



Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet: “Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” “Mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD’s flock is carried away captive” (Jer. 13:17). The Septuagint translation introduces Jeremiah’s book of Lamentations in this way: “Jeremiah sat weeping and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem.” Later he wrote, “Mine eyes do fail with tears...for the destruction of the daughter of my people” (Lam. 2:11). “Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people” (Lam. 3:48-49). Jeremiah’s tears foreshadowed the Lord Jesus Himself who wept over Jerusalem: “And when He was come near, He beheld the city and wept over it” (Luke 19:41).

When the great Apostle Paul summarized his ministry in Ephesus, he said that he had served the Lord “with all humility of mind, and **with many tears**, and temptations (trials) which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews” (Acts 20:19). “Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day **with tears**” (Acts 20:31).

In our society today, public weeping is rarely seen. In Bible times, people did not have such inhibitions. When they were emotionally touched and moved, tears were often the natural result. One of the problems of the modern church is that our eyes have been too dry for too long. **There is a place in God’s service for true heart-felt emotion flowing from a heart of true concern for eternal realities.** The sower is to go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, watering the Word with his tears and prayers (compare Psalm 126:6).

George Zeller, www.middletonbiblechurch.org

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