

## **What We Learn From Trials with No Intermissions**

In Lamentations 3:48 through 51, Jeremiah said, “*Mine eye runneth down with rivers of water for the destruction of the daughter of my people. Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission, Till the LORD look down, and behold from heaven. Mine eye affecteth mine heart because of all the daughters of my city.*” The weeping prophet was explaining that what he was witnessing among the chosen people of God was breaking his heart. He saw that they were sinning against the Lord and not repenting. He said, “*Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayer should not pass through.*” (Lamentations 3:48). Prayers were not getting answered and the enemy was coming against them like a flood. Jeremiah was saying that what he saw was causing the sorrow of his heart and hence the perpetual tears. There is a phrase that he uses that has captured my attention with great pathos: “*Mine eye trickleth down, and ceaseth not, without any intermission*” (Lamentations 3:49). This is the only time the word “intermission” is ever used in the Bible. It comes to us from the Hebrew word “haphugah,” which can be translated: relaxation, ceasing, stopping or intermission. Our English dictionary says intermission means a pause or break, an interval between parts of a play, movie or concert. The word comes to us from intermit, the origin being mid 16th century, from Latin *intermittere*, from *inter-* ‘between’ + *mittere* ‘let go.’ It therefore means: “a letting go between.” Jeremiah is saying, “I am crying and there is no break or letting go between my sorrows – it’s just one heartbreak after another!” In Job 1:16, 17 and 18, as Job’s trial came, we find these exact words, “*While he was yet speaking, there came also another...*” Within the span of three verses Job lost everything he possessed, even his children. Have you ever been at the point where it seems before you can finish one sorrow, “...*there came also another...*”? It has been said by wise old men, “Don’t waste your trials; learn from them.” What may we learn from trials with no intermissions?

### **1. We are learning the compassionate heart of Jesus.**

Jeremiah prayed, “*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!*” (Jeremiah 9:1). Be careful what you pray - the Lord may answer. In seeing the condition of his people, he was opening himself up to the very feelings of God for His wayward people. This is seen in the life of our Lord when He prayed: “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!*” (Luke 13:34). There was a song written a few years ago that says, “Let me see this world, O Lord, as though I were looking through Your eyes.” If the Lord answers that prayer, be prepared for heartbreak. The Bible is full of God’s disappointment over the men and women of His creation. We see this from the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to the story of the prodigal son. We are allowed through Scripture to enter God’s inner sanctum when we observe just momentarily the severity of Christ’s sorrow of heart in Hebrews 5:7: “*Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.*” The shortest and one of the most concise verses in the entirety of the Bible is expressed in these two words: “*Jesus wept*” (John 11:35).

### **2. We are learning that our tears are precious to God.**

“*And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief*” (Mark 9:24). God heard, answered and responded to this man’s prayer with tears. In the early days of my ministry I often heard this song, which was composed by Gordon Jensen in 1971:

### **Tears Are a Language God Understands**

Often you wonder why tears come into your eyes and burdens seem to be much more than you can stand. But God is standing near. He sees your falling tears, and tears are a language God understands.

When grief has left you low, it causes tears to flow, when things have not turned out the way that you had planned. But God won't for get you; His promises are true. And tears are a language that God understands.

God sees the tears of a brokenhearted soul. He sees your tears and hears them when they fall. God weeps along with man and He takes him by the hand. Tears are a language that my God, He understands.

Our tears are so precious to God that He makes note of them in a book. Could these be some of the same books that will be opened at the end of time? *"Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?"* (Psalm 56:8).

### **3. We are learning although there may not be an intermission to the trials, there will be a finale.**

The Lord promised to the saints who make it through the tribulation: *"For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes"* (Revelation 7:17). Then He promises to all saints from all time: *"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."* (Revelation 21:4).

As we showed earlier, since tears are precious to God and He responds to our tears, we have this ultimate promise: *"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."* (Psalm 126:5). God is going to bless us one day with the fulfillment of this promise. I am reminded of a great story from our family archives. Mom was carrying my brother David in the final term of her pregnancy when the doctors told my dad; she had one in ten chances to live. My pastor/father told the congregation of Central Baptist in Shreveport, Louisiana the dire circumstances and the members began to pray. Resigned to God's will, yet trusting that God would overrule the circumstances in his favor and grant life to his wife and little boy she was carrying, he took my five year old sister by the hand, sat her down and explained in child-like terms what they were up against and said, "Judy, we are going to claim this verse: *"...In his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."* (Psalm 30:5). Joy did come in the morning and the doctors accounted her healing as a miracle. Being the third child of this union, I take this miracle very personal! Ah! A precursor of that which is to come. One day, every tear, not just some, but every one of our tears will be wiped from our weeping eyes. This is the promise of God. We may rest in His Word: *"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began"* (Titus 1:2). The God who cannot lie is telling you, there will be a finale and end to our sufferings on this earth.

- Pastor Pope -

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