



Bottle of Tears

By Lucy Wall

This poem is inspired by Psalm 56:8 which reads:

*"You number my wanderings;
Put my tears into Your bottle;
Are they not in Your book?"*

This verse popped into my mind one day and for some reason the image really took root in my imagination. I started to think about what a bottle of tears would look like and not just any tears, tears from an entire life! I started to think things like "How big does the bottle need to be? Will it be the same size for everyone or according to how many tears they cried in life? I wonder if we'll remember what we were crying about and whether it was worth shedding tears over?"

This led me on to think about the countless different reasons why we might find ourselves crying because to live is to go through a variety of experiences and a whole host of emotions.

I think sometimes when we find ourselves crying, it can feel like even if we tried to explain our tears to someone, we'd never really be able to put the complexity of our emotions into words and truly get that person to understand whatever it is we're feeling. We'd never be able to get them to see and really feel the situation from our point of view.

This is a reason why I value Jesus so much because I don't even need to try and find words to express myself to Him, He already knows everything that's in my heart and mind and knows completely what I'm going through. With Jesus, I'm never alone in my emotions and I also know that He never allows me to feel pain that He hasn't already experienced Himself. Therefore the compassion Jesus can show is truly incredible.

The more I considered the verse from Psalm 56, the more I realised it speaks of a very personal, loving God. Nobody has immunity from heartache in life but the knowledge that God numbers our wanderings, puts our tears into His bottle and writes them in His book is incredibly comforting to me. It tells me that He never takes His eyes away from me and is interested in every moment of my life. If my tears are so important that each one is recorded and stored, how deeply He must treasure me in His heart.

I imagine when it comes to that day when Jesus hands me the bottle containing the tears I cried in life, only He and I will really know and fully understand the contents. Each tear will represent one of the many life stories or situations that formed and shaped my character. They'll speak of the life that we journeyed together.

To live and know emotion is a gift from God above.
We're brought into existence to discover Jesus' love.
We're beings of complexity and no two are the same.
But life will bring a mixture of sheer joy and darkest pain.

A vast array of feelings to explore throughout the years,
So what may be the circumstance that makes us shed our tears?
It starts with our arrival with the father standing by,
Where all can hear the wailings that declare a new-born cry.



A toddler's tears of protest as the temper hits the roof!
Or tears for countless reasons that were shed within our youth.
Sorrow as we kick against the wisdom from above.
The heartache and the pain that's caused by unrequited love.

So many different reasons bring a tear drop to the eye;
Perhaps the distant memory of mother's lullaby.
Remembering the lyrics of her long forgotten song,
Or tears of sweet reunion when a friend's been gone too long.

Tears that come accompanied by raucous fits of laughter;
A joke that's shared with friends that makes you giggle for days after.
Or maybe at the cinema, a devastating scene,
As star-crossed lovers bid farewell upon the silver screen.

To look within a loved one's eyes and see how much we're worth,
Or weep from sheer exhaustion at the miracle of birth.
Tears of disappointment when we fail to reach a goal.
Or feel we're trapped, like digging in a never-ending hole.

To find we're in an argument we've been in times before,
Or tears of utter helplessness when hope is on the floor.
Tears from deep betrayal, from the broken bond of friends.
From heartache that will follow when a cherished friendship ends.

Or sitting in a hospital, hot tears may sting the eye
As yet another loved one breathes their last and says goodbye.
I think of all the highs and lows that life has brought my way,
But what might be the reasons that would stir my tears today?

Tears for Jesus' sacrifice, His murder on the tree.
Then tears of shame to realise this murder was for me.
I weep with love and gratitude for paying for my sin.
Such tears of joy I shed for my eternal life with Him.

Tears of deep despair and heavy sadness for the lost.
For those rejecting God, although He paid the highest cost.
I weep in raw frustration for the spiritually blind.
For those who will ignore the Truth that's there for all to find.



Tears for God's creation, at the violence on the news.
How Satan's lies distract, destroy, confound and they confuse.
Convincing man "There is no God! Just live life for yourself."
Then every moral absolute grows dusty on the shelf.

Tears at such destruction and the cruelty that I see.
A stolen child who won't return to grieving family.
Tears at such injustice, at the torment they are in.
Then all that's left are tears to know the child's now safe with Him.

Such grief at worldly troubles and the reason for it all.
The tears I cry the hardest are the ones for mankind's fall.
I weep at man's rebellion and rejection of the King.
For all the pain and anguish caused by wickedness and sin.

Tears of righteous anger at the fallen state I see.
And then of course I weep for all the fallen ways in me.
Tears for all the trials in this sinful flesh of mine.
For pain within my body, in my soul and in my mind.

Tears of deep regret for every hurtful word I've said,
For drifting from God's path to choose a fruitless one instead.
For turning my attention t'wards such fickle, worldly charms.
Then tears to find such grace when welcomed back with open arms.

Tears at friends' abandonment, who won't associate
With followers of Jesus, Whom they will not tolerate.
It hurts to be deserted when we look to Jesus' cross,
But if it's all for His sake then I count it all as loss.

For tears of persecution, Jesus Christ Himself foretold.
And everything that's stolen, He'll repay a hundred fold.
For there will come a time when every tear is washed away;
When life is tough the wait feels like forever 'til that day.

At times it feels like no-one else can understand our tears.
But Jesus knows completely and can comprehend our fears.
For every battle faced, for every moment that we've cried,
We know our Saviour's there with us. He's always by our side.



Whatever be the reason, we can know we're not alone.
For God remembers every tear while sitting on His Throne.
We're under the protection and the guidance of His Son.
So precious are our tears that He has bottled every one.

To know we're dearly treasured stirs a warmth within my heart.
He's there when we are torn by pain that makes the tear ducts start.
Our God is so attentive that He always can recall
Each precious moment in our lives, for He records them all.

Tears of joy or sorrow, tears of anger, grief or strife;
How big will be the bottle that contains the tears of life?
For every one will signify a different life event.
I wonder if we'll think of every drop as tears well spent?

They'll speak of times of laughter and of sadness from the past;
A lifetime in a bottle and our stories held in glass.
Such peace there is in knowing when we knock on Heaven's door,
He'll seal the bottle, wipe our eyes, we'll shed our tears no more.

Revelation 21:4

"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."