**Crying**

**Jesus wept.**

***(St. John 11:35)***

**AND THE ACADEMY AWARD FOR BEST AUDIENCE MEMBER GOES TO . . . Our seven-year-old son, Tom, was going to his first movie with his father. The film was a real tearjerker, so I warned him it was very sad. But he was undeterred. When they returned, I asked if he had cried at all. “Yes,” he admitted. “Which part?” I asked. “The part where Dad wouldn’t buy me any popcorn.” *(Helen O’Connell, in Reader’s Digest)***

**Justin Henry made his acting debut at the age of seven in the film Kramer vs. Kramer. By the end of the third week of shooting, Justin was beginning to delight in the acting process. He even relished the crying. Having watched the other actors prepare for difficult parts, he sauntered off to an empty room on the set and tried to think sad thoughts. He thought of Chipper, his golden retriever, dying. The crying scene was shot in one take. Co-star Dustin Hoffman recalled: “When it was over, I picked him up in my arms and he wouldn’t stop crying. I thought, ‘What have we done? Maybe he’s forgotten what’s pretend and what’s reality.’ I told him he was brilliant, but he was still crying his eyes out. Then I asked him how he felt. He turned to me and said, ‘Terrific.’ Somehow in that moment he had become an actor.” *(Michiko Kakutani, in New York Times)***

**Man is the only animal that cries. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 142)***

**You wash your eyes every time you blink. Your tears are antiseptic and kill germs. *(Barbara Seuling, in You Can’t Sneeze with Your Eyes Open, p. 29)***

Letting babies cry: Allowing infants to cry themselves to sleep won’t do them any harm – and it may help parents get much-needed rest. That’s the finding of Australian researchers who studied a group of 225 babies and their parents for six years. Half of the babies were “sleep-trained” by parents who either allowed them to wail for increasing lengths of time before soothing them or sat with them while they fell asleep, moving their chairs farther from the cribs each night. The other half of the babies received no sleep training. Researchers found that by age 6, the sleep-trained children were no more likely to have behavioral or emotional problems or trouble bonding with their parents than the children who weren’t sleep-trained. Meanwhile, the infants who were sleep-trained woke up less during their first two years. Consequently, their parents got more sleep and were less likely to show signs of fatigue and depression – a big benefit for parents and kids. “A well-rested parent,” Judith A. Owens, a researcher at Children’s National Medical Center tells The Wall Street Journal, “is going to be a better parent.” *(The Week magazine, September 28, 2012)*

**Babies cry in their native tongue: Newborn French infants cry in French, and German infants wail in German. Long before they learn how to talk, new research shows, infants have learned the intonations, rhythms, and general sounds of the language that their mothers speak. European scientists did computer analysis of the hungry and fussy cries of French and German babies just 2 days to 5 days old. They found that German infants wail with a notably falling melody – high-pitched to start, and then dropping – remarkably similar to the intonation of spoken German. The French cries, in contrast, started low and then pitched high, akin to spoken French. The results suggest that the babies “are producing sounds they have heard in the womb,” likely during the third trimester, cognitive scientist Debbie Mills tells BBC.com. Previous studies have shown that infants are partial to voices and languages that were spoken in the weeks prior to birth. Lacking the ability to make vowel sounds, the melodic newborns are likely trying to mimic their mothers with the only tool available, “in order to attract her and hence to foster bonding,” says study author Kathleen Wermke of the University of Wurzburg in Germany. *(The Week magazine, November 27, 2009)***

**Babies’ eyes do not produce tears until the baby is approximately six to eight weeks old. *(Kids’ Pages)***

**The birth of a man is the birth of his sorrow. The longer he lives, the more his anxiety to avoid unavoidable death. What bitterness! He lives for what is always out of reach! His thirst for survival in the future makes him incapable of living in the present. *(Chuang Tzu)***

**Women’s tears send a chemical signal that is a turnoff for men: If a crying woman’s red nose isn’t a big enough turnoff to a man, a surprising experiment found another reason: Tears of sadness may temporarily lower his testosterone level. Those tears send a chemical signal as the man gets close enough to sniff them – even though there’s no discernible odor, say researchers from Israel’s Weizmann Institute of Science. It’s the first such signal to be found in tears, and it’s probably not unique to women’s. Theirs just were the first to be studied. “It’s hard to get men to volunteer to cry,” in a lab, noted Weizmann neurobiologist Noam Sobel, senior author of the study appearing in Friday’s edition of the journal Science. Emotional tears are chemically different from the reflex tears that form when you get dust in your eye. *(The North Platte Telegraph, January 7, 2011)***

**Chewing gum while cutting onions can help prevent tearing up. *(Noel Botham, in The Amazing Book of Useless Information, p. 176)***

**Chimps grieve, too: Humans mourn the death of loved ones with an intensity that seems unique among animals. But two studies suggest that chimpanzees react to death in ways “strikingly similar” to our own responses, British psychologist James Anderson tells Science NOW. Anderson witnessed a female chimp in her 50s, named Pansy, slowly pass away at a zoo in Scotland. As Pansy faded and expired, other chimps kept a close vigil, groomed her incessantly, and were uncharacteristically subdued for a week afterward. Separately, primatologists in Guinea came across two female chimps toting long-dead infants on their backs. The remains were effectively mummified, yet the mothers kept them close and even groomed them. The findings “make a strong case that chimps not only understand the concept of death but also have ways with which they cope with it,” Anderson says. “The boundaries between us and other species are nowhere near as clearly defined as many people used to think.” *(The Week magazine, May 14, 2010)***

**It is foolish to tear one's hair in grief, as though sorrow would be made less by baldness. *(Cicero)***

**Don't cry over spilled milk. By this time tomorrow, it'll be free yogurt. *(Stephen Colbert)***

**One species of moth lives entirely on cow tears. *(Uncle John’s Unstoppable Bathroom Reader, p. 321)***

**Good week for: The farewell scene in E.T., which was voted the most tear-jerking scene in movie history in a survey of 2,000 movie fans. *(The Week magazine, March 18, 2011)***

**Do elephants shed tears? Evidently. Charles Darwin saw a group of Indian elephants, captured and bound. He wrote: “They lay motionless on the ground, with no other indication of suffering than the tears which diffused their eyes and flowed incessantly. One elephant uttered choking cries, with tears trickling down its cheeks.” *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Duke Ellington had been developing and honing the sound for ten years by the time swing became a national phenomenon, so he, more than anyone else, had a right to be discouraged when the music became identified with white stars. Yet, even in disappointment, the Duke was the most dignified of men. "I took the energy it takes to pout," he said, "and wrote some blues." *(Ted Fox, in Showtime at the Apollo)***

**Sorrow makes us all children again – destroys all differences of intellect. *(Ralph Waldo Emerson)***

**Studies show that since a person starts to feel better as soon as he starts crying, all tears are tears of joy. *(Barbara Seuling, in You Can’t Sneeze with Your Eyes Open, p. 27)***

**I always thought the saddest feeling in life is when you're dancing in a really joyful way, and then you hit your head on something. *(Lena Dunham)***

**When I went to visit a friend, she was feeding her baby. As soon as she spooned food into his mouth, he pushed it out with his tongue. She would scoop the food off his chin and again place it in his mouth. This was repeated many times, interspersed with coughs and splutters by the baby. I asked, “How can you tell when he’s had enough?” “That’s easy,” she replied. “The meal is over as soon as one of us begins to cry.” *(Mary Gillespie, in Reader’s Digest)***

**You may forget with whom you laughed, but you will never forget with whom you wept. *(Arab proverb)***

**On the death of my mother, I found a friend's thought apt and consoling: "You can't weep for people who have left more in life than they have taken out." (John J. McAleer, in Reader's Digest)**

**Crying scenes are tough. Personally, onions make me cry. So when I have to cry, I think of a dead onion. *(Tom Hanks, actor, on "The Late Show")***

**Acting is bad acting if the actor himself gets very emotional in the act of making the audience cry. The object of the exercise is to make the audience cry but not cry yourself. The emotion has to be inside the actor, not outside. If you stand up there onstage weeping and wailing, all your emotion will go down your shirt, and nothing will go out across the footlights to the audience. Audience control is really about the actor's control of his own emotions. A good actor's tears remain at the back of his eyes. *(Rex Harrison, in A Damned Serious Business: My Life in Comedy)***

**When the heavens weep, the earth shall live. *(Hawaiian proverb)***

**A woman gave birth in a taxi during a wild ride to our hospital. When I asked the still-shaken cabdriver, "How long did it take the baby to cry?" he answered, "About two blocks." *(Dr. Christine Cherry, in Medical Economics)***

**Jennifer Hudson has experienced some extreme highs and lows, said Tim Adams in The Guardian (U.K.). A former cruise ship singer, she rocketed to fame in 2004 after appearing on TV’s American Idol and won an Oscar for her role in the 2006 film Dreamgirls and a Grammy for her 2008 debut album. But while on tour that year, she received a devastating phone call from her older sister, Julia. Their mother and brother had been shot dead by Julia’s ex-husband; the body of her sister’s 7-year-old son was later found in the back of a truck. “You don’t know how strong you are until you’re placed in that moment,” says Hudson, 32. “But Mom would always tell us if you are hurting, moan, and you will feel better.” Hudson slowly came to terms with the tragedy – but her mom and brother remain a presence in her life. “There is not a day that goes by when I don’t repeat the things (they) said. When we were kids, any time my brother saw me crying he would be like, “Jenny, knock it off.’ That’s what I hear him say when I cry now.” *(The Week magazine, August 15, 2014)***

**At 3 a.m. the new mother shook her husband awake and told him to check the baby. He listened for a minute, then said, “I don't hear her crying.” “I know,” she replied. “It's your turn to see why not.” *(Rocky Mountain News)***

**Scientists are learning that infant crying may help determine whether a baby will become an abused or a cherished child. “Ideally, crying should teach the child optimism about the environment, which he learns when his cries are answered,” says Michael Lewis, professor of pediatrics at Rutgers Medical School. “An infant of eight weeks is capable of appreciating the fact that he can cause things to happen.” If a baby’s cries are not answered, the infant feels confused and powerless. On the question of spoiling babies by responding to their every cry. Susan Crockenberg, associate professor of human development at the University of California at Davis, summarizes the work of several researchers by saying, “The more responsive a mother is to her baby, the less it cries, the more securely attached it gets to be and the more readily it develops trust.” *(Dava Sobel, in New York Times)***

**There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power. They speak more eloquently than 10,000 tongues. They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love. *(Washington Irving)***

**Supporting Role: When actress Sophia Loren sobbed to Italian movie director Vittorio De Sica over the theft of her jewelry, he lectured her: "Listen to me, Sophia. I am much older than you and if there is one great truth I have learned about life, it is this -- never cry over anything that can't cry over you." *(A. E. Hitchner, in Sophia: Living and Loving)***

**As the radio plays “You better watch out, you better not cry, better not pout,” Billy asks: “Mommy, I know all about cryin’ but have I learned to POUT yet?” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**More tears have been shed over men's lack of manners than their lack of morals. *(Helen Hathaway, writer)***

**Grief is itself a medicine. *(William Cowper)***

**Those who don't know how to weep with their whole heart don't know how to laugh either. *(Golda Meir)***

**Women are more likely than men to cry over some sadness. Men are more likely than women to cry for joy. Such is another debated contention of some psychologists. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The most important question in the world is, "Why is the child crying?" *(Alice Walker, novelist, winner of the National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize)***

**No, I do not weep at the world -- I am too busy sharpening my oyster knife. *(Zora Neale Hurston)***

**Why onions make us cry: It may be annoying when onions make you cry, but it’s a small price to pay for an ancient evolutionary trait that helped our ancestors avoid toxins and poisons. The reaction is triggered by a protein called TRPA1, which is found throughout the body and prompts tears when it senses irritating chemicals, like those found in cigarettes, smoke, tear gas, and onions. Researchers at Brandeis University found the same protein in flies and animals, and have traced it through evolving species going back 500 million years, to a common ancestor of “every vertebrate and invertebrate alive today,” biologist Paul Garrity tells LiveScience.com. “Since that time, it appears that most animals, including humans, have maintained this same ancient system for detecting reactive compounds.” That the protein was so closely preserved among different species suggests that it offered an evolutionary advantage – by making creatures averse to foods or substances that could kill them. *(The Week magazine, April 9, 2010)***

**Plants that are not cared for will cry for help; a thirsty plant will make a high-pitched sound that is too high for humans to hear. *(Noel Botham, in The Best Book of Useless Information Ever, p. 63)***

**It is often hard to bear the tears that we ourselves have caused. *(The Maxims of Marcel Proust, edited and translated by Justin O’Brien)***

**Researchers at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, say they’ve learned sad people see the world more clearly than do happy people. Moodiest of us, they say, are more realistic when depressed than when manic. But they do not yet know whether depression makes us see the truth or the truth makes us depressed. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Tears are the safety valve of the heart when too much pressure is laid on. *(Albert Smith)***

**Half the pleasure of crying is missed if there’s nobody by to pity and comfort you. *(George Santayana)***

**Dolly says to Jeffy, who is crying inside the house: “You should save it for later. Mommy is outside.” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

While reading the newspaper, Willy says to Ethel: “Here’s the latest scientific medical turn-around. Now they say it may be good for you to “cry over spilt milk’.” *(Joe Martin, in Willy ‘N’ Ethel comic strip)*

**What soap is for the body, tears are for the soul. *(Jewish proverb)***

**The sorrow which has no vent in tears may make other organs weep. *(Henry Maudsley)***

**According to researchers at the Academy of Medical Sciences in the Soviet Union, shedding tears actually speeds up the healing process of wounds. Rats with skin wounds were given eye irritants to induce crying. Their wounds healed quicker and scar tissue formed up to 12 days faster. Rats that had tear glands removed actually had wounds reopen! The Soviet scientists believe healing chemicals are secreted through tear glands and are carried through the bloodstream to all parts of the body. So next time you're injured don't be afraid to cry! (Wellness News)**

**A "mourning stamp" is a commemorative postage stamp printed to mark a grievous occasion. First such, a 15-cent black stamp bearing Abraham Lincoln's likeness, was issued after his assassination. (L. M. Boyd)**

**In the beginning you weep. The starting point for many things is grief, at the place where endings seem so absolute. One would think it would be otherwise, but the pain of closing is antecedent to every new opening in our lives. *(Belden C. Lane, in The Solace of Fierce Landscapes)***

**Tears as a survival strategy: Whether in pain or in sadness, the shedding of tears is a uniquely human trait. But what’s the use in crying? Several possibilities have been floated: Tears carry stressful chemicals from the body, or help a baby signal distress to a caretaker. Oren Hasson, a biologist at Israel’s Tel Aviv University, has advanced a new theory: By blurring vision, tears naturally stymie one’s aggressive impulses and so signal vulnerability to other people. By acting as a white flag signaling helplessness, crying may elicit mercy, sympathy, or even help, and thus aid our evolutionary survival. Hasson’s explanation “offers the most plausible hypothesis about the evolved function of tears and crying,” evolutionary psychologist David Buss tells LiveScience.com. “The notion that they operate through handicapping is highly original.” (The Week magazine, September 18, 2009)**

**A teardrop can kill a million germs. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Why people burst into tears: A good cry won’t actually make you feel better. That’s the surprising conclusion of a new study that proves “crying is not nearly as beneficial as people think it is,” University of South Florida researcher Jonathan Rottenberg tells MSNBC.com. Rottenberg and his colleagues asked about 100 Dutch women to record in a daily mood journal any crying episodes and how they felt afterwards. The 1,004 outbursts of tears the women experienced -- usually due to conflict, grief, or empathy for someone else’s suffering – failed to improve the moods of 61 percent of the women, and made 9 percent feel even worse. Just 30 percent said they felt better afterward. More vigorous bawling, with “screaming and body movements,” seemed to produce the most relief. Researchers theorize that the biological purpose of crying isn’t to release sorrow, but to elicit “social support” from other people. It’s the sympathy, not the release of tears, that can make people feel better. (*The Week magazine, August 19-26, 2011)***

**Does anybody know why we shed tears when we’re emotionally upset? One debated theory: Under stress, the body produces chemical secretions, glandular kickers, to enable it to cope. Their overflow releases through the tear ducts. Shedding tears, it’s thought, relieves the body of such activators built up during stress. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Women’s tears leave men cold: The whiff of woman’s tears is enough to dampen a man’s sexual arousal, a new study has found. Scientists at Israel’s Weizmann Institute recruited women who cry easily and had them capture the tears they shed while watching sad movies like Terms of Endearment. Then pads wetted with those tears or a control saline solution were affixed under the noses of men. When they smelled the tears rather than the control liquid, the men found pictures of women less sexually attractive and their testosterone levels fell; the odor also appeared to reduce activity in parts of the brain lit up by arousing movie scenes. Tears, researchers said, apparently contain “a chemical signal,” or pheromone, that tells men to forget about sex for a while. “Basically what we’ve found is the chemo-signaling word for ‘no,’” researcher Noam Sobel tells The New York Times, “or at least ‘not now.’” Some experts on the evolution of crying said tears may function partly to reduce male aggression and sex drive when women are in distress. *(The Week magazine, January 21, 2011)***

Of all the words of mice and men, the saddest are, “It might have been.” *(Kurt Vonnegut)*

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***