

A SHOULDER TO CRY ON

NUMBERS 11:13, "THEY WEEP ON MY SHOULDERS" (GOODSPEED)

Introduction: Why are children taught not to cry?

1. SOMETIMES IT IS FOOLISH TO CRY
- A. WHEN THERE IS NOTHING WORTH CRYING ABOUT
- B. WHEN CRYING CANNOT HELP
- C. WHEN YOU SHOULD BE DOING SOMETHING ELSE INSTEAD OF CRYING.
- D. when the tears are crocodile tears - insincere.

II. THE ISRAELITES CRIED ON MOSES' SHOULDER. Num. 11:13

(note) ~~vv-A helpless and hopeless feeling~~

- A. MURMURING AND COMPLAINING
- B. THE RABBLE AMONG THEM HAD A CRAVING FOR THE MEAT, ~~MEAT~~ AND THEY DESPISED THE HEAVENLY MANNA. A craving for the highly seasoned dishes of Egypt (Onions & garlic)
- C. MOSES SAID, "THEY WEEP ON MY SHOULDER."
 1. THEIR CRYING WAS SINFUL BECAUSE:
 - A. IT BETRAYED A SINFUL DESIRE FOR A RETURN TO BONDAGE
 - B. IT BETRAYED A LACK OF TRUST IN GOD
 - C. IT BETRAYED A LACK OF APPRECIATION IN GOD'S PROVISION
 2. MOSES FELT UNABLE TO COPE WITH THE SITUATION.
NEB: "They pester me with their wailing"
 3. GOD PROVIDED HELP TO SHARE THE BURDEN

The 70 elders & officers to help Moses (officers and organizers)

III. MANY TIMES WE NEED A SHOULDER TO CRY ON.

- A. A SENSE OF SECURITY
- B. THE ASSURANCE THAT THERE IS A LOVED ONE WHO CARES AND UNDERSTANDS.
- C. AN OUTLET FOR PENT-UP EMOTION
- D. JER. 31:15, "HARK! IN RAMAH IS HEARD LAMENTATION, BITTER WEEPING!

IT IS RACHEL WEEPING FOR HER CHILDREN,
REFUSING TO BE COMFORTED FOR HER CHILDREN,
BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT."

E. DAVID'S ELEGY OF WEEPING AT THE DEATH OF HIS FRIEND JONATHAN:
"O JONATHAN! BY YOUR DEATH AM I MORTALLY WOUNDED,
I AM DISTRESSED FOR YOU, MY BROTHER JONATHAN!
YOU WERE EXCEEDINGLY DEAR TO ME,
YOUR LOVE WAS MORE MARVELOUS TO ME THAN THE LOVE OF WOMEN.
HOW HAVE THE MIGHTY FALLEN,
AND THE WEAPONS OF WAR PERISHED!"

F. THOMAS GRAY'S ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD:

(cont'd) 2 things necessary for success in the service of God: God's help and power, and willing & capable human instruments.

(omit)

THE CURFEW TOLLS THE KNELL OF PARTING DAY,

THE LOWING HERD WINDS SLOWLY O'ER THE LEA,

THE PLOUGHMAN HOMeward PLODS HIS WEARY WAY,

AND LEAVES THE WORLD TO DARKNESS AND TO ME.

THE BOAST OF HERALDRY, THE POMP OF POWER,

AND ALL THAT BEAUTY, ALL THAT WEALTH E'ER GAVE,

AWAITS ALIKE THE INEVITABLE HOUR:

THE PATHS OF GLORY LEAD BUT TO THE GRAVE.

CAN STORIED URN OR ANIMATED BUST
BACK TO ITS MANSION CALL THE FLEETING BREATH?

CAN HONOR'S VOICE PROVOKE THE SILENT DUST,
OR FLATTERY SOOTHE THE DULL COLD EAR OF DEATH?

FULL MANY A GEM OF PUREST RAY SERENE,

THE DARK UNFATHOMED CAVES OF OCEAN BEAR:

FULL MANY A FLOWER IS BORN TO BLUSH UNSEEN,

AND WASTE ITS SWEETNESS ON THE DESERT AIR.

ONE MORN I MISSED HIM ON THE CUSTOMED HILL,

ALONG THE HEATH AND NEAR HIS FAVORITE TREE;

ANOTHER CAME; NOT YET BESIDE THE RILL,

NOR UP THE LAWN, NOR AT THE WOOD WAS HE;

LARGE WAS HIS BOUNTY, AND HIS SOUL SINCERE,

HEAVEN DID A RECOMPENCE AS LARGELY SEND:

HE GAVE TO MISERY ALL HE HAD, A TEAR,

HE GAINED FROM HEAVEN (T'WAS ALL HE WISHED) A FRIEND.

NO FARTHER SEEK HIS MERITS TO DISCLOSE,

OR DRAW HIS FRAILTIES FROM THEIR DREAD ABODE,

(THERE THEY ALIKE IN TREMBLING HOPE REPOSE,

THE BOSOM OF HIS FATHER AND HIS GOD.

(WRITTEN IN 1750)

The Divine Democracy of Baptist church polity:

The pastor does not have complete authority, nor does he have total responsibility. The key words are found here at the end of vs. 17, "not thyself alone." God's work in the church is effectively done only when the pastor, deacons, and all officers, teachers, workers, and members share the responsibility and ministry. The Lord Jesus Christ is recognized as the Head of the church, and the source of human power lies in the congregation voting and acting under the leadership of the Holy Spirit in their individual conscience.

Introduction:

Why is it that little children are told not to cry? Why are people embarrassed by crying? Once a little child sitting down in the floor of a department store besides her mother was crying out loudly while the mother kept saying, "Hush up now and stop your crying!" Another shopper noticed that someone was standing on the little child's hand, and that was why she was crying so loudly. Yet the mother was telling her to be quiet and stop crying and disturbing everyone. Some parents tell their children that it is a sign of weakness to cry, and little boys are told it is unmanly; and little girls, too, are taught not to cry. So a whole generation grows up feeling that it is somehow not appropriate to cry or weep.

Tears are normally secreted in small amounts by glands and are diffused between the eye and the eyelids to moisten the parts of the eye and to facilitate motion of the eyeball.

So we see that tears serve a very useful and practical purpose. Without them our vision would be destroyed.

When tears flow so profusely that they overflow the eyelids and flow down the cheeks and dampen the face, we are crying.

This crying expresses deep inner emotion, sometimes joy, gratitude, or something else, but usually it expresses deep sorrow or mourning, and we have the visual display of shedding excessive tears---much more than we normally do to keep our eyes normally moist. This is another of nature's ways which the emotions affect the physical body and illustrate the connection between the soul,

or mind on the one hand,

and the body on the other hand.

Sometimes crying results from
A HELPLESS AND HOPELESS FEELING
in the face of a task.

The Israelites had the task of occupying the Promised Land, and they felt insufficient or inadequate for this task. When a melancholy person is overcome by this feeling of insufficiency, he or she becomes blind to the values inherent in his or her own being.

This explains the violent inferiority feelings of the melancholy weeper.

The personal life is felt to be worthless and meaningless.

They feel depersonalized and say, "I'm a nobody."

They are disgusted with themselves and hate themselves and others and the whole world.

Their life task is exaggerated to superhuman proportions.

Perhaps simply completing an examination or a normal course in school, or successfully finishing Basic Training, appears to be an impossible task.

It appears impossible only when you are blind to your own abilities and values.

You have all it takes to do it, if you will only use what you have.

You are a person, a free and competent person, with God-given talents, skills, and abilities, and it is an insult to the God who made you for you to dare to say "I'm a nobody."

after Jesus Christ loved you enough to die for you and redeem you and make you a child of God.

Remember this the next time you get that helpless and hopeless melancholy feeling.

IV. GOD OFFERS US HIS LOVING SHOULDER TO CRY ON WHEN WE NEED HIM.

A. THE CERTAINTY OF HIS CARE,

1. "CASTING ALL YOUR CARE ON HIM,
FOR HE CARETH FOR YOU." (PETER)
2. JN. 11:35, JESUS SAW HER WEEPING, AND JESUS WEPT. *(note)*

B. THE STRENGTH OF HIS SHOULDER.

1. THE GOVERNMENT SHALL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER. ISA. 9:6
2. LK. 15:5, WHEN FOUND, HE LAYS IT ON HIS SHOULDER REJOICING.

C. CRIES THAT GOD HEARS

1. THE CRY FOR DELIVERANCE FROM BONDAGE.

Ex. 2:23, THEIR CRY CAME UP UNTO GOD
3:7, "I HAVE HEARD THEIR CRY, I KNOW THEIR SORROW."

22:23, "I WILL SURELY HEAR THEIR CRY."

E. B. Browning. "Do you hear the children weeping, 'O my

2. THE CRY OF PRAYER

A. Ps. 39:12, "HEAR MY PRAYER, O LORD,

AND GIVE HEED TO MY CRY!

BE NOT UNRESPONSIVE TO MY TEARS;

FOR I AM A GUEST WITH THEE,

A SOJOURNER, LIKE ALL MY ANCESTORS.

40:1, "I WAITED PATIENTLY FOR THE LORD,

AND HE PAID HEED TO ME AND HEARD MY PLEA.

SO HE DREW ME UP FROM THE PIT OF RUIN,

FROM THE MIRY SWAMP;

AND HE SET MY FEET UPON A ROCK."

PRAYER FOR A LOST FRIEND: (JOB 16:20)

"UNTO GOD MY EYE WEEPS,

THAT ONE MIGHT PLEAD FOR A MAN WITH GOD,

EVEN AS WITH A MAN FOR ONE'S FRIEND."

3. THE CRY OF THE POOR AND AFFLICTED.

A. JOB 34:28, "THAT THEY MIGHT CAUSE THE CRY OF THE POOR
TO COME UNTO HIM,

AND HE MIGHT HEAR THE CRY OF THE NEEDY."

B. PROV. 21:13, HE WHO CLOSES HIS EAR AGAINST THE CRY OF THE
POOR WILL HIMSELF ALSO CALL AND NOT BE ANSWERED."

4. THE CRY FOR MERCY, PS. 86:3, BE GRACIOUS UNTO ME, O LORD; FOR UNTO THEE DO I CALL ALL DAY LONG."

THE CRY OF THE PUBLICAN, "GOD BE MERCIFUL TO ME, A SINNER"

5. THE CRY OF HIS OWN CHILD, "ABBA, FATHER".

ROM. 8:15, "WHEREBY WE CRY ABBA FATHER" *They shall be comforted*

A. WEEPING MAY ENDURE FOR A NIGHT,

BUT JOY COMES IN THE MORNING. PS. 30:5

B. PS. 56:8, PUT THOU MY TEARS IN THY BOTTLE. *(note)*

CONCLUSION:

Redeemed

FOR ALL THE SAVED THERE WILL COME AN ETERNAL DAY WHEN
THERE SHALL BE NO CRYING OR WEEPING. *The end of weeping*

ISA. 25:8, THE LORD GOD WILL WIPE AWAY TEARS FROM OFF ALL FACES

REV. 21:4, THERE SHALL BE NO MORE DEATH, NEITHER SORROW, NOR CRYING

LUKE 6:21, BLESSED ARE YE THAT WEEP NOW: FOR YE SHALL LAUGH. *(over)*

Unredeemed
(BUT FOR THE LOST IT WILL BE TOO LATE, AND GOD WILL NOT HEAR
THEIR CRY.)

(OVER)

JER. 14:12, WHEN THEY FAST, I WILL NOT HEAR THEIR CRY.
MICAH 3:4, THEN SHALL THEY CRY UNTO THE LORD, BUT HE WILL NOT ANSWER THEM,
BUT WILL HIDE HIS FACE FROM THEM, AT THAT TIME".
JOB 35:12, THEY CRY, BUT NONE GIVETH ANSWER, FOR NO ONE CARES.
PROV. 1:24-28, "BECAUSE I CALLED AND YOU REFUSED TO LISTEN,
I STRETCHED OUT MY HAND AND NO ONE PAID HEED:
YOU IGNORED ALL MY COUNSEL,
AND WOULD NOT HAVE MY ADMONITION:
I IN MY TURN WILL LAUGH IN THE HOUR OF YOUR DOOM,
I WILL MOCK WHEN YOUR TERROR COMES;
WHEN YOUR TERROR COMES LIKE A STORM,
AND YOUR DOOM DESCENDS LIKE A WHIRLWIND,
WHEN DISTRESS AND ANGUISH BEFALL YOU.
THEN THEY MAY CALL ME, BUT I WILL NOT ANSWER;
THEY MAY SEEK ME, BUT THEY SHALL NOT FIND ME."

Many tears have fallen like rain through the centuries. But in the Holy City of God there shall be no tears. The last heartbreak has been experienced, the last tear has fallen. For all sadness must be turned into a serenity which becomes a gift for men and women and leaves no place for tears. And there shall be no more death. This mortal nature must put on immortality, and death will be swallowed up in victory. In the City of God death simply ceases to be. The fellowship with God is exhaustless. It cannot be thought of as coming to an end. Immortality is secure. And parting and pain are to be no more. How many tears have been shed because of parting from our loved ones and because of physical or emotional ^{sad} pain. The mourning which comes from ^{sad} parting will be no more; and the crying that comes from torturing pain shall cease to be. And we shall find ourselves in an endless world where gloom, sadness, and despair are changed into realized joy and fulfillment. There we shall not need a shoulder to cry on for crying is one of the former things that will have passed away.

PRAISE BE TO GOD!

9-27-82 - Heritage Com. Plaza de Seville, St. Pete

7-13-86 - W. Daniel Bap. Ch. Pasadena B.C. 6-21-87

WAC Chapel May 26 + July 77
H.M.B.C. 11/29/56: Coat Ch. Augsburg, 31 Dec. 65

* The certain proof of God's care for the mourner and the evidence that weeping is not weakness or improper is in the shortest verse in the Bible, John 11:35 "Jesus wept."

When Jesus stood in the presence of death of his friend Lazarus, and saw the weeping and crying of Mary and Martha, in whose home he had often been a guest, "Jesus wept."

He was greatly moved. His normal iron fortitude deserted him, and we are awed by the fact that "Jesus wept."

Why was our Lord so deeply moved?

He sensed the crowding sadness in life. He felt the pressure of so many hearts breaking or broken in a thousand pieces.

He felt the burden of so much suffering and pain and loss.

But the main truth pressed home upon us by this little verse is its proof of how really our Lord is one with us.

Everywhere throughout the Gospels we can feel that this glorious message of hope is not spoken from the outside, by one who is un-

touched by what life brings upon the rest of us. "We have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are." Therefore we can be sure that he really understands us in our situations, * * *

and that he will not fail us. His tears at the tomb of Lazarus are also a revelation, an authentic revelation of the divine care and concern for us; granting us insight into God's mind and nature; bringing home to us some inkling of the wonder of his compassion, of the depth and the sureness of his sympathy with the sorrowing, needy, desperate world,

and for hurt minds and broken hearts.

Someone has said that the Christian idea of God is not that of a being outside the universe, above its struggles, looking on and taking no part in the process; no, it is also that of a God who loves, who yearns, suffers, understands, sympathizes with anguish and bereavement.

Especially does God listen for the cry of little children. Elizabeth Barrett Browning asked, during the oppression of the innocent children in the factories and mines in the mid-nineteenth century, "Do you hear the children weeping, O my brothers?"

Many of the employers did not hear the children. They heard clearly other things; they heard the threat to their privileges and profits, which came with the rising humanitarian feeling. They heard joyfully the clink of the coins on their counters and cash registers. But they could not hear the cry of a child. Can you hear the children weeping today, O my brothers and sisters?

Can you hear the cry of the hungry children, the sick children, the cold children, the orphaned children, and the battered and abused children? "He that has ears to hear, let him hear" the still, sad music of humanity; let him hear the judgments of a God of righteousness and love as they are sounded out in our history today, let him hear the children weeping.

Blessed are they that mourn and repent for their sins; others are content with an unexamined life; a sin to them is a trivial affair. But the "mourners for their sins" see God grieving in holy love. Their conscience is quick and tender. Their prayer is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." They can say with the sensitiveness of the Psalmist, "My sin is ever before me." So God is ever before them, and they dwell in His light and in His presence; for the reverse side of the remorse is comfort, forgiveness, relief, and eternal light and peace -- something which the insensitive and unrepentant and dry-eyed habitual sinner never experiences.