

Fasting: Friday

PEACE IN THE MIDST OF PAIN: FATHER FORGIVE THEM FOR THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO.

Scripture: Matthew 27:32-54

Mark 15:21-39

Luke 23: 26-49

John 19:17-37

“As the soldiers led him away, they seized Simon from Cyrene, who was on his way in from the country, and put the cross on him and made him carry it behind Jesus. 27 A large number of people followed him, including women who mourned and wailed for him. 28 Jesus turned and said to them, “Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me; weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For the time will come when you will say, ‘Blessed are the childless women, the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ 30 Then “they will say to the mountains, “Fall on us!” and to the hills, “Cover us!”” 31 For if people do these things when the tree is green, what will happen when it is dry?” 32 Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with him to be executed. 33 When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, **along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.** 34 Jesus said, “**Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.**” And they **divided up his clothes by casting lots.** 35 The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.” 36 The soldiers also came up and mocked him. They offered him wine vinegar 37 and said, “If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.” 38 There was a written notice above him, which read: this is the king of the Jews. 39 One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him: “**Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!**” 40 But the other criminal **rebuked him. “Don’t you fear God,” he said, “since you are under the same sentence? 41 We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.**” 42 Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” 43 Jesus answered him, “**Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.**” (Luke)

It was now about noon, and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon, 45 for the sun stopped shining. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. (Luke)

About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “**Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?**” (which means “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”).47 When some of those standing there heard this, they said, “He’s calling Elijah.” (Matthew)

knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” 29 A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. 30 When he had received the drink, Jesus called out with a loud voice, “**Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.**” “**It is finished.**” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. (John/Luke)

Now it was the day of Preparation, and the next day was to be a special Sabbath. Because the Jewish leaders did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. 32 The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other. 33 But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water. 35 The man who saw it has given testimony, and his testimony is true. He knows that he tells the truth, and he testifies so that you also may believe. 36 These things happened so that the scripture would be fulfilled: "Not one of his bones will be broken," 37 and, as another scripture says, "They will look on the one they have pierced."

I stand in awe of the beauty and boldness of Jesus. He has been mistreated and abused mocked and betrayed by those He spent hours with teaching and loving. As he is walking toward His death, he barely has enough strength to walk. His face is so mangled by the beating that he is almost unrecognizable. Yet, He still stops and teaches the people one last thing. "Do not weep for me, weep for yourselves and for your children."

Then after the nails have been driven in and the cross erected. The King of Glory, The King of Kings is hung between two thieves. Instead of crying out insults or proclaiming His innocents He prays for His accusers and asks for their pardon instead of His. We have a hard time forgiving our spouse for taking the last of the coffee every morning. We hold grudges for things that don't even matter or took place years ago. If Jesus being nailed to a cross, His body completely exhausted of all strength has the peace of mind to forgive in that moment. Then we need to re-examine how we forgive and maybe start to let things go.

Lets now focus on the testimony of Jesus. Two criminals are sentenced with Jesus. One mocks and the other rebukes. Seeing Jesus hanging beside him one criminal selfishly and mockingly tells Jesus to save Himself and him. The other in his dying moments chooses to defend Jesus and asks where is the reverence for God? Its almost as if this criminal is apologizing for the other. I don't know if this criminal knew Jesus before but maybe seeing how Jesus conducted himself through the trial and the crucifixion made this man recognize the true face of God. What happens when you see or hear someone mocking our Lord? Do you pass it off or confront it? Are you worried to cause a scene if you say something? Isn't our God worth it? What if, that scene, the standing up for your faith, is what someone needed to see to start a relationship with Christ? Remember your life style is your testimony.

Then as the hour drew near for His death and He yells out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Lets set this straight for the record. This is not God turning His back on His son. He wouldn't do that to us, so why would He do that to His son. Our Father loves, period! In the Jewish religion, especially then, their books didn't come with fancy numbers and paragraphs. They memorized the scripture so well that all they had to do was recite a verse/sentence and everyone would know what you were talking about. So when He yells out "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me ?" He's reciting a passage! Take a moment right now and read Psalms 22. Jesus was declaring the final prophecy is fulfilled! Psalms 22 was being fulfilled right in front of them! Including verse 15 which is why he asks for a drink.

Last He cries out "Daddy I'm coming Home! I did what you asked of me!" The same way Jesus dies is

the same way we are asked to accept Him. So many of us want fire insurance and not a relationship. When you accepted Christ as your personal Lord and savior did you say, "Father into your hands I commit my spirit?" Meaning, from that moment forward it was no longer you, but we.. When you give someone your spirit, you are giving them all that you are. Not a portion or a part, but all. When you do that your old life is finished. Its dead. It shouldn't come back. So as we enter into this Good Friday don't just reflect on what Jesus did for you, reflect on you do for Jesus. Do you have a relationship or are you holding back, because if He can give His all for you, maybe we should start giving our all for Him.

DAILY PRAYER:

Jesus, we praise you. Your is the name above all other names. You love us and invite us into relationship with you, forgiving us of every sin, with your grace and mercy you are leading us in your love. Help me to follow your examples of living a life laid down for others. I offer to you my will, my way, my desires, my plans, and my dreams and I ask that you would give me that which is better: YOUR plans, your ways, your desires for my life. Help me to give up any thing that keeps me from you. Grow in me such a distaste for sin and unrighteous living, that I may desire only to be in your presence and experience your goodness. Amen.