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## Weep for Yourself Luke 23:26-31

At this station of Jesus' journey to the cross he was in an awful condition. For you who have seen the passion movie, you know that Jesus had been severely whipped and tortured by soldiers. He is already at this time near death. He stumbled a number of times and they got someone else to carry the cross, because he couldn't. It was an awful sight. A sight that could make even a grown man cry. What suffering. What pain. What punishment.

Many people followed Jesus to the cross and many were crying for Jesus. Among them were women who loudly mourned and wailed. In the Middle East even today when ever there is a death or a funeral procession there is a great outward expression of grief and crying out. People feel sorry for the victim and their family. They are overwhelmed and immersed in the situation. They cannot see the bigger picture.

In this death procession, Jesus stops and says one of his final words. A word a deep significance – a word that defines his life and ministry. Do not weep for me, weep for yourselves. Weep for your children.

The gospel writers do not go into great detail about the suffering and pain of the crucifixion. They do not try to stir our emotions about blood and wounds. They do not stir up our pity. They point to the bigger picture, to the reason why Jesus died.

Do not weep for me. Weep for yourself. You see if you focus only on the details, on whipping, the wounds and the blood you miss the point. What Jesus is going through was done for us. What he experiences would happen to all those who miss out on God's grace. Weep for yourselves, weep for those who live in sin, weep for those who do not understand God grace for them. Weep for your sin, weep for the sin of your children. It only when we weep for our selves, when we sorrow over our sin that we can see Jesus and accept Jesus as our Savior. If we do not weep for ourselves, if we do not weep over the sins we commit, if we do not weep over our estrangement with God we got ourselves into we never be able to say Hallelujah what a savior.

So let us begin our reflection on the passion Jesus by weeping for ourselves and our children, and pray that God will be merciful to us.

## Father Forgive Them: Luke 23:32- 34

At this second station of Jesus' suffering, he is on the cross. This is Jesus moment of glorification. This is where it all happens, the reason Jesus came, the reason he died. This is God's defining moment. This is God's grace in its finest hour. There between two criminals they crucified Jesus. With great injustice, with immense brutality, with deep anger and jealousy, with hatred and pride, with self righteousness and self centeredness they violently nailed Jesus to the cross, and killed him. And it's at that moment, at sin's darkest hour Jesus speaks one of his final words - A word of deep significance – a word that defines his life and ministry. Jesus says these amazing words: "Father, forgive them, forgive their injustice, forgive their brutality, forgive their anger and jealousy, forgive their hatred and pride, forgive their self righteousness and self centeredness, for they do not know what they are doing. This is the most amazing prayer in the whole bible.

In James 5:16 the Bible tells us that God hears the prayer of the righteous. The prayer of the righteous man is powerful and effective. It was at that moment, that darkest hour of human sin, that God answered the prayer of the one and only righteous man on earth. And so Jesus bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors.

Jesus the Christ. Hallelujah what a Savior.

May God's

**Grace and love like mighty rivers**

**Poured incessant from above**

**Heaven's peace and perfect justice**

**Kiss a guilty world in love**

Today you will be with me in Paradise Luke 23:35-43

And not only did Jesus die to forgive us, but his death opened the door to eternal life, to paradise for all those who desire it and seek it in Jesus. Do you want to enter the kingdom of God? Do you want to experience the presence of God, God's grace and God's love. Sometimes we think we are undeserving. We are too unworthy. We focus on what we have done wrong. And when we experience the darkness of life and the pain of human sin we say to ourselves "we are getting what our deeds deserve. We are being punished justly." But the incredible good news of the passion of Jesus is that no matter how criminal we are, no matter how close we are to the end, no matter what we have done in life, no matter how much we have screwed things up. If we look to Jesus, and ask him to remember us when he comes into his kingdom. He will open his arms and say Come, my friend. Today you will be with me in paradise. Today you will experience the grace and love of God. Today you can walk in the temple of God and the curtain that used separate God from us was torn away. Today God is there for you with open arms because Jesus' punishment brought us peace and by his wounds we were healed. That's Jesus, the Christ. Hallelujah what a Savior.

Let us pray that God will remember us when he comes into his kingdom.

Father into your hands I Commit my Spirit. Luke 23:44-46

After the barrier between God and human beings was torn away, After the Holy of Holies, the most sacred place on earth, God's throne room, the place of his word and mercy seat was opened to the public, After the criminals were welcomed into paradise, after the transgressors and sinners were forgiven, Jesus mission was accomplished. Even though it was totally dark and his life was ebbing away, Jesus gave up his spirit to his Father. Father, he said in complete trust, even in the face of death, I give you my life and my trust. Jesus let go every thing he was and did, his whole spirit and soul and let himself go in total surrender to the will of God. He surrendered all. He remained obedient even unto death – death on a cross. This was Jesus, the son of God. The Lamb who takes away the sin of the world. Hallelujah what a savior.

Let join with Jesus in surrendering to him.