

Sunday, May 18, 2025

Scripture Reading: Revelation 21:1-6

Tears are made of one percent water and 99 percent prayers. —Anon.

In Revelation 21:1-6, we encounter one of the most beautiful promises in Scripture: the renewal of all creation — offering hope to anyone who has experienced pain, loss or brokenness. God is not only bringing an end to suffering but replacing it with something entirely new — a world where sorrow and death are no more. Imagine!

Not only will suffering end, but the tears that so often accompany suffering will dry up as fast as a dewdrop in Death Valley. Think about the tears we shed and their purpose and function. We know that tears serve emotional, physiological and social purposes, making them essential for both mental and physical well-being. Biologically, they act as a microbial wash to keep the eyes lubricated and protect against irritants. Emotional tears, on the other hand, release stress-related chemicals which can reduce tension and improve mood.

There's more. When your body is racked by a torrent of tears, it's very definitely expressing vulnerability, and could be a way of seeking comfort. Crying also allows us to process grief, sadness and joy, thus promoting emotional healing. Spiritually, tears can symbolize repentance or spiritual renewal, marking profound moments of personal transformation.

In short, tears remind us that we're human.

Here's my question: Can you imagine a world without tears? Yes, if you can imagine a world without suffering, illness, hatred, wickedness and evil. Would not that be the most wonderful thing in the world?

In this passage, the apostle John reminds us that no matter how broken our lives may seem, God is in the business of restoration. The Creator is not finished with us yet. The reading for today is a call to persevere and to hold fast to faith, knowing that God's promise of renewal is certain.

Perhaps, now, a simple tear of joy is permissible!

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Lord, thank you for the promise that you are making all things new. Help us to live with hope, even in the midst of brokenness, knowing that you are working out your perfect plan. Give us faith to trust in your promises and to embrace the joy of your presence. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings**Sunday:** Luke 22-24**Monday:** 2 Samuel 9-12**Tuesday:** 2 Samuel 13-15**Wednesday:** 2 Samuel 16-18**Thursday:** 2 Samuel 19-21**Friday:** 2 Samuel 22-24**Saturday:** Psalms 49-51*Verse to Remember**The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.*

—Psalm 51:17

The Peril of Plurals

Tobias Schmidt is an international student from Hamburg, Germany. He is having trouble learning the plural forms of nouns in English. Can you help him? This study sheet is from his "English as a Second Language" class. What are the plural forms of the following nouns?

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|---------------------|----------------------|
| 1. beau _____ | 11. crisis _____ |
| 2. hypothesis _____ | 12. leaf _____ |
| 3. alumnus _____ | 13. potato _____ |
| 4. scarf _____ | 14. fish _____ |
| 5. sheep _____ | 15. attorney _____ |
| 6. salmon _____ | 16. philosophy _____ |
| 7. son-in-law _____ | 17. church _____ |
| 8. mouse _____ | 18. wife _____ |
| 9. ax _____ | 19. deer _____ |
| 10. goose _____ | 20. moose _____ |

ANSWERS:

1. beaux or beaus
2. hypotheses
3. alumni
4. scarves or scarfs
5. sheep
6. salmon/s
7. sons-in-law
8. mice
9. axes
10. geese
11. crises
12. leaves
13. potatoes
14. fish
- (species=fishes)
15. attorneys
16. philosophies
17. churches
18. wives
19. deer
20. moose

