

Entering the House of Mourning

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 – A time to every purpose under heaven

What is mourning?

Mourning in the Bible was expressed, by weeping (*Gen. 35:8*); by loud lamentation (*Ruth 1:9*); by the disfigurement of the person, as rending the clothes (*2 Sam. 3:31*), wearing sackcloth (*Gen. 37:34*), sprinkling dust or ashes on the person (*Job 2:12*), shaving the head (*Job 1:20*), neglect of the person or the removal of ornaments (*Mt 6:16-17*), fasting (*2 Sam. 12:15-17*), and sitting in silence (*Job 2:13*). *Easton's Bible Dictionary*

The Biblical definition of mourning is an outward expression of inward sorrow.

Question: Must we mourn in order to be saved? – I believe He is more concerned with our inner sorrow over sin than how many tears may have fallen or how loud we may have cried out.

For what reasons should we mourn?

Sin and its Consequences:

1.) Death

Genesis 23:1-2 – Abraham mourned for the loss of his wife, Sarah

Luke 8:49-52 – The people mourned the death of the daughter of the ruler of the synagogue

Acts 8:2 – Stephen, the first martyr of the Christian era is mourned by godly men

2.) Our transgressions

Jonah 3:4-10 – The people of Ninevah mourned and repented toward God for their sins

James 4:8-9 – God tells us to mourn for our sins of idolatry and the lusts of our pride

3.) The transgressions of others

Daniel 9:1-8 – Daniel sought the forgiveness of God for the sins of his people

Luke 19:41-44 – Jesus wept over Jerusalem's rejection of the gospel

4.) The withdrawal of God's presence

Psalms 13:1-5 – David mourned because the Lord had removed His presence from him

Mark 15:34 - My God, my God... Jesus Himself was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief (*Isaiah 53:3*)

What are the benefits of mourning?

Avoiding the pitfalls of excess

Ecclesiastes 7:2-6 – It is better than to enter the house of mourning than the house of feasting
Consider the tragedies that occurred during times of "joy": Writing on the wall; John the Baptist's death; Death of Philistines (Samson); the man who laid store in his barn; the flood; the end; and many others.

The danger of excess is that it takes our mind off of the Lord.

God's comfort

Matthew 5:4 – "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Luke 7:38,48 – The woman who washed His feet with tears was forgiven.

Psalms 30:7-11 – David mourned because he missed the Lord's presence. The Lord returned and his mourning was replaced with rejoicing.

Psalms 126:5-6 – Those that sow in tears shall reap in joy (mourning over the lost)

2 Corinthians 4:1-7 – With mourning comes abundant consolation – enough to share with others

Biblical mourning bears the fruit of pure joy, focused on God and His goodness.