

The Tears of Our Lord

Ecclesiastes 3:1, 4

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Have you ever just wanted to sit down and have a good cry? I believe we all have.
- B. In the long ago, Solomon wrote in **Ecclesiastes 3:1** – “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven.” Three verses later he said: “A Time to weep . . .” (Verse 4)
1. Weeping is one of the universal languages of man. You may travel to many places in this world in which you may not understand the people’s language . . . But you will understand her tears.
 2. Illustration: 1993 Victoria Khano in Amman, Jordan.
 3. Jesus, and others in the Bible, spoke this universal language.
- C. Where there are tears, there are reasons for them.
1. **Hannah.** In **1 Samuel 1:8**, Hannah wept because she was barren. “Then Elkanah her husband said to her, “Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons?”
 - a. We cannot know the sorrows of the Hannahs of this world unless we have desired children and have been unable to have them.
 - b. She promised God that if He would permit her to have a son, she would give him to His service. God rewarded her with Samuel and in turn Hannah gave him into God’s service. What a prophet Samuel became!
 - c. Her faithfulness to her promise led God to reward her with six additional children. 2 Samuel 2:5
 2. **David and the people.** In 1 Samuel 30:3-6, David and the people wept because Ziklag had been invaded by the Amalekites . . . The city had been burned and their families and friends had been taken captive.
 - a. The weeping was bitter when wives, sons, and daughters were captured.
 - b. **1 Samuel 30:4** – Then David and the people who were with him lifted up their voices and wept, until they had no more power to weep.
 3. **David.** In **2 Samuel 18:33**, David wept over the death of his rebellious son, Absalom. Then the king was deeply moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept. And as he went, he said thus: “O my son Absalom — my son, my son Absalom — if only I had died in your place! O Absalom my son, my son!”
 4. **Peter.** In **Luke 22:62**, Peter wept bitterly and uncontrollably over his sin of denying Christ three times. “So Peter went out and wept bitterly.”
 - a. Just seven words tell us about this traumatic response of Peter.

b. How wonderful indeed that “For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation . . .” **2 Corinthians 7:10**

5. **Paul.** Paul wept many times in his service to Christ.

a. In Philippians 3:18-19, Paul wept over the enemies of the cross.

b. In **Acts 20:31**, Paul reminds the elders from Ephesus that he met with at Miletus, “. . . Remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.”

c. Paul wrote a letter to the Corinthians that caused him to shed many tears.

1. In 1 Corinthians 5, it grieved Paul to know of wickedness in the church.

2. In 1 Corinthians 1:6, it grieved him to know of division and contentions in the church at Corinth.

D. The tears of Hannah, David, Peter, and Paul all have their place in the Bible. However, I want to call your attention to some additional tears mentioned in the Bible . . . **The Tears of Our Lord.**

E. Some 700 years before Christ came to dwell among men, the “Messianic Prophet,” prophet Isaiah, described Him in Isaiah 53:3 – “He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.

F. Publius Lentulus, a resident of Judea during the reign of Tiberias Caesar, wrote a description of Christ in which he said, “**He has wept frequently in the presence of men.**” I do not know how many times our Lord wept while on this earth, but I do know of at least three specific occasions because they are recorded in the Bible.

1. Each of these three specific occasions have much to say to us.

2. Each of these three accounts of our Lord’s weeping are rather representative of life.

ON THE WAY TO THE TOMB OF LAZARUS. John 11

A. **John 11:32-35** - Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”

33 Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled.

34 And He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.”

35 Jesus wept.

B. On this occasion **Jesus was weeping in sympathy for the sorrows of others.**

C. No burden ever goes unnoticed by our Lord. He is conscious of it all.

1. Jesus is aware of our sorrows and our troubles. He is conscious of it all.

2. Jesus is touched by the things that touch us.
 3. Jesus is concerned about the things that concern us . . . Whether that concern be for ourselves . . . Or for someone else.
 4. Jesus is conscious of it all.
- D. There is never a time in our lives when we can truthfully say that He does not understand.
1. Well-known song . . . “Does Jesus Care?” It asks and answers some very meaningful questions.

1st Stanza

1 Does Jesus care when my heart is pained too deeply for mirth and song;
As the burdens press, and the cares distress, and the way grows weary
and long?

2nd Stanza

2 Does Jesus care when my way is dark with a nameless dread and fear?
As the day light fades into deep night shades, does He care enough to be
near?

3rd Stanza

3 Does Jesus care when I’ve tried and failed to resist some temptation
strong;
When for my deeper grief I find no relief, tho my tears flow all the night
long?

4th Stanza

4 Does Jesus care when I’ve said “good-by” to the dearest on earth to me,
And my sad heart aches till it nearly breaks-is it aught to Him? Does He
see?

CHORUS:

O yes, He cares; I know He cares, His heart is touched with my grief . . .
When the days are weary, the long night dreary, I know my Savior cares.

2. Hear God’s Word in the matter.
 - a. **1 Peter 5:7** – “Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”
 - b. In **Matthew 15:32**, Jesus said, “. . . I have compassion.”
 - c. In **Matthew 9:36**, Jesus “. . . Was moved with compassion.”
 - d. **Psalms 86:15** – “But You, O Lord, are a God full of compassion, and gracious, Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.”
3. Jesus came to make things better . . . Not worse.

- a. **John 10:10** – “. . . I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.
- b. **Matthew 11:28-30** – “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

E. Listening Friends . . . Please consider this:

1. A different world will never be built by an indifferent people.
2. A compassionate world will never be built by an uncompassionate people.
3. A caring world will never be built by an uncaring world.
4. A loving world will never be built by an unloving people.
5. A lost world will never be converted by unconcerned people.

F. Jesus teaches us to care about the sorrows and misfortunes of others.

Jesus cared! Listen to what Peter penned in **1 Peter 2:21** – “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps.”

G. **Illustration:** Little Mary helping Jane cry.

H. What was the reaction of the Jews to the tears of our Lord on the occasion of Lazarus’ death in Bethany? **John 11:36** – “Then the Jews said, ‘See how He loved him!’”

1. Our Lord’s tears were sincere . . . They were genuine.
2. The shortest verse in the Bible in English tells of one of the biggest of all the Lord’s deeds . . . Weeping in sympathy for the sorrows of others.

ON ONE OF THE MOUNTAINS SURROUNDING JERUSALEM . . . JESUS WEPT OVER THE CITY. Matthew 23:37

A. Standing on either Mount Scopus or the Mount of Olives, Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem.

B. Jerusalem is some 4,500 years old and is referred to in the Bible some 1,800 times.

1. Jerusalem means “Foundations of peace.”
 - a. “Jeru” – “City of”
 - b. “Salem” from “Shalom” – “Peace”
 - c. “Jeru” + “Shalom” = “City of Peace”
2. Jerusalem has been anything but a city of peace.
 - a. **50** times it has been **besieged**.
 - b. **38** times it has been **conquered**.
 - c. **10** times it has been **destroyed and leveled** to the ground.

C. In that city Jesus had done so many wonderful things.

1. At age 12, He had confounded the religious leaders at the temple.
2. A number of His great miracles were performed there.

3. Some of His greatest teaching had been done there.
 4. He would soon give His life there.
 5. His church would be established there.
 6. But now . . . On this occasion . . . He was weeping over the city.
- D. On this occasion, Jesus was not weeping in sympathy for the sorrows of others as He had done in Bethany . . . **He was weeping over lost and wasted opportunities.**
1. Although Jesus was a city richly blessed . . . It was a city of lost and wasted opportunities. Listed to the words of Jesus in **Matthew 23:37** – “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!”
 - a. Some of God’s greatest prophets had walked those streets . . . But they had been rejected and killed.
 - b. God had placed His great name there . . . but the people turned to idols.
 - c. Great men of God had dwelt there.
 - d. The temple with its Holy of Holies, was there.
 - e. The city had played such a great role in God’s dealings with man.
 - f. It was the religious capital of the Jews.
 - g. The gospel of Christ would be preached there for the very first time.
 - h. Repentance and remission of sins would be preached from there.
 2. Jesus knew Jerusalem . . . Jerusalem had failed to know Jesus!
- E. Christ not only recognized its lost opportunities and wasted opportunities . . . He wept over them as well.
- F. We all have some lost and wasted opportunities that we can never recall to take advantage of. Are they important enough for us to shed tears over? . . . Opportunities that are lost . . . Opportunities that are gone forever.
1. Opportunities to better ourselves.
 2. Opportunities to grow stronger and more faithful, in and to, Christ.
 3. Opportunities to care for those we love.
 4. Opportunities to care for the sick and the needy.
 5. Opportunities to be more involved in our home congregation.
 6. Opportunities to lead souls to be converted to Christ.
 7. Opportunities to be more active in the Lord’s work.
 8. Opportunities to bring greater glory to God.
 9. Opportunities that can never be recalled.
- G. We sing . . . “Oh those years in sinning wasted, could I but recall them now. I would give them to my Savior, at His feet I’d humbly bow.” When you sing those words, you are singing about lost and wasted opportunities.
1. Lost opportunities to thank Pop.
 2. Girl at Freed-Hardeman. I spoke at a devotional during final exam week

at her dorm about loving and appreciating your parents and letting them know it before it is too late. Told them what to do as the first thing upon their arrival home (embrace them with a big hug and tell them how much you love and appreciate them. . . . Christmas holidays followed . . .

January registration . . . Told me the devotional remarks led her to change her plans from spending the holidays with friend, spent holidays with her parents. “Two days ago, my dad died.”

3. Perhaps we can learn from the past and be more alert and be better prepared for future opportunities.
- H. Illustration: Mt preaching in Jerusalem. Facing audience during the singing and before the sermon, thinking about the beginning of the church just three or four blocks away . . . 3,000 baptized the first day as we read in Acts 2 . . . But now we do well to fill a small meeting place.
- I. Jerusalem is a city of lost and wasted opportunities . . . May this not be so with our lives.

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE. Matthew 26

A. Please note these passages:

1. **Isaiah 53:3** – “He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief . . .”
2. **Matthew 26:38** – “Then He said to them, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.”
3. **Luke 22:44** – “And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.
4. **Hebrews 5:7** – “Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear.”

B. When Jesus shed tears in the Garden of Gethsemane on the final night of His life upon the earth, it was not in sympathy for the sorrows of others . . . Nor was it over lost and wasted opportunities . . . But rather, **He was weeping in Battle.**

C. He was in agony and he was alone.

1. Oh, but you say, “He wasn’t alone-great crowds followed Him . . . No, the crowds left Him earlier that day.
2. But He still had 12 apostles . . . No, Judas had already left the group to betray the Savior.
3. But He still had 11 apostles . . . No, He left eight of them at the entrance to the garden.
4. Well, He still had three . . . No, they were a stone’s throw away and were asleep within the hour.

5. Jesus was totally alone . . . Isolated from all humanity on behalf of all humanity . . . He was alone to weep in battle. It all came down to that night before the day of crucifixion.
- D. The historical archives of man record many famous and important battles that have been fought through the centuries . . . But there has never been a battle fought like the battle that was fought in the garden of Gethsemane that night.
1. Some of His precious blood spilled on that battle field that night. As he prayed earnestly and fervently, great drops of perspiration, like as blood, fell from our Lord.
 2. That phenomenon is well documented in medical history.
 - a. It is called the “bloody sweat.”
 - b. The “bloody sweat” occurs when the small blood vessels just beneath the skin burst under great duress. Blood mixes with sweat as it comes through the pores of the skin.
 - c. It is reported that Napoleon experienced the “bloody sweat” at the battle of Waterloo (June 18, 1815)
 1. On the 18th of June 191,300 soldiers fought one of the most decisive battles in the history of Europe in only one day.
 2. The Wellington army had 67,000 soldiers.
 3. Blücher's army numbered 52,300.
 4. Napoleon's army numbered 72,000.
 5. A total of 48,500 men fell or were severely wounded.
 6. Napoleon lost the battle.
- E. No wonder our Lord cried in the Garden of Gethsemane.
1. The writer of the Book of Hebrews said, “strong crying.”
 2. He was fighting for you and me.
 3. In a real sense, the battle was won in the garden . . . The decision was made in the garden then carried out on to the cross.
 4. He was in the garden of Gethsemane on Thursday night . . . On the cross on Friday morning . . . And in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea on Friday evening.
- F. In working, serving, and living for the Lord, we will face many battles . . . But we will never face one alone.
1. Man is never left to fight a battle alone . . . God is there!
 2. In **Matthew 28:20**. Jesus promised, “. . . And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age . . .”
 3. Battles are real.
 - a. Preachers face battles.
 - b. Elders face battles.
 - c. We all face battles.
 - d.

CONCLUSION:

- A. Herein we have seen the tears of our Lord . . . He wept:
1. At the death of Lazarus . . . **IN SYMPATHY FOR THE SORROWS OF OTHERS.**
 2. As He beheld the city of Jerusalem . . . **OVER LOST AND WASTED OPPORTUNITIES.**
 3. In the Garden of Gethsemane . . . **WEeping IN BATTLE.**
- B. Jesus wept for a family, for a city, and for all humanity. He was, and still is, our example. He was concerned to the point that He was moved to tears. How concerned are we . . .
1. How concerned are we for the sorrows of others?
 2. How concerned are we for our lost and wasted opportunities?
 3. How concerned are we for the battles we must fight?
- C. **Illustration:** During World War II, Winston Churchill was in conference with officials on Downing Street when an air raid occurred. They heard a bomb explode relatively near. It had fallen in one of the poorer parts of London. Almost at once, Churchill ordered his car and set off to see what had happened. The scene was one of desolation and heartbreak. As the people, many of them now homeless, saw the car and recognized its occupant, they crowded around and cheered Churchill. Churchill completely overcome by his reception, openly wept. After a bit, a voice from the crowd was heard to say: “See! He’s crying. He really cares about us.”
- D. I want to say to you about Christ . . . “See, He’s crying. He really cares about us!”
1. **2 Corinthians 4:7** – “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.”
 2. **2 Corinthians 9:15** – “Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!”
- E. If you are tempted to doubt the Lord’s love for you and others, all you have to do is to go back to dark Gethsemane, in the dark places of olive trees, where He had every opportunity to turn His back on us and say, “Father, forget them, they’re not worth the price.” Instead, we find Him on the cross praying, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”
- F. Listening friends . . . Do not let any more opportunities go by. Obey Christ this very hour. **God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation**