

#221 “Temporary Sorrows”

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Life will have highs and lows, some of which will be more extreme for some of us than for others. But sorrow is part of living on earth, and it is something that we will all deal with many times. It is a consequence of sin, and sin leads to regret, sadness, and loss. People were never supposed to die, but, because of sin, death reigns in our mortal bodies. We will all one day die. When we lose a loved one, it hurts, especially if he or she didn't belong to Christ. When a dear one suffers and there is nothing that we can do to alleviate the pain, this brings us great sorrow. Sometimes sorrow is a light burden, and it soon passes. However, at other times, sorrow hits us like a ton of bricks, and we feel like we will never be able to get back to normal again. Grief and sorrow are intense emotions, especially when we feel helpless. Sickness, loss, and death serve to remind us that this place is not our home. Our real home, heaven, does not have sorrow. This is why it is our hope, for there Christ will wipe away every tear (Revelation 7:17, 21:4). For now, He keeps all of our tears in His bottle (Psalm 56:8), remembering all of our hurts, struggles, and pains. He cares, for He walked this earth as well.

Isaiah 53:3 says, “He was despised and forsaken of men, *A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him” (emphasis added). When we think of Jesus, this picture of sorrow is probably not the first picture that comes to mind. Perhaps we think of a white guy with long sixties hair with a white robe and blue sash surrounded by a heavenly glow. At least that is what many children's books in the western world rendered Jesus to look like. We need to get beyond our false preconceptions of what Jesus was really like. For starters, He was a Jew, probably with olive skin. He was a carpenter by trade, a hard laborer from the working class. He wasn't a pushover, but He was gentle. He was strong, but He endured the reality of the frailty of His human frame. He felt pain, He bled, He bruised, and He would die for the sins of men. Surely, though Savior, Emanuel, King, Lord, and Teacher are all essential names of God, let us not forget Man of Sorrows. Until we remember Jesus' identity with grief, we will miss the full Biblical rendering of Who Jesus really was. The fact of the matter is that, since He was intimately acquainted with grief, sorrow, and rejection, He can sympathize, empathize, and encourage us in our times of travail. In fact, He can do even more than that, taking upon Himself our burdens, our hurts, and our pain so that we can walk on. “Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried” (Isaiah 53:4). In taking our sin to the cross, sorrow and grief were also nailed to their death. Once we lay aside these earthly bodies and enter paradise, we will no longer experience sorrow. It will be a great day. **Sorrow and grief have an expiration date thanks to Jesus Christ.** In the meantime, however, as sorrows afflict us in this life, we must remember that Jesus also suffered in this life. Our Savior is also the One from Whom men hid their faces, despising Him and wanting nothing to do with Him. Our Jesus knows pain, abandonment, and sorrow. But He endured, finding solace in His relationship with His Father, meditating with Him in prayer, and remembering the task to which He was called for our sakes. Because He endured and because He lives within us, we too can endure by the perfect and

understanding grace that He has promised to provide. He is there to catch every tear because He hurts when we hurt. **We never cry in secret.**

Isaiah 55:11 is a near word-for-word repeat of Isaiah 35:10, affirming its importance. It says, "So the ransomed of the LORD will return And come with joyful shouting to Zion, And everlasting joy will be on their heads. They will obtain gladness and joy, And sorrow and sighing will flee away." There will be a day when all sorrow and sighing will flee away. There will be no more annoyances or nuisances. There will be no more heartaches or frustrations. There will be no more internal struggles with the flesh or defeats to sin and the devil. There will be no more loss and no more death. This is the only real hope and cure in this life for sorrow. We must know and remember the hope that we have which is yet to come. We will meet our loved ones in Christ again. We, who experience chronic pain, will finally be free. The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the mute will speak, the diseased will be restored, and Jesus will be praised. It will be quite the day when sorrow finally loses its power.

Until that day comes, we must be faithful not to turn on our Savior but to rather acquaint ourselves with the Man of Sorrows even more when tough times strike. There is no One better to comfort us and to restore our joy. 2 Corinthians 1:5 says, "For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ." Even in the deepest, darkest pain of grief, Jesus is there to feel it also, to sympathize, and to carry us through. He is not a distant heavenly figure who can't relate. Rather, He is well acquainted with our lives on earth so much so that He made sure to give us heaven. Remember that coming day to get through this one, and remember the Savior Who comforts us in our sorrow.