

A CHARACTER STUDY OF  
THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

Lesson 2

THE WEEPING PROPHET

Jeremiah 9:1

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Gethsemane Baptist Church

Adult Sunday school Class

## THE CALLING OF JEREMIAH

*“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!”*

Jeremiah 9:1

God called Jeremiah to a very difficult ministry. Because he grew up in Anathoth, a village just in sight of Jerusalem, Jeremiah loved these people fervently. God told him to preach against the sin and unfaithfulness of these people. As a result, those that he cherished, hated him with a firm anger. “The difficulties he encountered, as described in the books of Jeremiah and Lamentations, have prompted scholars to refer to him as ‘The Weeping Prophet’” (Wikipedia. Jeremiah) He expresses his sorrow for the people in many places in the book of Jeremiah by weeping. *“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!”* (9:1) He said that the Lord encouraged the people to *“call for the mourning women, that they may*

*come; and send for cunning women, that they may come: And let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us, that our eyes may run down with tears, and our eyelids gush out with waters.” (9:17b-18) We may also see his tears in Jeremiah 13:17. “But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the LORD'S flock is carried away captive” and Jeremiah 14: 15b-17 “By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed. And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them. Therefore, thou shalt say this word unto them; Let mine eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease: for the virgin daughter of my people is broken with a great breach, with a very grievous blow.” “Although the book [of Lamentations] itself does not name its author, II Chronicles 35:25 definitely connects Jeremiah with the lamentation*

type of literature” (Wycliffe. P. 695). There he says through the voice of Jerusalem or the people of Zion., *“For these things I weep; mine eye, mine eye runneth down with water, because the comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me: my children are desolate, because the enemy prevailed.”* (Lamentations 1:16) Jeremiah is the weeping prophet. “So, he is commonly called, not only because he penned the Lamentations, but because he was all along a mournful spectator of the sins of his people and of the desolating judgments that were coming upon them.” (Henry. P. 398)

If these passages in the book of Jeremiah are examined, it is apparent that they have many things in common. He weeps because the sin and unfaithfulness of Judah will cause them to suffer the direct judgment of God. Many people will die and the nation will be destroyed. Many of the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem will be deported in captivity to Babylon. The Temple of God will be destroyed and the people of God will die.

This thought is clearly seen in chapter nine of Jeremiah. He expresses his sorrow and tears in verse one and verse ten. He says

of the people *“they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. . . . they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD.”* (Jer. 9: 3b) In an elegant and impassioned passage Jeremiah expresses the heart of God and His divine advice to the people of Judah. God wants the people to know that they cannot escape the consequences of their sin by use of their own intellect. They should not glory in their own wisdom. They should not expect to overcome God’s judgment by their own strength or might. Certainly, the rich could not purchase a way out from the wrath of God. They should come to God, understanding that He will deal with the people in lovingkindness. If they will only come to Him in faith, they will be delivered. He evaluates their hearts by His Justice and love of righteousness. Those who come to Him in faith, because of these qualities, delight the Heart of God. In the book of Jeremiah, “with the threatenings are intermixed many gracious promises of mercy to the penitent, of the deliverance of the Jews out of their captivity, and some that have a plain reference to the kingdom of the

Messiah.” (Henry. Vol. 4. P. 398) Although the passage is written to the Jews of Jeremiah’s day, there is a real application to people today. Many people approach God and expect to be accepted into Heaven because of their intellect, strength of their talents, or because of their riches. They do not realize that these qualities fail to please the Lord. These things are all works that are done in order to satisfy the Lord. Salvation cannot be earned by doing these works. Scripture says, *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.”* (Titus 3:5) We must approach the Lord in faith and receive His grace and righteousness and forgiveness by faith. *“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever, believeth on him shall not be ashamed.”* (Romans 10:9-11)

Jeremiah is known as the weeping prophet. His tears were shed because he saw

the sins of the people as very sinful. He knew that the end result of that sin would be the judgment of God upon his people. He wept because of his love for the people and the land. Reading Jeremiah 9:1, *“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!”* A thoughtful person must ask himself, “What does it take to make me weep?” Do we weep over the sinful condition of our society today? God is ignored. His love is rejected. His name is profaned. His Word is ridiculed. Shall we not weep over the eternal destination of our family and friends who reject the goodness of God? Jeremiah was broken over the fate of Judah. Are we moved to the point that we would speak to these dear ones and warn them of what is ahead? Is our love for the Lord Jesus so cold that we can watch souls for whom He died pass into eternity with out him with dry eyes? Surely, we must pray that His compassion should move through us.

Jeremiah wept. He suffered much because of his preaching to the people. In the character of Jeremiah we see qualities that were also in the Lord Jesus. “Those who imagined our Savior to be one of the prophets thought him of any of them to be the most like Jeremiah (Matt. 14:14), because he was a ‘man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief.’” (Henry. P. 398) The Lord Jesus suffered and died to provide for us forgiveness and Heaven. This gift of God (Romans 6:23) is received by believing on the Lord Jesus. (I John 3:16-18) and not by any works which we could do. Let us ask God for the vision He provided Jeremiah, “the Weeping Prophet.”

References:

Wycliffe - The Wycliffe Bible Commentary. By Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison. Moody Press, Chicago, Il. 1962.

ISBY - The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia. By James Orr. Vol III. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan. 1956

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## NOTES

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## **The Lord Said, “Fear Not.”**

**“Thou drewest near in that day that I called upon thee: thou saidst, Fear not.”**

**Lamentations 3:57**

**Suggested Scripture Reading Lamentation 3:53-57**

Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, was thrown into prison on several occasions because of his preaching. One of those prisons was a dungeon with deep, filthy mud instead of a floor. He was up to his neck in muck because he tried to call the people back to the Lord. In this predicament he cried out in despair, **“They have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me. Waters [of depression and sorrow] flowed over mine head; then I said, I am cut off.”** (Lamentations 3:53-54)

Believer, those times of discouragement will come. They came one day to a person who also knew depression and he reported the following. On a day that was cold and grey, when the wind moaned through the naked branches of the trees, I cried. My burden was more than I could bear. There was no one to help; no one to know. No one to care. I suffered alone. I

had lost all, with no hope of regaining the joy of my heart. Then Lord, you came to me. Out of the dungeon of my soul you heard my voice. I breathed out my prayer to you and you drew near to me. And the day that was so cold became warm. The gray cloudy skies cleared and the sun of your love shown through. My world regained color. The leaves on the trees were green again. The difference came, Father, when you spoke two words to me. Two words brought healing and peace; strength and courage. You said to me, "Fear not." There was no longer any room for fear because you heard my prayer. I need not fear because you argued my cause and none can accuse me of wrong. My enemies hate me. The Law condemns me. Lord, you saw my guilt and then took my reproach on yourself. As the caring wonderful Father, you loved me. Your words gave to me, as they did to Jeremiah, strength and hope. Therefore, from this time forward I will:

### **FEAR NOT.**

**"Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old."**

**Lamentations 5:21**