

Grief: the results of corruption

Grief is a profound emotional response to loss or wrongdoing that can involve deep sorrow, distress, or pain. It's a common human experience that's addressed throughout the Bible.

Biblical examples of grief

- **Job**

Job's story is a profound exploration of grief. Job experienced immense loss, including the death of his children and the loss of his wealth and health.

- **Noah**

The Hebrew root for "grieve" communicates a mixture of divine indignation against sin and a heartfelt anguish concerning the plight of his creation. God was experiencing grief, particularly in response to human sin and rebellion. In **Genesis 6:6**, it is written, "And the LORD regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart." This expression illustrates God's deep sorrow over the wickedness of humanity before the flood.

- Grief is a result of sin and death
- It is a response and result
- It is an action "to grieve or to cause grief"
- It is suffering
- It manifests itself in many ways, some which may not be obvious

Biblical guidance on grief

The Bible provides divine guidance on how to navigate grief, including:

- Recognizing that God is good and that what he has given is good
- Moving beyond circumstances and dwelling upon God and His ways
- Trusting in the Lord forever
- Repenting of sin and seeking God's power to walk away from it
- Realizing that we, as children of God, stand justified before God

- Empathy: Our call to rescue

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. It's associated with love and compassion.

Biblical examples of empathy

- **1 Peter 3:8:** "Have compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous"
- **Romans 12:15:** "Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn"
- **Galatians 6:2:** "Bear one another's burdens"
- **Matthew 9:36:**
"36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."
- Jesus felt compassion for people who were distressed and dispirited

Biblical empathy in action. Overwhelming compassion

The Bible encourages people to act on their empathy by:

- Seeking to understand others' experiences and perspectives
- It isn't tolerance of the sin, but loving the sinner
- Caring for others' well-being
- Sharing in others' joys and sorrows
- Acting to alleviate suffering or meet needs

Empathy is related to sympathy but is generally considered **more personal and involves relating** to a variety of emotional states.

The Bible verse where "Jesus wept" is **John 11:35**, which is the shortest verse in the Bible.

What does the verse mean?

- Jesus wept after speaking with Martha and Mary, the grieving sisters of Lazarus.
- Jesus wept even though he knew he would raise Lazarus from the dead.
- Jesus wept to empathize with the pain of Mary and Martha.
- Jesus wept because he understands what it means to be in pain and need to push past it.
- Jesus wept to show that he is present in our pain.

What happens after Jesus weeps?

- Jesus goes to the grave of Lazarus.
- Jesus says, "Take away the stone".
- Jesus cries out, "Lazarus, come forth".
- Lazarus comes out bound in graveclothes.
- Many of the Jews who saw what Jesus did believed in him.

Jesus's tears are a reminder that he is with us in our pain.

Jesus wept over Jerusalem because he knew the city would be destroyed and the people would face judgment. This event is described in Luke 19:41-44.

Luke 19:41-44

English Standard Version

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

41 And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, 42 saying, "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side 44 and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

Why Jesus wept

- Jesus knew that the people would reject him and fail to recognize him as the embodiment of God.
- Jesus knew that the people would reject God's visit by rejecting Jesus.
- Jesus knew that the people would face a future judgment, including starvation and slaughter.

What Jesus said:

Jesus said, "If you had known, even you, at least in this your day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes".

What this means

Jesus's weeping over Jerusalem demonstrates that he is still grieved when sinners reject his mercy

- **Speak life to suffering**

- It requires sacrificing self by stepping into the situation, not standing back and watching hopelessness and hell advance. **This is hypocrisy!**
- It requires faith in **Jesus** to do the work and move by His Spirit in us
- It is spiritual warfare! It is fighting back against hell on this earth
- It is to plant the seeds of hope, by truth in love.

Proverbs 18:21

English Standard Version

21 **Death and life are in the power of the tongue**, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

Matthew 23:15

English Standard Version

15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, **hypocrites!** For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much **a child of hell** as yourselves.

James 3:6

English Standard Version

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and **set on fire by hell**.

James 3:9

English Standard Version

9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.

- Religious pride, hypocrisy and apathy equals unleashing hell on earth
- We have a choice to fill someone with encouragement and hope or to degrade them, be selfish, lukewarm and allow evil to advance. Hell is something we allow to propagate and be unleashed in God's good world. Humans choose to do this.
- The mission of Jesus is to confront hell and drive it out of this world and out of us. It is to bring us into his presence with the hope of Christ.

Ephesians 4:17-32

English Standard Version

The New Life

17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, **alienated from the life of God** because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!— 21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self,[a] which belongs to your former manner of life and is

corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you **speaking the truth with his neighbor**, for we are members one of another. 26 **Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil.** 28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. 29 **Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.** 30 **And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God**, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

- **Hope: The Victory cry of the Kingdom of Heaven**

- Our hope is in the resurrection of spirit that gives us eternal life now, and later the body when Jesus returns to earth.
- Our hope is in the everlasting, eternal presence of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit now, and then.
- Help is not wishful thinking, it is the expectation through faith of what Jesus is doing, what he promises and has proven.
- Our hopes should all be within his will and align with his atonement.
- It requires knowing him and his nature.
- It is being still while knowing and then moving in accordance with his will and love.
- Hope in Christ is the key that unlocks the chains.
- Only the free can set others free.
- The results of hope are encouragement, grace, comfort and a vision of what God has intended in each of our lives. This is resting in the peace of Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

English Standard Version

The Coming of the Lord

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, **that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope.** 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord,[a] that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18 **Therefore encourage one another with these words.**

Matthew 5:4

English Standard Version

4 “Blessed are those who mourn, **for they shall be comforted.**

- Who will comfort them? The Holy Spirit through us.

John 14:15-20

King James Version

¹⁵ If ye love me, keep my commandments.

¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you **another Comforter**, that he may abide with you **forever**.

¹⁷ Even **the Spirit of truth**; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: **but ye know him**; for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you.

¹⁸ **I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.**

¹⁹ Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; **but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.**

²⁰ At that day ye shall know that I am in my father, and ye in me, **and I in you.**