

# America at the Abyss

## A Time For Tears

**Text: Luke 19:37-46**

### **Introduction:**

1. Vs. 41, “*wept*”; εκλαυσεν; ek-lah'-sen; means to sob or wail loudly.
  - a. To weep as the sign of pain and grief for the thing signified (2799).
  - b. Compare to John 11:35 - εδακρυσεν; e-dak-roo-sen (1145); simply means to shed tears, weep silently.
2. “*wept*” in vs. 41 is the strongest word for weep that exists in Scripture
3. This passage occurred on the Sunday before the Crucifixion.
4. Before this, Jesus had avoided attracting the attention of the rulers, but He knows (*perfect omniscience*) the end is near.
  - a. He now deliberately makes Himself conspicuous.
  - b. He knows His death is imminent !

### **I. Superficial Religion (vss. 38, 39)**

- A. They came around the south side of Olivet, about five furlongs from Jerusalem (from ISBE), or a little more than half a mile (Also in Flavius Josephus: Antiquities of the Jews - Book XX, Chap. 8, Sec. 6.
  1. The phrase “Mount of Olives” occurs in the OT in Zech.14:4 only.
  2. In II Sam. 15:30 it is called “mount Olivet”.
  3. In Neh. 8:15 it is called simply “the mount”.
  4. In I Kgs. 11 it is called “the mount facing Jerusalem”.
  5. Lastly, in Ez. 11:23 it is called “*the mountain which is on the east side of the city*”, where God’s glory departed from Israel.
  6. Read II Sam. 15:30, “*And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot: and all the people that was with him covered every man his head, and they went up, weeping as they went up.*”
    - a. David was told that Ahithophel conspired with Absalom.
    - b. David wept and prayed that Absalom would not follow

Ahithophel's evil counsel.

- c. 1,057 years later Jesus would weep from that very same place.
- d. It is said the view from the Mount of Olives is one of the most striking impressions which any visitor carries away.
- e. Today, it is but a view of ruin and departed glory compared to that which Jesus wept over.
- f. Just a few days hence, Jesus would endure His agony in the Garden of Gethsemane on the lower slope of Olivet.
- g. Imagine the scene as Jesus' gaze falls upon the city below.
- h. Try to imagine the unspeakable sadness and grief in His heart!
- i. Can you not feel the terrible sorrow in His heart:

“Father, I have lived a perfect life, but they hate me!”

“Father, I came to seek and save, but they will not hear me!”

B. The whole multitude began to praise God - Speaking at once, as it seems, words which most of them did not really understand.

C. How different their vision than His.

1. They broke in loud acclamation, summoning Jerusalem to receive her King.
2. They dreamed of a mighty king on a throne.
3. Jesus knew it was a cruel Cross that awaited Him!

D. Their faith was short-lived and their shouts soon died away.

1. For many of them, it withered even before the branches they waved.

2. **High-wrought emotion is a VERY POOR substitute for steadfast conviction.**

3. **Too many beliefs but NO convictions !!!!!** (A sermon for another time!)

E. There were Pharisees mingling in the crowd, who had no title for Him except διδασκαλε; did-as'-kal-e, which means teacher/instructor.

1. A tepid, lukewarm, quasi-worship was more than enough for them.
2. Formalists **detest** genuine feelings.

F. That scene is so like today ! If Jesus were standing here today, would he weep? See Rev. 3:16-19

1. In Rev. 3:16, “spue”; εμεσαι; em-es-ahee; means: to vomit.
  2. Today, in most churches, the Sunday worship service hardly even rises to the level of “lukewarm”.
  3. The “modern”, so-called worship service is more about concerts, coffee shops, confusion!
  4. In Christ’s words, they have become: Venues of Vomit !!!!!
- G. Why did the Jews take Jesus down from the Cross before sundown?
1. To avoid defiling their religious ceremony, Jn. 19:31
  2. While they practiced their religion, they completely missed Jesus !
- H. Does America’s state of religion make you weep?

## II. Slipping Opportunity, (vss. 42-44)

- A. Vs. 42, “*If thou hadst known...*”, again they missed the “Prince of Peace”.
- B. Vs. 44, They knew not that God was visiting them.
1. Jeremiah to Israel, Jer. 8:19-21, “***Behold*** *the voice of the cry of the daughter of my people because of them that dwell in a far country: Is not the LORD in Zion? is not her king in her? Why have they provoked me to anger with their graven images, and with strange vanities? The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved. For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.*”
  2. “Vanities: - That which is transitory and unsatisfactory.
  3. Can you hear; can you feel the anguish in Jeremiah’s lament?
- C. Look down on this infinitely pathetic scene.
- D. **DO NOT** be misled, Christ’s sorrow **WILL NOT** hinder His Judgment.
- E. The woes which wring His heart, will nevertheless be poured out upon a disbelieving world that rejected Him then and rejects Him still.
- F. Here, His eyes, elsewhere called a flame of fire, are filled with tears, but their glance will consume evil in that last day !
- G. Does a lost and dying world burden your heart to tears?

### III Sinful Practices (vss. 45, 46)

- A. Look at vs. 45, Here we see an “easy-out” religion.
1. They did not even bother to bring their own sacrifice.
  2. Hollow religious actions **WILL NOT** make up for a sinful life.
- B. Our sacrifices and our prayers should cost us something.
1. David’s example, II Sam. 24:24, “*And the king said unto Araunah, nay; but I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing.*”
- C. **Our sacrifices should be the BEST - NOT the leftovers.**
1. Mal. 1:12,13, “*But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible. Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.*”  
**NO, NO, NO ! A thousand times NO !!!!!**
- D. Today, Christianity is literally drowning in easy-believism !
1. We must give of our best.
  2. We must sacrifice of ourselves.
  3. We must sacrifice that which costs us something.
  4. Does God want your attendance only?
  5. **NO**, He wants ALL of you!
- E. This was the second cleansing of the temple.
1. The first having taken place quite early in his ministry.
  2. Listen to the finality of it of “*ye have made it a den of robbers*”.
  3. The thought here is that they had robbed God by turning the House of God into a circus.
- F. Does God have your best today ?
- G. Or have you given Him only what costs little and is “convenient”?
- H. The halt, the lame, the sick, the left-overs.
- I. Is one measly hour on Sunday all you can manage to offer?

## V. Sad Epitaph Hag. 1:3-6 (Read)

- A. What is the result of the three points I just elaborated?
1. America lies in waste because God's house lies in waste !
  2. Is your spiritual foundation "*a bag with holes*"?
  3. Vs. 5 says "*Consider your ways*" - this means to set the heart upon one's ways; to consider one's conduct.
  4. Vs. 6 shows that our eyes are blinded by the things of this world.
  5. Vs. 9 say "*ye looked for much*" from the world "*and, lo, it came to little;*"
  6. **There is a VERY CLEAR warning here!**
  7. Today, many Christians are abandoning "*true*" worship.
  8. Each passing day we draw ever closer to the Lord's return.
  9. How will Christ judge your worship?

## VI. Conclusion

- A. America **desperately** needs Christians that are concerned enough to offer up "*great lamentations*" (wailing) unto the Lord!
1. Gen. 50:10, "*And they came to the threshingfloor of Atad, which is beyond Jordan, and there they mourned with a **great** and very sore **lamentation**: and he made a mourning for his father seven days.*"
  2. Mat. 2:18, "*In Rama was there a voice heard, **lamentation**, and weeping, and **great** mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.*"
  3. Acts 8:2, "*And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made **great lamentation** over him.*"
  4. In each verse above the weeping is due to the death of a loved one.
  5. America is dying a slow death of depravity and decay!
  6. Will you not offer up a "*great lamentation*" unto the Lord?
  7. Or will you wait until America has fallen and it is forever too late?
- B. Read Ps. 74:7-10 - The Psalmist asks, "How long Lord?"
- C. One final "*how long*": I Kings 18:21, "*And Elijah came unto **all** the people, and said, **How long** halt ye between two opinions? if the*

*LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.” (Gutless Cowards ALL!!!)*

1. Do you let someone else fight the Lord’s battles.
  2. Do you turn away when someone blasphemes God?
  3. Do you serve God out of convenience or from conviction?
  4. Will you stand silent as our nation descends deeper and deeper into the cesspool of immorality and depravity?
  5. You cannot run with the Devil’s crowd all week and “*claim*” to stand for Jesus on Sunday! **NO**, not even for one hour!!!!
  6. **Today, right NOW**, before it is too late!!!
    - a. It is time for America to choose!
    - b. It is time for the Church to choose!
    - c. It is time for **YOU** to choose!
- C. Dear Christian, you need tears:
1. Tears of regret.
  2. Tears of repentance.
  3. Tears of renewal.
  4. Tears of refreshing.
- D. Today, right now, will you pledge to turn from the world?
- E. Today, right now, will you surrender your best to Him?
- F. Today, right now, will you ask God to give you tears for America?