

Wept

“And when Jesus came near, he beheld the city and wept”

Luke 19:41

Wept—These are two words in Greek for the one word we translate “wept.” This is the first of the two (*eklausen*). It comes from *klaio*. It means “to wail, lament and weep.” This is a word that describes a very strong emotional response, one that overwhelms us with tragic sadness. It is very important that we see how intense this word is. Tomorrow we will look at the second Greek word. It is another case of Jesus weeping. But the difference between these two is startling.

Have you ever been completely overcome with crying? I remember one time while I was in seminary. I stood in the front window of our little apartment in Glendale, Illinois, thinking about my life and what I was learning at school. Suddenly, I began to cry. I cried because I knew how far I was from inner peace. I cried because I knew I was broken. I cried because in spite of my knowledge, God and I were not friends. My soul opened the floodgates of my despair and I could not stop the tears. I wept this word *eklausen*.

God brings us to the place of soul weeping. The word literally means “out of grief.” Until we come to soul grief, we are still avoiding God’s call. We must see ourselves as God sees us. Only then will rescue mean restoration. I am eternally grateful that God heard my soul grieving over who I was. He saved me from myself.

In this verse, Jesus looks out over the city of Jerusalem. He sees the brokenness of its citizens. He sees the plight of their resistance to God. He sees the tragic failures of their lives. And he has soul grief over them. How God longs to draw us to joy and safety and care! How God’s tears stream down from heaven waiting for us to open our lives to him! God’s Son sobbed over us.

Today I have tears of joy. Soul grief is gone at last. Blessed are those who mourn for they shall be comforted. I was among those who mourned. But now I am comforted. Are you?