

The Book of Tears

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Ps 56:8 Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?

Intro: Because we are in a Bible study mode tonight, where we come to listen and learn, upon occasion we tend to not expect a move of the spirit in that type of service. I want you to stay very sensitive to the Lord. It is going to be difficult for me to be completely methodic tonight. Because of the subject, I feel that we should all stay sensitive to the leading of the Lord tonight as we learn.

- Here within this passage we see that the scripture is telling us something very special that the Lord is doing in our regard. It says that the Lord is intimately involved w/ our sensitivities specifically our TEARS. David makes a reference here to a tear bottle and a book that God is making an account of the times that we cry.
- Now I find it very important to note that out of each of the Heavenly books and scrolls that we are going to discover The Book of TEARS is important because it is the only book that is written by God over our emotional soulful release. Note: We do not find a book of Shouts, Dances, Clapping, or even an accounting of how many times you've spoke in tongues; but we do find that our TEARS are important to God. So I want to do some extensive investigation in this study tonight about the subject of TEARS... What's important to God is worth our attention. We need to look at several things... First of all, Who's Crying? Why are they weeping? And how did this get God's attention?
- Before we investigate some specific places in Scripture let's do some background study on tears...

What Are Tears?

- According to the American Medical Association, tears are the salty, watery secretion produced by the lacrimal glands, part of the lacrimal apparatus of the eye. The tear film over the cornea and the conjunctiva consists of 3 layers: an inner, mucous layer secreted by glands in the conjunctiva, and intermediate layer of salt water, and an outer oily layer secreted by the meibomian glands.²
- A deficiency in tear production causes keratoconjunctivitis sicca (dry-eye syndrome). Excessive tear production may cause watering eye.
- Tears help wash the eye of potentially harmful germs. I can't help noticing the spiritual parallel here:

NUGGET: Tears, in our crying out to God, can wash our spiritual eyes of any evil that has taken root. Just as the physical tears wash the dangerous germs, so our spiritual tears serve as cleansing, falling to the ground and taking the harmful germs with them.

Is There Such a Thing As Artificial Tears?

- Yes. Artificial tears are preparations used to supplement inadequate production of tears in keratoconjunctivitis sicca and other conditions causing dryness of the eyes. To be effective, artificial tears must be applied at frequent intervals. Artificial tears may also be used to relieve discomfort caused by irritants, such as smoke or dust, but they provide only temporary relief.
- Many preparations contain a preservative that can irritate the eyes. Contaminated preparations may cause serious eye infections.³

What Occurs When We Cry?

- When you experience intense emotions, such as grief or anger, your brain sends a signal to your lacrimal glands. These glands are located over each eye and behind each eyelid. Tears, in the form of a watery, salty fluid, are produced continuously from these glands. Each time you blink, your eyelids draw fluid from the lacrimal glands. Continuous tears constantly bathe your cornea, the curved, clear front of your eye.

- This flow, medically known as lacrimation, serves to keep the eye clean and germ-free and to lubricate the movement of the eyelid over the eyeball. Every time the eyelid blinks, the fluid drains away into small holes in the inner corner of the eye, down the tear duct, to the back of the nose and throat. But when you laugh or cry, or if the eye is irritated by a foreign body such as dust or grit, lacrimation increases and there is an overflow of tears.⁵

Is there more than one kind of tear?

- Yea, there are two kinds of tears, Every time we blink, a film bathes the surface of the eye with a bacteria-fighting fluid. Anyone who has chopped onions is familiar with irritant tears, which dilute and flush away the strong onion vapors. When a foreign object such as a loose eyelash or grain of sand gets in our eyes, these tears help to wash away the irritating invaders. This is called neurogenic lacrimation.
- The second type of tear is uniquely human. These are emotional tears, and they fall under the category of psychic lacrimation. Although weeping is usually associated with sorrow, human tears appear in response to many types of emotional stress. From tears of grief when a loved one dies, to extreme joy from winning a game, tears play an important part in human emotions.
- Emotional crying starts in the part of your brain that governs emotions, memory and behavior. If a surgeon blocks the nerves in this area, you won't be able to produce emotional tears, yet it would have no effect on the other kinds of tears your body produces.
- Continuous and irritant tears are controlled by different nerves than those that affect emotional *testing*. *If those nerves are cut, or if a doctor places an anesthetic on the surface of your eye, continuous and irritant tears stop. But there would be no such change in emotional tears.*

The Math of Tears

- To illustrate what a valley of tears we are living in, I have made use of a little mathematical calculation in an effort to give you an idea of the immensity of the subject we are discussing. Suppose that every

individual in the world sheds fifty tears a year. I realize this is far below the actual fact. Few if any shed less; almost all of us shed more. Some shed literal buckets full, but we shall take one tear a week as our starting figure. That means that in the world, with its four billion population, one hundred billion tears are shed each year. Since there are about 420 drops to the ounce this would be 250 million ounces. Reduced to gallons it equals two million gallons and reduced to barrels it means forty thousand barrels. A barrel is three feet long; so laid end to end, these barrels of tears would reach twenty-four miles. In the last thousand years it would be twenty-four thousand miles or once around the world. Since the day of Adam it would mean six barrels laid side by side encircling the whole world. Figure it out for yourself. If all these tears could be barreled and poured into a canal from New York to San Francisco they would make a river in which barges could be floated.

Tears in A Bottle

- Now before David mentions the recording in heaven of our weepings, he says something about our tears being put into a bottle. The idea of collecting tears as a memorial has been going on for centuries. In fact, some civilizations have actually carried out what we have done mentally, collecting tears in little bottles as memorials to those who have died.
- These little bottles, called lachrymatories, are still found in great numbers in ancient tombs. The custom was to collect the tears of the mourners and preserve them in bottles. These bottles were made of thin glass (or, more generally, of simple pottery, often not even baked or glazed) with a slender body, a broad bottom and a funnel-shaped top. If the friends of the deceased were expected to contribute their share of tears for these bottles, they often hired cunning women to cause their eyelids to gush out water.
- This ritual of collecting insincere tears was very offensive to sensible people. The Latin historian Cornelius Tacitus (a.d. 55-120) revealed the disdain many had for this custom: "At my funeral let no tokens of sorrow be seen, no pompous mockery of woe. Crown me with

chaplets, strew flowers on my grave and let my friends erect no vain memorial to tell where my remains are lodged."

- Collecting tears not only was common among the Romans, but was in practice at an earlier period among the Eastern nations. In some of the mournful Persian assemblies, a priest would go to each person at the height of his grief with a piece of cotton in his hand, with which he carefully collected the falling tears. He then squeezed the tears into a bottle, preserving them with the greatest caution.
- In her book, *The Fountain and the Furnace*, Maggie Ross writes, "It is possible that the woman who bathed Jesus' feet with her tears (Luke 7:38), was pouring out her bottle of tears. The Greek verb could be translated in this way. Having found her Lord, she no longer needed to hold to herself all her joys and sorrows, but could pour them out and be free. Her tears became undammed to flow with the waters of life into the river of life."²
- There was another similar practice during the times of the psalmist. When a person was ill or in great distress, his friends went to see him, taking along a tear bottle. As the tears rolled down the sufferer's cheeks, they were caught in these bottles, sealed up, and preserved as a memorial to the event.

NUGGET: Now in order for those tears to be collected there has to be a visitation. This lets us know that when we weep, God is right there where we are. Seeing every pine catching every drop.

Weepers in the Word

- There are well over 700 mentionings in the Word of God about tears, crying, mourning, and weeping. The Bible has a great deal to say about the matter of tears. In it we see infants weeping, strong men weeping, even the tears of the Saviour are mentioned on various occasions... Let's look at a few...

As to individuals who weep, we find a biblical who's who....

Esau wept in his rivalry with Jacob (Gen. 27:38).

Jacob wept with Esau in a wary reconciliation (Gen. 33:4)
, and later wept at the presumed death of his son Joseph (Gen. 37:35).

When Joseph was preparing to reveal his true identity to his brothers, he wept so loudly that it became a talking point among the Egyptians (Gen. 45:2).

Soon he wept with his brothers (Gen. 45:14-15), and when Jacob finally arrived in Egypt, Joseph threw his arms around his father and "wept for a long time" (Gen. 46:29).

Later, he wept over Jacob's corpse and wept again over his father's last request to forgive his brothers fully (Gen. 50:1,17).

Saul, the first king of Israel, wept (1 Sam. 24:16),

as did David and Jonathan (1 Sam. 20:41).

On one occasion David's army wept aloud all day long until they had no strength left within them (1 Sam. 30:4).

Above all, Jeremiah is the prophet of tears. He frequently weeps for Israel, even as he brings dire warnings of impending judgment, and cries out for mercy in tears (Jer. 9:1,18; 14:17; Lam. 1:16; 3:48).

Peter wept bitterly after his threefold denial of Christ (Matt. 26:75).

Paul also knew the place and value of tears. He described his ministry as serving the Lord with great humility and tears (Acts 20:19), and he continually warned with tears against false teachers (Acts 20:31).

When Paul wrote to Timothy he remembered with fondness Timothy's tears at their last meeting (2 Tim 1:4)

the 1st mention of Tears and then a few found thereafter....

The first time tears are mentioned in the Bible is in 2 Kings 20:5

2 Kings 20:5 Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.

- Here we have a record of a king weeping. Hezekiah is sick unto death and has just been informed by the Prophet that he is going to die. Turning his face to the wall, he sobs out to the Lord in his plea for life and answer to those tears the Lord stays the hand of death and adds fifteen years unto his life. Now please note that this is the first time that TEARS are being mentioned in the scripture... Why is this important? Because this invokes the Law of First Mention...

The Meaning of the Law of First Mention

- The law of first mention may be said to be *the principle that requires one to go to that portion of the Scriptures where a doctrine is mentioned for the first time and to study the first occurrence of the same in order to get the fundamental inherent meaning of that doctrine*. When we thus see the first appearance, which is usually in the simplest form, we can then examine the doctrine in other portions of the Word that were given later. We shall see that the fundamental concept in the first occurrence remains dominant as a rule, and colors all later additions to that doctrine. In view of this fact, it becomes imperative that we understand the law of first mention.
- Again, Hezekiah's passage is first mention of God seeing and taking note of the tears of man.... Let's use the law of first mention here to examine the passage.

What do we see...

1. A man who has a sickness unto death.
2. A man of God w/ a message of eternal preparation.
3. A sorrowful tearful prayer.
4. An extended life.

Here is the spiritual application....

1. A man who has a sickness unto death. – Sin (James 1:15)
2. A man of God w/ a message of eternal preparation. – Preaching of the Word (Acts 2:38)
3. A sorrowful weeping prayer. – Repentance (2 Cor 7:10)
4. An extended life. – The Holy Ghost (Rom 8:10-13)

Seven References of Weeping

When we rightly interpret the source of our fountain of tears, we begin to unveil the mysteries of the soul.

1. Remembering The Days of Old

"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. Upon the willows in the midst of it we hung our harps. For there our captors demanded of us songs, and our tormentors mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion.' How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" (Ps. 137:1-4).

In this passage we find the transplanted Hebrews meditating on the wonders of the Lord. They once lived joyously in the beauty of their homeland. They remembered sipping on the fruit of the vine while relaxing under a shade tree. Their grateful hearts gave way to sweet songs of heaven. With their harps they glorified God, and with their lips they gave Him praise. But now the tune has changed. They have found themselves surrounded by the enemy in a strange land. Seated by the rivers of Babylon, they are asked by their captors to sing a melody, but they are unable to sing. "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" they mournfully reply. The horrid feeling of wanting to feel God but being away from His presence.

Peter shed bitter tears when the cock crowed a second time. The bible says he went out and wept bitterly. These are the tears when we remember the days of old. And it is while in our rebellious, backslidden condition that we remember God.

2. A Place of Total Abasement

This is the valley of Baca — literally, "the valley of weeping" (see Ps. 84:6). It is the place of spiritual drought we've all passed through. It was probably an allegorical name given to an experience rather than an actual location, much like the valley of the shadow of death. Yet regardless, our well has run dry, and our tongue is parched. We are destitute, longing for a spiritual oasis:

"Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools" (Ps. 84:5-6, KJV).

This is a place in our spiritual lives of total abasement. It is when we're scraping bottom; when the world's pressure is clamping down from all sides; The cry is deep, emotional, desperate and sincere. It is motivated by a gut belief in Jesus, regardless of the circumstances. "Help, Jesus! Lift me up!" Tears flow like a river. "Dear Lord, if You don't reach down and pick me up, it's over." It is the cry of an agonizing man, the groanings of a weary pilgrim, the strainings of a sinking soul. It is the cry for life!

3. When the Enemy has Triumphed

"But if you will not listen to it, My soul will sob in secret for such pride; and my eyes will bitterly weep and flow down with tears, because the flock of the Lord has been taken captive" (Jer. 13:17).

During such times, God's command is clear:

"Awake, drunkards, and weep; and wail, all you wine drinkers, on account of the sweet wine that is cut off from your mouth" (Joel 1:5).

"For these things I weep; My eyes run down with water; Because far from me is a comforter, One who restores my soul; My children are desolate because the enemy has prevailed" (Lam. 1:16).

Nobody likes to lose. The Bible says...

The Bible says, **"Then all the sons of Israel and all the people went up and came to Bethel and wept...they fasted...and offered burnt offerings" (Judg. 20:26).**

Bethel signifies the house of God, where God dwells. During these times of apparent defeat we must get close to God; we must press on. Our river of tears must lead us to the harbor of His will.

4. When the Lord Wept

What causes a king to cry? What is it we do that causes grief enough to produce tears on the face of our Father?

The Scriptures record three moments when our Lord's emotions surfaced through tears. The most memorable is well-known as the shortest verse in the Bible. This was over the death of His friend Lazarus: "Jesus wept" (literally, shed tears; John 11:35). His open display of emotion caused those nearby to exclaim, "Oh, how He loved him."

It is important for us to read this verse in context. You see, the previous verse tells us why Jesus wept. **"When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her, also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit, and was troubled" (v. 33).**

On another occasion — after His incredible triumphal entry into Jerusalem— He stood upon the hill and wept over the city's eminent destruction. What motivated the Son of God to mourn over Jerusalem? Luke 19:41 says that Jesus saw the city and wept over it. The original text expresses "loud cries" His wailing was warranted. You see Jesus saw everything through the eyes of eternity. Jesus' tears were not as Hezekiah's over a fatal sickness—those tears were temporal. The tears of our Lord had to do with eternity.

The third mention we have of our Lord crying is found in Hebrews...

Heb 5:7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death,

This of course speaks of the agony of Gethsemene, as our dear Saviour's flesh cried unto God for the heaviness of the sins of humanity.

5. Emotion emanating from deep concern, worship or prayer.

Listen to Isaiah: **"Like a swallow, like a crane, so I twitter; I moan like a dove; My eyes look wistfully to the heights; O Lord, I am oppressed, be my security" (Is. 38:14).**

Rachel joins in this crying chorus: **"A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; and she refused to be comforted, because they were no more" (Matt. 2:18).**

The harmony continues in the Psalms: **"Hear my prayer, O Lord! And let my cry for help come to Thee...For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping" (Ps. 102:1,9).**

Indeed, the emotional tears throughout the centuries flow together, forming a mighty river to heaven. We find the tears of Joseph upon meeting his brothers:

"And Joseph hurried out for he was deeply stirred over his brother, and he sought a place to weep, and he entered into his chamber and wept there" (Gen. 43:30).

We find the tears of Paul, shed for his beloved children at Philippi: **"For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ" (Phil, 3:18).**

And again Paul sheds tears over his children in Corinth: **"For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote to you with many tears; not that you should be made sorrowful, but that you might know the love which I have especially for you" (2 Cor. 2:4).**

There is also his farewell address to the believers at Ephesus: **"Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears" (Acts 20:31).** Yes, Paul was a weeper.

Listen to Mary at the tomb of her Lord: **"But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb...Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?'" (John 20:11,15).**

Could you imagine the scene at the death of Aaron and then again at the funeral service of Moses? The Bible says, **"All the house of Israel wept for Aaron thirty days" (Num. 20:29). "So the sons of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days; then the days of weeping and mourning came to an end" (Deut. 34:8).**

In the Word we also find Elkanah, the husband of Hannah, responding to his wife's tears: **"Hannah, why do you weep and why do you not eat and why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?...And she, greatly distressed, prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly [literally, "bitterness of soul"]" (1 Sam. 1:8,10).** We know the rest of the story: Her deep mourning was turned to dancing upon the birth of her son, Samuel.

The widow of Nain is found weeping beside the casket of her only son. Then Christ comes alongside her — the true Comforter arrives. To others, her tears were just ordinary expressions of grief. But to Jesus, they spoke of far deeper pain and misery. Perhaps He thought of what His own mother would soon experience on the day of His death.

In an instant He became overwhelmed with the desire to "stop the suffering." Once again, His compassion moved Him to action. Her pain was soon relieved by the resurrection of her only child — a mighty fulfillment of the holy mandate to weep with those who weep.

6. Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth.

Jesus spoke of the quenchless flame, the undying worm, the eternal unforgiveness, the body and soul plunged in Gehenna and the weeping and

gnashing of teeth. Each of these were His attempts to build a fear of eternal damnation.

**Matt 13:49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,
50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.**

The weeping and gnashing of teeth, in particular, denotes severe rage coupled with sorrow. The force of this warning — the eternal grinding of teeth and ceaseless crying — was intended to deter the hearers from this dreadful end..

Nugget: It's interesting that part of our heavenly reward will be no weeping, while part of the curse of hell will be eternal weeping.

7. When God shall Wipe our Tears Away

We can rejoice for there is coming a time that God shall wipe our tears away!

Rev 21:4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;

He isn't talking about our senseless whining, our selfish sorrow that life isn't going our way, our blatant church bickering over the color of the carpet or the volume of the sound system. He's not wiping the tears of sulking saints. No, the tears spoken of here are legitimate Godly tears.

Are you passing through a personal Gethsemane? Are you alone? Jesus has been there. He is holding the bottle, catching every teardrop. Are you teary-eyed from running the race? We've all experienced tears welling up as we went running against the wind. Its brisk force, cutting across our eyes, dried out the moisture. Our body reacts by crying, soothing the dryness. Are the winds of adversity blowing across as you run this race? Jesus has been there. He is holding the bottle, catching every teardrop.

Are you tired of your wanderings? Do you feel like a hunted fugitive, like David, with the pressure clamping down on all sides? Do you find yourself going from one dark cave to another or from wilderness to wilderness? Do you have no place to lay your head? Jesus has been there. He is holding the bottle, catching every teardrop.

Is the world crashing down all around you? Are you standing on a hill, beholding the agony of this life, as Jesus beheld the city of Jerusalem? Are you seeing what could have been a perfect situation, but sin has separated you from God's best? Are you feeling the effects of rebellion? Do you feel the darkness of destruction? Jesus has been there. He is holding the bottle, catching every teardrop.

God is recording your pain... He is collecting those tears...

Spiritual Dry-Eye Syndrome

Known in the medical field as keratoconjunctivitis sicca, dry-eye syndrome is a condition marked by hyperemia of the conjunctiva, lacrimal deficiency, thickening of the corneal epithelium, itching and burning of the eye and often reduced visual acuity. Excessive evaporation of tears may be due to environmental factors such as hot, dry and/or windy climate. It is possible through an injury to lose your capacity for tears.

So here we see 3 things that happen w/ Dry-Eye Syndrome..

1. You start to lose the acuity of your vision
2. It can come from being in dry places.
3. An injury can affect your capacity for tears.

You need to ask yourself some questions....

1. Will my name be found in the book of Tears?
2. Do I have spiritual dry-eye syndrome?
3. Have I lost the vision I once had for God?
4. Am I in a spiritual dry place that has caused this in my life?
5. Was there an injury in my spiritual life that I have not allowed to mend?
6. Have I openly wept before Him over my sins?
7. How much crying have I done for the lost?
8. Do I shed tears when I hear the Word of the Lord?
9. When I pray, are there tears mingled with my requests?