

## Has God Seen Your Tears?

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by Bill Crews

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Under quite different circumstances the widow of Nain wept for her dead son, her only son, and Jesus was moved with compassion and brought him back to life (Lk. 7:11-15). Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus (Jn. 11:35). Mary Magdalene wept at the tomb of Jesus (Jn. 20:11). **Here we have tears over a dead loved one or a friend (and more than a friend).**

Jeremiah wept over the sins of God's people and the calamities that were to befall them for those sins. Remember that he warned them again and again, for years, and they resented him, despised him, and persecuted him for it. Read Jeremiah 9:1-5. Verse 1 says, *"Oh that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"* He has not been called "the weeping prophet" for nothing, and he left us the five lamentations of the book of that name. Jesus wept over the people of Jerusalem, thinking of their sins and of their coming fate (Lk. 19:41). **Here we have tears of grief over the sins of others.**

Peter, after denying the Lord three times, just as Jesus had told him he would and after staunchly denying that he would, went out and wept bitterly, just as he should have done (Matt. 26:75). **His were tears of godly sorrow and repentance.**

The sinful woman, at the house of Simon the Pharisee, shed many tears (Lk. 7:36-48). She even washed the feet of Jesus with her tears, and her tears must have been **tears of penitence** because Jesus forgave her sins.

Jesus shed tears in the garden of Gethsemane as He prayed unto the Father (Heb. 5:7). This should give us pause about the words of the song, "He had no tears for his own grief, but sweat drops of blood for mine."

Paul shed tears at Ephesus. Said he to the elders from there, *"Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with tears"* (Acts 20:31). And those elders, *"All wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him"* over his departure from them and the prospect of seeing his face no more (Acts 20:37-38).

Paul, in writing to the saints at Corinth (2 Cor. 2:4) spoke of his tears for their sins and of his words (in the previous epistle) motivated by his love for them.

Timothy's tears are referred to by Paul in 2 Timothy 1:4 (*"longing to see thee, remembering thy tears"* — probably over their last parting). And if Timothy did not make it to Rome before winter (2 Tim. 4:21), how he must have wept over Paul's execution and his failure to see his father in the gospel one last time.

### God Wants Men To Mourn And Weep Over Their Own Sins

*"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted"* (Matt. 5:4). Like the other beatitudes, this is a condition for citizenship in the kingdom of heaven and divine approval. Most of all, we need to mourn over our own sins before we will ever repent of them and reform our lives. What a comfort that when God forgives our sins, He will remember them against us no more (Heb. 8:12; 10:17). *"Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh"* (Lk. 6:21). *"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall exalt you"* (James 4:8-10). Sin has a way of hardening our hearts, inflating us with arrogance, bringing us fleeting and deceptive pleasures, and causing us to laugh when we should be ashamed. When our tears over our sins are genuine and occasioned by godly sorrow and conducive of repentance, God is ready and willing to forgive.

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