

Sow in Tears and Reap in Joy

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PM Service

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Text:

Psalm 126:1 When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. 2: Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them. 3: The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad. 4: Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south. 5: They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6: He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Introduction

The first half of this Psalm reflects on the goodness of God in bringing His people back from Babylonian captivity to their Promised Land. Because of their disobedience and idolatry, the nation of Israel has been taken out of their land by the Babylonians. **After 70 years of captivity, God graciously and powerfully intervened** and brought them back to Zion; to Jerusalem.

Psalm 126:1 When the LORD turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. 2: Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them. 3: The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad.

God's people **expressed their gratitude to God** for the great things He has done in delivering them from their enemies and restoring them to their homeland. But then, though they are back in their homeland, they realized things are not the way it was. **The Promised Land had been neglected, during their captivity.** It had not been tilled and there had been no harvest for 70 long years. Their fruitful land had become **fallow ground and had become overgrown with thorns and weeds.** And it was almost impossible for them to restart this work of cultivating the land in their own strength. **The planting would be difficult, the sowing would be strenuous.**

And so, the Psalmist prays in ...

Psalm 126:4 Turn again our captivity, O LORD, as the streams in the south.

As if he was saying, right now God, **our land is like dried up river bed.** And we need you to **open up the gates of blessings** to us again. And that's what leads to these verses of promise about seed and harvest in ...

Psalm 126:5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. 6: He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

They realize if the land is to return to its former condition where it yields good and abundant crops, they have to go forth and sow and as they do that, they must weep seeking God to bless the work of their hands.

But this morning, I want us to think about a **different kind of sowing**. A **different kind of harvesting**. It's the kind of sowing that our Lord Jesus talked about in the Parable of the Sower. It's a spiritual sowing and harvesting. **It's the sowing of the seed of God's word**. All of us are sowers and reapers. As we consider this work of sowing and harvesting, there are **three aspects of sowing** in the kingdom we want to think about, namely, the **Task** of the Sower, the **Tears** of the Sower, and the **Triumph** of the Sower.

I – The Task of the Sower

As sowers we must “go” and “sow”.

Psalm 126:6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

The word “**goeth forth**” is in the present tense and speaks of a continual activity. This is not a once in a blue moon event. This is a **consistent repetitive going and sowing**. Isn't that the task of every child of God? You and I are to be sowers. The Bible contains many pictures of witnessing and one of them is the picture of farming. **Reaching people with the Gospel is like farming**. The Bible also teaches this wonderful principle of sowing and reaping.

Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. 8: For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

You always reap what you sow. If you plant apple seeds you will reap apples! If you plant orange seeds you will reap oranges!

*You always reap **what** you sow!
You always reap **after** you sow!
You will never reap **until** you sow!
You always reap **more than** you sow!*

Gospel seeds will always reap a harvest of souls! **We have stopped harvesting souls for only one reason: we have stopped sowing!** Newton's First Law of Motion is that *objects at rest tend to stay at rest; objects that are moving tend to continue moving*.

We must sow deliberately and purposefully. **We have this tremendously powerful seed** – the Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. And **the task for all of us is to go out and sow**.

And by the way, this is **not the responsibility of just a few** in the kingdom. We are **all called** to this task. Whether we are preachers or Sunday school teachers or missionaries or evangelists; whether we are young or old, whether we are male or female, **God calls us, each one to sow**. This is **our task**. This is **our calling**.

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

How we need to ask God to forgive us for our failure in this. How we need all to recommit ourselves to the work of sowing the seed. This is the task of the sower.

II - The Tears of the Sower

Notice that this farmer goes out to sow and as he sows, he is shedding tears. **Why does he weep?** In his particular situation, he weeps because when they returned to their homeland, they find it **barren and no harvest**. There was **little food to eat**. All they had was a **few precious seeds**. He **had to make a decision**. Should he use the few grain to feed the children, or should he sow it? What if these seeds don't bear harvest? What if it fails and it's all for nothing? **The farmer wept because he cares**. He is **not indifferent** about his work. He is **not cold and without feeling**. He takes sowing so seriously because **he knows everything depends on the next crop**. He has a burden for the harvest. He has a burden for the harvest, and **he wants to see the seed multiplied so that his people might live!**

As this farmer is not indifferent about his work so we Christians should not be indifferent about our work. We must weep as we sow the Gospel seed. "*Winners of soul must first be weepers for souls.*" Oh, that God would break our hearts and humble our spirits, and that there should be tears because we care.

In the Bible, we God's people weep as they serve and sow. Think of **Jeremiah**, the weeping prophet.

Jeremiah 9:1 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!

Think of **Paul**, he wrote to the Corinthians

2 Corinthians 2:4 For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you **with many tears**; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years **I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears**.

Romans 10:1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.

Romans 9:1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, 2: That I have great **heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart**. 3: For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

Think of **Jesus Christ**, the Man of Sorrows Himself, **Luke 19** weeping over Jerusalem

Luke 19:41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and **wept over it**,

In **John 11:35**, we read Jesus wept because the people's unbelief.

We also read in [Hebrews 5:7](#), our Saviour offering up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears.

[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;

Winners of soul shed tears **out of care and concern** for the souls of men and women, boys and girls.

We read in [Psalm 119:136](#) these words, “[Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law.](#)”

The message to us is abundantly clear is it not? Doesn't that challenge us. Surely, we know little of true Christianity, if we don't feel a deep concern about the souls of unconverted people. What sort of heart for the lost do you have this morning? How deeply do we feel for those in a lost condition? How deeply moved are we when we see people ignoring and disregarding the only message that we ever bring them peace?

Are you ready to weep because sinners will not weep?

Is there someone you know for whom you should weep? If we are not deeply concerned for the unconverted there is somehow seriously wrong with us. There is something out of balance in our Christian life, in what we really believe if we are not concerned. We know little of the Spirit of Christ if we don't really care with those who are going to hell.

*Did Christ over sinners weep?
Shall our cheeks be dry?
Let floods of penitential grief
Burst forth from every eye.*

III – The Triumph of the Sower

We have the **task**, we have the **tears** of the sower, now let's look now the **triumph** of the sower. Sowing is hard work.

A farmer's work is not easy. If it's easy everyone would be a farmer. “*Anyone can farm but not everyone can be a farmer.*” The **most hardworking people** in the world are farmers. And a farmer often faces challenges. One of the challenges is that the **harvest comes slowly**. Sowing and harvesting are **long processes**. There is **no quick return or instant reward in farming**. That's why, one of the necessary characteristics of a farmer is patience.

Why do farmers sow? Farmers continue to sow seeds even though it's hard work, wearisome and involves tears and trouble **because they expect a crop**. They expect a harvest. It's the law of sowing and reaping. Yes, it's not easy. The process is long and difficult, and **the results are not**

immediate. But they have confidence that **their hard work would pay off.** They know good seeds in good soil will produce good crop.

Isn't that encouraging for us who are involve in evangelism, for all the sowing you are involved in, there will always be seeds that fall on a good soil and it will bear fruit to the glory of God. Understand that **sowing the seed of God's word is not a pointless thing.** It's not a meaningless activity. Everything you do in sowing God's word, **there's a purpose, there's a goal, there's a future harvest you are looking to.**

Yes, the task of spreading the seed is difficult but **there will be a time of rejoicing.**

[Psalm 126:6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.](#)

He who sows in tears shall reap with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him. What an encouragement this is as we think of what we do every Saturday. **There will be a harvest. God will give the increase whether here and now** in the conversion of souls or whether we only see the harvest at the end. We will see how much God has done in the sowing of the seed. God will give the increase. **How do we know? God has given His promise.**

Of course, the farmer is dependent on the Lord to send the rain in due season. And in the same way we are dependent on the Lord to give the increase, to cause the seed to grow. God promises to do that.

[1 Corinthians 3:6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7: So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8: Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.](#)

God gives the growth.

The seed is called precious. The power of the sower is the "**precious seed.**"

[Luke 8:11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.](#)

It is the seed of God. It is the seed of the Gospel - a message

[1 Corinthians 15:1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2: By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3: For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4: And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:](#)

The seed is the Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation. Before we leave this Psalm let me tell you about this story ...

When the tomb of Egyptian Pharaoh King Tutankhamen was discovered, among the many treasures in that tomb were some seeds that were over 3,000 years old. Scientists took some of

those seeds, planted them and they germinated and grew up into plants. No wonder the Word of God is compared to a seed. There is power in the blood, but there is also power in the Book!

If we will go and sow, God will give the increase. Of course, not everyone we witness to will get saved, but God will save some for His glory and there will be souls in Heaven because you took the time to share!

There is joy in soul-winning!

Proverb 11:30 The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

Luke 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

Closing Thoughts

God wants to do amazing things in and through our lives. He wants to bring a great harvest of souls. The question is, will you choose to be a part of the seed-sowing? The key to being part of the harvest God wants to bring is sowing the seed of the Gospel. Let us keep sowing. Let us stay on task. Let us stay on mission. Because we can be sure of this, there will be a harvest.

Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Here is a promise for us, the God who never lies says, in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. In due season we will reap if we do not give up. He will turn our tears into shouts of joy. He will turn our sorrow into joy!

But if you are not saved this morning you should know our tears are for you today. For you I ask for you not to work nor to sow but come to Jesus Christ. Trust Him and you will live. Trust Him and you also return home with shouts of joy!

2 Corinthians 5:20 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 21: For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Come to Christ. Come to Him acknowledging your sins and your sinfulness and your inability to save yourself. Come to Him who is ready, willing and able to save sinners to the uttermost.

AMEN!