



Tears of Suffering

Heb 5:7 In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. 8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.

To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything and your heart will be wrung and possibly broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact you must give it to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements. Lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness.

But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. To love is to be vulnerable.
- C.S. Lewis

If the more we open our hearts to love, the more deeply we can feel pain, then Christ, who loved the most, felt the greatest pain of all.

While Jesus consistently opens His heart to love, we often find ourselves closing our hearts to God and others.

Hebrews 3:8 Do not harden your hearts...
Hebrews 3:15 Do not harden your hearts...
Hebrews 4:7 Do not harden your hearts...

As Christians, we must learn to keep opening our hearts to love, accepting the pain that comes with it, and sharing in the tears of suffering with Jesus.

Tears of Sympathy

Hebrews 4:15

15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to **sympathize with our weaknesses**, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

Hebrews 5:1-2

1 For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to **act on behalf of men** in relation to God, to offer gifts and **sacrifices for sins**. 2 **He can deal gently** with the ignorant and wayward, since he himself is beset with weakness.

The high priest acts on behalf of people, offers sacrifices for their sins and deals gently with them because he sympathizes with their weaknesses.

Leviticus 9

2 And he said to Aaron, “**Take for yourself a bull calf for a sin offering** and a ram for a burnt offering, both without blemish, and offer them before the LORD.

8 So Aaron drew near to the altar and killed the calf of the sin offering, **which was for himself**.

Exodus 32:24

So I said to them, 'Let any who have gold take it off.' So they gave it to me, and **I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf.**"

The high priest acts on behalf of people, offers sacrifices for their sins and deals gently with them because he sympathizes with their weaknesses.

Hebrews 5

8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. 9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, **10 being designated by God a high priest** after the order of Melchizedek.

This does not mean Jesus passed from disobedience to obedience. Nor does it mean that he developed from imperfection to perfection. The idea is that he became complete in his human experience.

-Kent Hughes

He who was and is the perfect Son of God from eternity **learned obedience by what he suffered so that he might become the perfect high priest** for his people. ... The verse expresses forcefully that **Christ's solidarity with humankind guarantees his quality as a sympathetic high priest.**

His appointment to high priesthood was not conferred simply because of his relationship to God, **and the path to that appointment was one of suffering, obedience, and endurance.**

-Sigurd Grindheim

No one will deny that there is deep mystery here, but the fact of it makes our high priest's understanding of us unquestionably more real.
-Donald Guthrie

Jesus, by his tears and suffering, is the perfect high priest who intimately understands and sympathizes with our weaknesses and deals with us gently.

Tears of Our Savior

Tears of Our Savior

Hebrews 5:9 And being made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him, 10 being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

These prayers, tears, reverence, obedience, and suffering not only qualify him as the perfect high priest but also as the perfect sacrifice.

The good news is that Jesus came to save. The good news is that Jesus came to save and **wanted** to save us, for he was sympathetic to our weaknesses and dealt with us gently.

I have entered many Buddhist temples in different Asian countries and stood respectfully before the statue of the Buddha, his legs crossed, arms folded, eyes closed, the ghost of a smile playing round his mouth, a remote look on his face, detached from the agonies of the world. But each time after a while I have had to turn away.

And in imagination I have turned instead to that lonely, twisted, tortured figure on the cross, nails through hands and feet, back lacerated, limbs wrenched, brow bleeding from thorn-pricks, mouth dry and intolerably thirsty, plunged in Godforsaken darkness. That is the God for me!

I could never myself believe in God, if it were not for the cross. The only God I believe in is the One Nietzsche ridiculed as 'God on the cross.' In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it?
-John Stott

