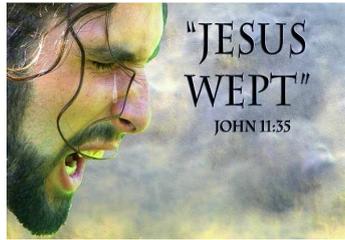


I Wonder What Made Jesus Weep



By Ben Godwin

Two times the Gospels tell us that Jesus wept. The causes give us a glimpse into the heart and nature of God. Certainly Jesus cried many more times during His thirty-three year lifespan. Surely He cried at birth, as all babies do when forced from the cozy womb to take their first gasp of air. He likely cried in pain when He was circumcised on His 8th day to fulfill the Mosaic Law. As an infant, since He was fully human as well as divine, He would have cried when He was hungry, wet, or tired. What about as a kid when He got a splinter, a cut, or stubbed His toe? As a teenager, He no doubt smashed His finger with a hammer in the carpenter shop and tears flowed.

I can't imagine Jesus holding back the tears when His stepfather Joseph died, leaving Him to help support His younger siblings. Trauma can trigger tears involuntarily, so what about when they scourged Him and the whip dug deep into His back? When the nails pierced His hands and feet? When He absorbed the sin of all Humanity? When His heavenly Father turned His back on Him, He cried out vocally and emotionally, "*My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?*" Strangely, the Gospels only cite two cases in which Jesus cried:

1. **Jesus wept over Jerusalem**—Luke 19:41-44. This instance was sandwiched between His triumphant entry into Jerusalem and His cleansing of the Temple. So He experienced the full range of emotions that we face (from glad, to sad, to mad) all in that one day. So what made Jesus weep?
 - **Spiritual Blindness:** Jesus explained, "*If you...had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes*" (Luke 19:42, NIV). Ironically, Jerusalem means "possession of peace," but it has been one of the most war torn cities in the world. The Prince of Peace was right in front of their eyes but they couldn't see Him for who He was. We're all born like cats with our eyes closed until God opens them to see spiritually. Helen Keller said, "The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision."
 - **Looming Judgment:** Through dripping tears, Jesus predicted the fall and destruction of Jerusalem that occurred some forty years later. The Jewish historian Josephus described

the savage siege of Jerusalem by Titus and the Roman army in 66-70 A.D. Surrounded, thousands of Jews died of starvation. Thousands more who tried to escape were caught and crucified. The death toll was staggering (hundreds of thousands) before the city was finally demolished. Jesus saw it coming and sobbed over their future fate. Contrary to what some believe, God gets no glee from judgment. It breaks His heart for He would much rather show mercy than punish sinners, but it is conditional upon man's repentance.

- **Spiritual Ignorance:** Jesus prophesied Israel's demise because they "*did not know the time of [their] visitation.*" Jerusalem missed its moment of destiny—the Son of God came to the city of God and they missed it! Jehovah came to town in flesh form as the Messiah and they didn't even recognize Him. "*He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not*" (John 1:10-11). How many times has God visited His people with revival and we've ignored it or shrugged it off? We desperately need another great visitation of God to spiritually awaken apostate America and the compromising church.
2. **Jesus wept at Lazarus' grave**—John 11:35. It's the shortest verse in the entire Bible, consisting of only two simple, but powerful, words—"*Jesus wept.*" You mean God cries? Apparently, He did and He does. But why did Jesus cry over Lazarus when He was about to raise him from the dead minutes later? Maybe He didn't cry over Lazarus. The Bible says, "*When Jesus saw her [Mary] weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled*" (John 11:33-34). He cried out of compassion for what His dear friends were facing. He was deeply moved by the heartache of His heartbroken friends.

Hebrews 4:15 states, "*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities....*" In other words, Christ is sensitive to our suffering and understands what we are going through. He is not a distant, impersonal force somewhere out in the universe. No, He is a personal God who is keenly aware of our pain. When we hurt, He hurts! The Apostle Paul used the analogy of believers being the body of Christ with Jesus as the head (1 Corinthians 12). Can any part of your body hurt without your head knowing about it and feeling it too? When you stub your toe, doesn't your head know that your toe is in pain? Yes, of course! Why? Because pain receptors send a message through your nerves to your brain that your toe hurts. The same is true of the body of Christ. When any part of His body is hurting, Jesus, the head, is acutely aware of it and sympathizes with that member.

Revelation 21:4 provides this promise, "*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain....*" Perhaps the reason God will wipe our tears away in heaven is because He shed some of His own here on earth.



Ben Godwin pastors the Goodsprings Full Gospel Church and has authored three books available at bengodwin.org. His weekly telecast, *The Word Workshop*, airs on TV-16 and Charter Cable #10 on Mondays at 9 p.m. and Tuesdays at noon and live streams on TV16HD.com. Note: this article was recently featured in Ben's column in the *Daily Mountain Eagle*, a newspaper in Jasper, Alabama. To read more articles, visit his website and take advantage of his 3 book bundle for \$20.00 plus shipping at bengodwin.org