



## ‘A Cry Baby Finds Hope’

Lamentations 3:1-33

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For some this period of economic down turn and spiraling costs of seemingly everything is overwhelming. There are many people who are crying tears in the midnight hour. People are being forced to face the reality that there are moments in their faith journey that become extremely difficult. Crying is a way in which the human body helps to alleviate despair, depression, and the feeling of hopelessness. Tears are defined simply as “drops of salty fluid flowing from the eyes.” Tears can be caused by irritation or laughter but usually are associated with weeping, sorrow, and grief. When we cry, friends wonder what is wrong and try to console us. Babies cry for food, children cry at the loss of a pet, and adults cry when confronted with trauma or death.

The author of this morning’s sermon has been called the “weeping prophet.” Jeremiah’s grief ran deep. His tears flowed from a broken heart. As God’s spokesperson, he knew what lay ahead for Judah, his country, and for Jerusalem, the capital and “the city of God.” Jeremiah was a “cry baby.” His tears were not self-centered, mourning over personal suffering or loss. He wept because the people had rejected their God—the God who had made them, loved them, and sought repeatedly to bless them. Jeremiah’s tears were tears of empathy and sympathy.

What makes a person a “cry baby” says a lot about that person—whether he or she is self-centered or God centered. What causes your tears? Have you had some long, lonely crying periods? For a few moments this morning let’s read from the Word of God as to how to find hope when tears have drowned your very reason to exist. When we analyze this third chapter of Lamentations and review Jeremiah’s plight and his final summarization, I believe there is a nugget of truth for each of us to glean.

Reading from Lamentations 3:1-20, we are allowed to feel the pain of one of God’s faithful servants. None of us is immune from pain. We discovered that Jeremiah is burned out, depressed and full of hopelessness. In verses 21-25 we read how he begins to refocus on God’s goodness, which can be so easily forgotten and overlooked when we are facing one calamity after another. One of the success factors is revealed in verse 26—“Wait patiently for the Lord.” Isaiah re-emphasizes this advice in Isaiah 40:27-31. Jeremiah, in verse 22-26, tells us that “God’s compassion never fails; His faithfulness is great; God is my portion and I will wait; keep our hope in God; be still and let God fight your battles.” When we learn and apply this basic, ancient principle from the Bible, we can stop crying “poor mouth, broke down, in the dumps, nobody loves me” and receive the hope that God has promised. Verses 27-30 assure us that we should learn from our previous experiences. Jeremiah shares some profound wisdom on what we should do when hope seems all but gone. In all that Jeremiah, and we, must go through there is always hope. That is what Jeremiah writes in verses 31-33. Read these verses, dry your tears, and acknowledge that when you wait on God, He will never fail, reject, deny, or abandon you. Waiting is trusting in God (Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 27:14). The prophet Isaiah said it so succinctly in Isaiah 40:29-31.

This morning, stop crying, wasting tears, and ask God to give you strength and patience—WAIT ON THE LORD.

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