

TEARS ARE A LANGUAGE GOD UNDERSTANDS

Psalm 56: 1-9

INTRO: The National museum in Tehran, Iran, has ancient artifacts dating back some 6,000 years. In that museum there are some odd shaped bottles. They are tear bottles. When a husband went off to war, the wife or loved one would weep and collect their tears in a bottle, and upon his return she would hand to her beloved the bottle of tears — they spoke louder than the words, “I love you”. Scripture tells us that God has a bottle, a bottle in which He collects the tears of His children that cry.

This is a strange concept for the Western mind, but the old Middle Eastern custom of collecting the tears of a family and preserving those tears in a bottle was very common. When death or serious trouble occurred, each member of the family brought his or her tear bottle and collected tears from all the persons present. These bottles were sacred to the family members because they represented all the sorrows the family had known. Each person, when they died, was buried with their tear bottle.

King David was someone who knew what it was to weep bitter tears. Yet, even in his tears and in his exile, he finds comfort in the fact that, God is taking note of everything he is going through, that a record is being kept, by God, in a book, of all the tears that fall from his eyes.

David's tears are from grief and loneliness, but not of despair. There is a future to them. At present they are a token of suffering, but one day, each tear will become the theme for a song of praise. So David says to God, “Put my tears in your bottle—and keep a record of them until this day has past, and my crying turns to rejoicing.” Wow, what a thought!

ILLUS: Two tear drops were floating down the stream of life, when one asked the other, “who are you?” The one tear replied, I’m the tear of one who lost her true love”. Who are you?, came the follow up question. “Oh, I’m the tear of the one who found him.”

Suffering is an inevitable part of human life. Its outcome will depend on how we react to it. There is an old saying: “To be truly beautiful, one must suffer.” Suffering, endured in faith and for the sake of righteousness, imparts a unique beauty. Paul wrote in **Romans 8:18** “I reckon that our present sufferings are not worthy to compare with the glory that will be revealed in us” **Those are great words for thought!**

I would like for you to read with me from Psalm 56 this morning. Look at **v 8**. “You have seen my wanderings. You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected my tears and preserved them in your bottle. You have recorded every one in your book.”

The Bible has a lot to say about tears...

Job 16:20 “My eyes pour out tears to God.”

Jeremiah 9:1 “O that my head were a spring of water, and my eyes a fountain of tears, so that I might weep day and night for the slain of my poor people.”

Psalm 6:6 “Every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping.”

The title of my sermon today is, TEARS ARE A LANGUAGE GOD UNDERSTANDS. All of us are going through things right now. Some are struggling more than others. My prayer is that today's sermon will bring us great comfort, individually. And that it will bring us, corporately, ever closer to revival, as we think about the goodness of God.

If you have one handy, take out a pen and write down two questions:

1. What causes me to cry? No matter how big and strong, no matter how hard hearted we may be, there will be something at sometime that will cause us all to weep.

2. When I cry, what is it that I need?

We'll come back to these questions in a moment.

Let's look at our passage: The backstory to this Psalm is that David penned these words shortly after the Philistines seized him to Gath. We find, by studying our Bible, that those words have reference to David running for his life from King Saul. And while in his haste to do so, he ran right into the Philistines at a place called Gath. The king of Gath put David under arrest and was under pressure from his advisers to put him to death. David had killed Goliath, the Philistines champion, just a few years earlier. Now David finds himself in the clutches of his enemy. But oh my, what an encouragement these verses are, as we read of God's protecting hand on David's life.

I want us to look at vv 5-11. In these verses, David will share some great insight about the God we serve. NOTICE...

I) GOD IS MINDFUL OF OUR TRIALS: v 5-7 *"(My enemies) are always twisting what I say; they spend their days plotting to harm me. 6 They come together to spy on me—watching my every step, eager to kill me. 7 Don't let them get away with their wickedness; in your anger, O God, bring them down."*

To say that David had been through some stuff is an understatement. But even as bad as things were, David knew that God was still his help and his hope!

We have been through some things ourselves. What we've been going through doesn't compare to what David was experiencing, but we're no stranger to trouble. And just like David, we need to realize that God is mindful of the trials we are encountering day by day. And that He is able to sustain us and help us when we place our trust in Him.

So here, we first see that God is Mindful of David's Trials. Secondly...

II) GOD IS MINDFUL OF OUR TEARS: v 8-9 *"You have seen my wanderings. You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected my tears and preserved them in your bottle. You have recorded every one in your book. 9 My enemies will retreat when I cry out to you for help. This I know: for God is on my side!"*

Notice what David is saying. He said, *"You have seen my wanderings. You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected my tears and preserved them in your bottle. You have recorded every one in your book."* I'm glad that God is keeping a record of every tear that falls from the tear ducts of His children's eyes. David testified personally to that fact here in the 56th Psalm. He continued to say in v 9, *"My enemies will retreat when I cry out to you for help..."* NOW HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT DAVID? HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOUR ENEMIES WILL TURN BACK? David answers by saying, *"This I know; for God is on my side."*

Tears move the heart of God. Tears are a language God understands. Isn't it a comfort to know God keeps a record of every tear and records their story in His book.

I) GOD IS MINDFUL OF OUR TRIALS: vv 5-7

II) GOD IS MINDFUL OF OUR TEARS: vv 8-9 **CONCLUSION** This is a beautiful picture of God caring for His children. He collects our tears and preserves them for us. What a picture!

In the old Middle Eastern custom, people would catch their own tears in a bottle, but God bottles up OUR tears, not His. The significance of that is, that God himself, needs never to cry. He has complete control over His emotions. And as far as troubles are concerned, He already knows the end of them all. He is God! There's no need for Him to cry. But He knows, very well, our pain. And God's Word teaches us that He is touched by our infirmities. And in tender love and care, He saves our tears, to show us how much He loves us. He is a Good, Good Father!

So, we see that God is Mindful of Our Trials. He is Mindful of Our Tears. And thirdly,

III) GOD IS MINDFUL OF OUR TRUST: vv 10-11 *"I praise God for what he has promised; yes, I praise the Lord for what he has promised. 11 I trust in God, so why should I be afraid? What can mere mortals do to me?"*

David had complete trust in the God he served. And the God David served is the same God you and I serve! And He is still as trustworthy as He has ever been.

What can mere mortals do to me? What can anything do to us? Paul wrote in...

Romans 8:38-39 *"And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. 39 No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

Let's go back to those two questions from earlier.

1. What causes me to cry?
2. When I cry, what is it that I need?

There are many things that will cause us to cry in this life. I have cried at times, and didn't even know why I was crying. There just seemed to be a pain that wouldn't leave me. What is it right now that is causing your tears? Maybe you know, maybe you don't. But I can tell what you need. You need a touch from God. His touch always gives us the comfort, the healing, the strength that we need to make it another day.

CONCLUSION: **Rev 21:1-5** *"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God [is] with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them [and be] their God. "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."*