

# ***The Ministry of Tears***

## ***Why does God allow His people to Weep?***

***Harold B. Sightler (1941-2001)***

***Dr. Sightler was one of my Father's favorite radio preachers.***

*In Revelation 21:4 we find a blessed promise which assures us of a day when God shall wipe away all tears. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."*

*In the meanwhile, all of us have the experience of tears. Our hearts have been and are being broken as we pilgrimage upon the earth. From our souls we each have cried, Why? Why does God allow me to weep? Sometimes we have seen the very finest and most consecrated of Christians with broken hearts. Why does God allow this?*

*Full well do I recognize the impossibility of knowing fully the motives behind our weeping. However, I feel there are some things which we can understand. The Bible tells us much about the tears of God's people.*

### ***FALSE IDEAS ABOUT TEARS***

*May we note some common false ideas about tears. There is the idea that:*

#### ***All Tears Are a Result of Personal Sin.***

*To be sure, sin produces much weeping. However, there are Bible examples of God's people weeping who were not guilty of personal sin. Job is an example. The very first chapter of the book of Job tells us the kind of a man Job was: just, upright, perfect; and he despised evil. He walked before the Lord as holy as he knew how to walk. Yet no man ever had his heart broken as did Job. Certainly no man would dare accuse him of sin because of the trouble which plagued his life. There can be no doubt but that his weeping and suffering were for God's glory and for our encouragement.*

*There is also the idea that:*

#### ***It is Never God's Will for His People to Suffer or Weep.***

*It is the common message of many so-called "faith healers" in these days that God does not will any of His people to suffer or weep or to be sick. They proclaim the idea that if one suffers or weeps, it is because of some sin or faithlessness.*

*There is the false idea that:*

#### ***Jesus and Salvation Make Life Easy for the Believer.***

*All without exception have been exposed to the idea that Jesus is the answer to all experiences of life. This new "Hollywood" slant on religion has deceived the masses into believing that to become a Christian is to drift in to Heaven on a flowery bed of ease. Such an idea is far from the truth and far from experience.*

#### ***That God Cannot Get Glory From Such.***

*Much do I believe that God delights in mercy toward His children. However, God can and does receive glory through the sufferings of the saints.*

Look for a moment at Paul. In II Corinthians 12:7-10 we read:

*“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”*

In no uncertain words these verses reveal the truth that God can and does receive glory through our infirmities. God says, “... for my strength is made PERFECT in weakness.”

### **What Ought Be Our Attitude?**

*Will we accuse God foolishly? Shall we miss His deep purpose in allowing these tears and these disappointments and tragedies?*

### **And Results in Hopeless Doubts.**

*Beyond tragedy there is another attitude. It is this: I do suffer, I am distressed. I do not understand. I cannot see the reason. I visualize only a fragment of the picture. If I could see the whole, I would know the purpose. So, although I suffer and am limited, I can believe and trust and have faith that life does have a meaning, that God is just as Paul declared: “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.” -II Corinthians 4:17-18.*

### **Put Your Faith in a God Who Doeth All Things Well.**

*Dr. Oswald Smith, the great Canadian preacher of righteousness, received the terrible news of the awful tragedy which befell his sister, a missionary in South America. Her husband had suddenly died, blasting their hopes and ruining their plans. He wrote to her in her dark bereavement:*

*God understands your sorrow;  
He sees the falling tear,  
And whispers, “I am with thee,”  
Then falter not, nor fear.  
God understands your heart aches,  
He knows the bitter pain.  
Oh, trust Him in the darkness,  
You cannot trust in vain.*

### **Why God Allows Tears.**

#### **It Fits Us for the Office of Sympathy.**

*Under the Old Testament law the priest was consecrated for the office of sympathy. This consecration was produced by placing a drop of water on the right ear-consecrating that ear to hear the tales of woe and trouble from the people. A drop of water was placed on the thumb of the right hand-consecrating the hands to minister to the need of those in trouble. A drop of water was placed on the toe of the right foot-consecrating the feet to go about in ministering to those in need. The priest was unfit for the office of sympathy until he had thus been consecrated for the task.*

*Do you not see the picture for us today? No Christian can possibly know the art of sympathy until that Christian has been prepared of the Lord for the task. This preparation cannot be acquired at the seminaries. This preparation is acquired ONLY in the valley of experience.*

### ***It Leads Us to Place Our Complete Dependence Upon God.***

*Nothing will so destroy the arm of flesh as tears. It is the will of God for His own that we look to Him. This is no easy task. There is something about the flesh which will seek to strengthen itself. The natural man will seek to solve all the problems himself. He will spend himself to work out his own hard places.*

*If a valley or trial experience teaches us to "look to Him" then it is a blessing in disguise. It is only when one has come to the limit of his own strength that he will turn to God to help. The tears of this experience force us to this limit. The psalmist says, "But I am poor and needy: yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God."-Psalm 18:1-6.*

### ***To Keep this World From Becoming Too Attractive to Us.***

*The tragedy of the life of Lot was the attractions of this world. Many are the Christians who become engulfed in the things of this life. This is never pleasing to the Lord. To be sure, we are earthly creatures; but our citizenship is in Heaven "from whence we look for the Saviour."*

*God commands us to be heavenly minded; to lay up treasures above; to seek the things from above; to journey with our faces set toward Heaven, looking for a city whose Maker and Builder is God; to keep our minds stayed upon Jesus; to love not the world, neither the thing which are of the world; to set our affections on things above.*

### ***To Make Us Homesick for Heaven.***

*We are Heaven's citizens. We are headed toward Heaven's bliss. However, as we journey we are hindered by the pull of this world. It is very easy to become satisfied in this life.*

*Have you ever thought that, if this life offered no hardness, no suffering, no tears, no bitterness, no disappointments, most of us would be content to remain here?*