

# CATCH A FALLING TEAR

They're called tear bottles or tear catchers – an ornamental vase made from colored blown glass. There is an attached glass fixture at the opening of the stem that is formed to your eye.



Legends of tear catchers go back millennia to the days of Rome when, purportedly, mourners would bury their tear bottles with the dead as symbols of respect. It's also reported that professional mourners (called wailers) would be paid to collect their tears for the dead – the louder the wails and the fuller the tear bottles, the better the pay.

In ancient Persia, when a sultan returned from battle, he checked his wives' tear catchers to see who among them had wept in his absence and missed him the most. The use of tear bottles enjoyed a resurgence during the Victorian period of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Mourners would place their tears in a bottle with porous stoppers. The complete evaporation of the tears would mark the end of the mourning period.

During the Civil War, women would catch their tears in a bottle and kept them to show their husbands how much they were missed while away on the field of battle.

Today, tear bottles are enjoying another revival in popularity. You can buy them online and in trendy gift stores to give as gifts and tokens, not just of mourning, but for shared tears of empathy over present struggles, and even for shared tears of joy.

References to tear bottles actually predate even Roman culture. King David, in his sorrow, cried out to God, saying, "You keep track of all my sorrows. You have collected all my tears in your bottle. You have recorded each one in your book" (Psalm 56:8 NLT).

What beautiful imagery! God sees each tear we cry and tracks each one. No sorrow goes unnoticed. No pain goes unmourned by our loving and compassionate Father.

And one day, just as with the lachrymatories of the Victorian era, all our tears will evaporate, wiped away by the hand of a loving Savior.

*"He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever" (Revelation 21:4 NLT).*

– Beecher Hunter