

Luke 23:26-49

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Date: 29 March 2015

Preacher: David Helm

[0 : 00] Our scripture reading for today comes from Luke chapter 23 verses 26 through 49. That can be found on page 884 in the Provided Bibles.

Again, that is Luke chapter 23 verses 26 through 49. That can be found on page 884 of the Provided Bibles.

Please stand for the reading of God's word. As they led him away, they seized one, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country and laid on him the cross to carry it behind Jesus.

And there followed him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for him. But turning to them, Jesus said, Two others who were criminals were led away to be put to death with him.

And when they came to the place that is called the skull, there they crucified him and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. And Jesus said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

[1 : 41] And they cast lots to divide his garments. And the people stood by, watching. But the rulers scoffed at him, saying, He saved others. Let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his chosen one.

The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine and saying, If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself. There is also an inscription over him, This is the king of the Jews.

One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us. But the other rebuked him, saying, Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?

And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds. But this man has done nothing wrong. And he said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.

And he said to him, Truly, I say to you, Today you will be with me in paradise. It was now about the sixth hour, And there was a darkness coming over the whole land until the ninth hour, While the sun's light failed.

[2 : 50] And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.

And having said this, he breathed his last. Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, He praised God, saying, Certainly, this man was innocent. And all the crowds that had assembled for the spectacle, When they saw what had taken place, Were turned home, beating their breasts.

And all his acquaintances, And the women who had followed him from Galilee, Stood at a distance, watching these things. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

You may be seated. Well, good morning, and welcome to you. We're so glad that you've come, And to arrive here on Palm Sunday together.

Just a couple of words before I expound the text That was just read in the coming days.
Just by way of reminder, If you came in late, Highly encourage you to attend our Good
Friday Holy Communion service here.

[4 : 04] Seven o'clock, I'll be preaching on the burial of Christ Right here in the following text in
Luke's 23rd chapter. And then on Easter morning, Breakfast together, Catered by my
favorite Hyde Park institution, Valois on 53rd.

And then our splendid Easter service at 10 o'clock, Not the normally scheduled time of
1030. And then just to let you know, Each spring, normally we have a guest preacher.

And this spring will be no exception. We usually have someone speak who labors with me
In the Simeon Trust work Of proclaiming a way to help pastors in preaching.

And I'll be doing a workshop in Atlanta this spring With K. Edward Copeland. He's the
senior pastor of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Rockford.

And he will be preaching here On April the 12th, the week after Easter. And I'll actually be
on holiday With our family spring break vacation.

[5 : 14] So make sure you welcome him warmly. I look forward to that time. He's one of my dear
friends. And he and I serve together on a national council.

And I look forward to introducing him to you. So there's the next few weeks. And then
when he leaves, We're going to pick up the book of Exodus On April 19th.

Well, Luke and his contribution To what we know of Christ's crucifixion. Three eyewitness
accounts That are unique to his gospel And not picked up on By Mark Or Matthew Or
John Three Vignettes That Luke would have us know Concerning the crucifixion of Christ
First are these words To the women In that opening section The second thing that he
would have us know On this Good Friday event The death of Christ Is the conversation
Between criminals And then finally Unknown

In the other accounts A Quietly placed word On the condition Of the crowds Words to the
women A conversation With the criminals And the condition Of the crowds At a literary
level He has embedded This three-fold division Into his text With great artistry Do you see
how the text begins In verse 26 And as they led him away And within that context Of being
on the way Luke will bring forth Jesus' words To the women But then At verse 32 There's
a shift We're introduced to the criminals And then this line And when they came to the
place And so at a literary level On the way Something for us

Of his words To the women But at the place The unique contribution A conversation With
the criminals And then Just at a literary level As if he is bringing you And walking you And
standing you He allows you to return In verse 48 48 The crowds That had assembled For
this spectacle When they saw What had taken place Returned home The condition Of the
crowds Returning home What a beautiful Way of arranging The text And so we look At it
together What do we learn From Luke On the way Interestingly In the days Of Roman rule
Crucifixion Was not only A public event But inevitably It became A public spectacle I mean
Luke actually Records it

[8 : 42] In that very Language If you take a look At verse 48 He mentions The crowds That had
assembled For this Spectacle A spectacle Is a sight To behold Now there were Many
ways That one could Have become Subject To capital Punishment But crucifixion By
design Was intended To meet Out more Than a Death Sentence It was Really Also there
To be a Social Deterrent And so When we read The text And actually See of the Blows
That came To Jesus It would Not have Been unique To him If he Were to Die in this Way
Or when we Read of the Mockery Of the Chief Priests And those

Attending The event It would Not have Been unique To him For The Roman World Had ensured That Crucifixion Was a Slow Death Meant With social Deterrent Implements In place So that All who Would see It Who would Gravitate Toward it Who would Watch it Would know The force Of law And be Deterred From doing Anything That might Warrant it Upon themselves And so It's no Surprise then When the Text opens Given the Nature of A public Spectacle That They're Followed With him In verse 27 A great Multitude Of people It's no Surprise That we Have a Host Of women Already Like a An official Delegation

Of mourning And loud Weeping And lamentation No surprise That even One like Simon of Cyrene Right there In the Opening Would have Been caught Up In the Events Taking Place Along the Way All of That is Recorded In each Of the Gospel Accounts But Luke Would put Our Eyes Elsewhere These Words To the Women Along the Way And so We pick That up By way Of emphasis They had Mourning And lamenting For him Verse 28 But turning To them Jesus said Daughters Of Jerusalem Do not Weep For me But weep For yourselves!

And for your Children! Notice the Change in Language He wants The object Of their Mourning To shift The verse You can see It there From him They were Weeping For him And he Would change That Where they Would be Weeping For Themselves And for Their Children Now that Is quite A surprise These Words To the Women It's the Surprise Of all Surprises Isn't he The one Under Wrath The wrath Of Rome Isn't he The one That stands On the Verge Of death Certainly He is Isn't he The one That will Soon Have his Own breath Extinguished What are We to Make of This Why would Jesus At this Moment Desire Those who Were there To consider

Their own State And the State of Their Children As something More worthy Of lamentation Than his Own crucifixion It seems To me He answers It In verses 29 Through 31 With these Two Clauses That begin With the Word For This is Why he Brings it Up Verse 29 For behold The days Are coming When they Will say Blessed are The barren And the Wombs that Never bore!

[13:12] And the Breasts That never Nourced! Then they Will begin To say To the Mountains Fall On us And to The hills Cover Us! In other words He indicates That there Is a Coming Day When People Will Consider It Better To Have Never Been Born Than To endure What was Coming Upon Them And Later Even Upon Their Children In other words He wants To help Them Grasp Their Own Future As Something Worthy Of Lamentation Even Beyond Mourning His Own Death In Doing So He Turns To Israel's Past I doubt We would Have Picked It Up In The English Text But It Might Have Had More Resonance With Them These Words In Verse 30 Where He Indicates They Will Say

To The Mountains Fall On Us And To The Hills Cover Us He Appeals With That Quote To The Ministry Of The Ancient Prophet Hosea In Hosea's Day Probably Prophesying Some 800 Years Even Before Jesus Own Ministry He Began To Speak Against The Two Fold Division Of Israel The Northern Tribes And The Southern Tribes And He Began To Proclaim That God's Judgment Was Coming Upon The Northern Tribes And Indeed Soon That Did Take Place And They Were Carried Off Under The Assyrian Invasion By Fish Hooks Within The Nose And The People Themselves Falling But In Chapter 10 And Verse 6 Of Hosea's Prophetic Ministry He Speaks Of That Judgment

In These Terms That The People At The Time Of The Judgment Of God Would Be Indicating May The Mountains Fall Upon Us Rather Than That Which Is Coming To Us May The Hills Cover Us Rather Than This Wrath That Is Falling Upon Us And In A sense Jesus Is Jesus Is Picking Up On That History Lesson In Regard To His Present Condition To Indicate The Lamentation That Will Be Worthy Of Israel Even In Their Very Near Future!

In Hosea Chapter 10 Israel Is Referred To As A Luxurious Vine! And Three Times In The Chapter The Metaphor Used To Depict The Judgment That Is Coming Is Agricultural In Nature In Other Words It Begins To Speak Of Thistles And Weeds And Fallow Ground As Opposed To That Which Is Bearing Fruit That The Judgment Of God Would Take All Things Living And Make Them Dead I Think That The Closest Approximation To What Jesus Is Referring To Probably Comes Back In Reference To Luke Chapter 19 Verses 41 Through 44 When He Spoke Of Jerusalem's Fall Which Now You And I Know To Have Taken Place In About 70 A.D.

See When Jesus Drew Near To The City In Luke 19 He Wept Over It Whereas Now We See The Women Weeping Over Him And He Wept Over It Saying Would That You Even You Had Known On This Day The Things That Make For Peace But Now They Are Hidden From Your Eyes For The Days Will Come Upon You When Your Enemies Will Set Up A Barricade Around You And Surround You And Hem You In On Every Side And Tear You Down To The Ground You And Your Children!

[17:13] Within You And They Will Not! Leave So Jesus Is On The Way And The Women Are Weeping For His Impending Death And He Says To Them Oh That You Would Lament Not For Me But For Yourselves And For Your Children For The Wrath Of God Is Falling Upon The Luxuriant Vine And It Will Soon Be Ready For The Fire It Makes Me Think Of Even The Second Four Then In Verse Thirty One For If They Do These Things When The Wood Is Green What Will Happen When It Is Dry I Think A Metaphorical Reference

To Himself If They Do These Things When Life Is In Their Midst What Will Happen To You When Life Has Been Taken Away And All Things Will Be Ready For Wrath So Jesus In His Present Sufferings Is Calling Upon The Women To Consider Their Own Future Day Where They Will Stand Before God Where They Would Rather The Mountains Fall Upon Them Than Meet With God's Wrath Indeed As He Has Turned To Past John's Apocalypse Takes These Same Words And Moves Them To The Ministry Of The Church To The End Take A Look At Revelation And In Chapter 6 Where We See Similar!

Language This Language Of The Mountains Falling And The Hills Covering Chapter 6 In Verse 12 When He Opened The Sixth Seal I Looked And Behold There Was A Great Earthquake And The Sun Became Black As Sackcloth The Full Moon Became Like Blood And The Stars Of The Sky Fell To The Earth As The Fig Tree Sheds Its Winter Fruit When Shaken By A Gale The Sky Life Vanished Like A Scroll That Is Being Rolled Up And Every Mountain And Island Was Removed From Its Place Here We Are Then The Kings Of The Earth And The Great Ones And The Generals And The Rich And The Powerful And Everyone Slave And Free Hid Themselves In The Caves Among The Rocks And The Mountains Calling To The Mountains And Rocks Fall On Us And Hide Us From The Wrath Of The Lamb For The

Great Day Of The Wrath Has Come And Who Can Stand What's The Takeaway For You And For Me That A Day Is Coming More Worthy Of Your Lamentation Than The Death Of Our Lord Jesus Christ And It's Not Merely The Day Of Our Death Indicated By Our Sadness Over Our Own Mortality It's A Day Of Wrath In Which We All Stand Before God And Give An Account And On That Day Be Laid Bare Naked Exposed Before The Eternal God Which Is A Far More Devastating Place To Be Than The Naked Exposed Body Of Christ Before The Eyes Of The World At

Calvary This Is Instructive I Mean This Is Holy Week What Do We Do In Holy Week We're Used To Fixing Our Eyes And Mourning The Death Of Christ But Remember This This Is The Surprise Of Luke And His Contribution To The Crucifixion Just As This Week You Give Yourself To The True And Good Consideration Of What Jesus Has Done On Friday He Would Have You Begin To Mourn For Yourselves And For Your Children That The Life That The Shift Would Take Place In Our Hearts That While We Are On The Way We Would Consider Our Final Standing

[22 : 05] Before God Will You Do That This Week Will There Be A Heart Lament Over Our Soul's True Condition Without Christ Interestingly The text Moves On The Way To At The Place And There We See One Man Who Did This Very Thing This Certainly Is The Reason For The Conversation That Jesus Has With The Criminals They're Introduced First Two Others!

Who Were Criminals Were Led Away To Be At Death With Him But Then Subtly He Moves To The Spectacle Of It All And To The Language That All The Other Gospel Accounts Give Concerning The Mockery And The Come Up Manship And The Inscription Even That Says Hail Here Was The One Who Was The King Of The Jews But Then Luke Wants To Make His Contribution!

Are You Not The Christ Save Yourself And Us I Mean This Is Mockery Indeed A Rejection Of Him And Almost A Taunt Of Him Get Yourself Out Of The Situation And Us As Well Yet All The While Here's The Other One And This Is Luke's Emphasis The Other Rebuked Him Saying Do You Not Fear God Since You Are Under The Same Sentence Of Condemnation And We Indeed Justly For We Are Receiving The Due Reward Of Our Deeds But This Man Has Done Nothing Wrong And He Said To Him Jesus Remember Me When You Come Into Your Kingdom Three Things Concerning The One Who Lamented His Own Condition!

This Man Is Now Hours From Death Himself What A Fortunate Place He Found Himself To Be In Next To The Only One Who Could Help Him Into The Next World But Notice What He Does And This Is What All Must Do Who Begin To Lament Their Own Condition First He Rebuked His Friend That's The First Step For Many He Broke With His Friend I Mean These Are Two Criminals That Were Breaking Bad Through Life And This Is Actually The Thing That Keeps Many From Following Christ An Unwillingness Even At The End Of The Day To Break With Friends But How Foolish It Is To

Go Through Life Unwilling To Break From Relationships That Keep You From Christ How Foolish It Is Here Even On The Cross This One Begins To Understand What Must Be Done He Rebuked His Friend Secondly He Confessed His Sins Notice He Fears God And He Indicates That The Sentence Of Death Which Has Come Upon Him Was Just In Other Words He Acknowledges His True Condition Before God I Am Receiving The Just Penalty Of My Sin Namely The Giving Of My Own Life Now Just As Few Today Would Want To Break With Their Friends Even Fewer Today Will Break With The Conventional Wisdom That You Need Saving That

[26 : 13] You Need Confessing That There Is Some Just Condemnation Yet This Is The Only Way Home And We Begin To Learn It From The Thief That On The Cross Conventional Wisdom Says Conventional Wisdom Says There's No Accounting To Be Given But This Man Understood His True State Conventional Wisdom In Chicago Says Well I'm Not All That Bad And If You Measure Me Up To Everyone Else Well When I Stand Before Him I Think I Got A Good Shot Very Few People Take Full Responsibility And Ownership For The Life That Is Taken From Them Because Of The Sin That Was Carried On In Them He

Broke With His Friend He Broke With Conventional Wisdom And Then He Offered A Simple Prayer He Asked Jesus To Save Him Jesus Verse 42 Remember Me When You Come Into Your Kingdom The Word Remember There Is In A Sense Just Simply Be Mindful Of Me You Know How It Is We Can Be Out Of Sight Out Of Mind And He Says When You Come Into Your Kingdom Remember Me Be Mindful Of Me In Other!

Words I Am Receiving My Just Do But When You Receive Yours Remember Me It's A Prayer And Jesus Says Remarkably Verse 43 Truly I Say To You Today You Will Be With Me In Paradise The First Vignette Days Are Coming When God's Wrath Will Fall Upon The World And Yet The Second One On This Very Day You Can Enter Into Paradise This Is The Unique Contribution Of Luke And If You Wonder Whether Or Not Jesus Is Actually Capable Of Doing That

Or Delivering On That Promise Luke Keeps You Attentive To What Took Place On That Place Verse 44 It Was About The Sixth Hour And There Was Darkness Over The Whole Land Until The Ninth Hour!

While The Sun's Light Failed The Curtin Of The Temple Was Torn In Two And Jesus Called Out Father Into Your Hands I Commit My Spirit And Having Said This He Breathed His Last Darkness Falls In My Own Understanding Of The Text This Is The Ultimate Fulfillment Of What Earlier Took Place In Israel's History With The Ninth Plague When They Were Delivered From Egypt The Ninth Plague The Plague Before The Death Of The First Born Son And The Life To Israel Through The First Born Son Where They Became God's Family That Plague Was The Plague Of Darkness And It Fell On Egypt For Three Days And Here It Falls For Three Consecutive Hours In Other Words The Ultimate Unenlightened Judgment Of God Coming Upon The Land That Happened With Jesus On Calvary Three Hours And Yet He Was In The Grave On The Third And On The Third Day

[30 : 05] Before The Sun Rose He Comes For Is Jesus Actually Capable Of Enabling Anyone To Enter Into An Afterlife Where They Can Stand Before God Under Protection Rather Than Wrath Luke Luke Want You To Know Yes Because Upon Him In That Hour Darkness Falls The Judgment Of God Falls On The Land And Really On Jesus Himself Taking The Just Condemnation For All Who Would Trust In Him Indeed This Is Why The Scriptures Tell You The Curtain Was Torn At That Very Moment You Remember That In The Temple Herod's Temple The Holy Of Holies Set By Itself Was Hidden From View By A Curtain And On The Curtain Embroidered

Were These Cherubim That Actually Reflected The Angels All The Way Back To Genesis That Kept People From Getting Back Into The Garden That They Were Responsible To Keep An Unholy People From Entering Into The Presence Of God Where They Would Be Able To Live With Him And Have Relationship With Him Well At The Death Of Jesus The Just Penalty For The Sins Of The World Has Taken Place And The The Curtain Itself On That Day Rips Tears In Other Words He's Indicating That What's Happened Here In Herod's Temple By Way Of Pattern Was Happening In Heaven By Way Of Perfection And Reality That Jesus Death Now Once For All People Opens The Gate Into A Presence With God Indeed The Centurion Servant Words The Centurion Himself His Words Are To Indicate That Jesus Death Was Not For Himself He Says Truly!

This Man Was Innocent Well If You've Been Following Luke He's Not The Only One To Have Said That Pilate Said This Guy Has Done Nothing Worthy Of Death Herod Said He's Done Nothing Worthy Of Death The Criminal Says He's Done Nothing Worthy Of Death The Centurion Says He's Done Nothing Worthy Of Death Luke Wants You To Know That This Man's Death The Ebbing Away Of His Life Which Is The Rightful Penalty For Sin Is Not On Account Of Something He Did So What Was It Then But A Substitution Made Once For All That Any Any The Worst Of The Worst A Criminal!

Who Had Been Sentenced To Capital Punishment Can Enter Into The Very Presence Of God Indeed On That Day Have It All Change And So There It Is And Then The Third Vignette And With This We Close The Crowds That It Assembled For The Spectacle Verse 48 When They Saw What Had Taken Place Return Home On The Way The Words To The Women Begin To Mourn Your True State Before God At The Place The Words Of The Criminal Indicating What It Takes To Come Into A Relationship And Now Returning Home They Go What Not Mentioned In Any Of The Other Accounts They Went Home Beating Their Breasts Well What What Are We To Make Of This Yom

Kippur In The Jewish Calendar! This Year Takes Place Somewhere In September It's The Day Of Atonement It's The One Day When The High Priest Would Enter In And Make Sacrifice For Sins Let me Tell you What Happens On That Day This According To Chancellor's Commentary On The Day Of Atonement This Is What The Those Who Hold Today To The Jewish Faith Will Do Quote As We Recite The Litany Of Our Iniquities We Gently Beat Our Breasts The Heart Within Has Led Us Astray The Choices We Have Made Were Our Own To Confess Is To Acknowledge That We Lay The Blame For Our Frailties On No One But Ourselves And Then Listen To These Words We Possess The Power To Do Better In The Coming Year We

[34 : 47] Are Willing To Lay The Burden Of Our Iniquities On Ourselves But We Understand Our To Possess The Power To Do Better In The Coming!

My Own Personal Perspective Those Are Tragic Lines To Think That We Can Lay The Blame On Ourselves And Yet Turn To Ourselves For The Power To Progress Far Better The Words Of The Criminal Be Mindful Of Me Or The Words Of The Tax Collector In The Earlier Chapters Who Found Himself In The Temple With The Pharisee And With The Same Language The Beating Of His Breast Said Simply This Be Merciful To Me A Sinner Have You Done That Charles Simeon Lived In The Cross Over Between The Eighteenth And Nineteenth Century In Cambridge England And As A University Student

First Year Became A Christian And He Did It On The Week Of Easter And He Later Recorded That Event And This Is What He Writes But In Easter Week As I Was Reading Bishop Wilson On The Lord's Supper I Met With An Expression To This Effect That The Jews Knew What They Did When They Transfer Their Sin To The Head Of Their Offering The Thought Rushed Into My Mind What May I Transfer All My Guilt To Another Has God Provided An Offering For Me That I May Lay My Sins On His Head Then God Willing I Will Not Bear Them On My Soul One Moment Longer Accordingly writes Simeon I Sought To Lay My Sins On The Sacred Head Of Jesus

And On The Wednesday Began To Have A Hope Of Mercy On The Thursday That Hope Increased On The Friday And Saturday It Became More Strong And On The Sunday Morning Easter Day He Writes April 4th He Writes I Awoke With Those Words On My Heart And Lips Jesus Christ Is Risen Today Hallelujah He Wrote Hallelujah Oh May That Be So For Us This Week As We Come To Holy Week And You Consider The Road Christ Walked He Would Say To You Reflect Upon Your Own Condition Cast

Yourself Upon My Care That You Might Have That Internal Change Of Heart Rather Than That External Commitment To Going Forward On Your Own Our Heavenly Father Bring Faith To Many Through The Preaching Of This Word In Jesus Name Amen I'm Going To Encourage You To Take Your Bulletin We Are Going To Sing About The Power Of The Cross And I'm Going To Ask You To Stand As We Do It Let's Stand Together

[39 : 31] To To The Power Of The Cross Christ Became Sin For Us Took The Blame For The Wrath We Stand For Given At The God Would You See The Pain Written On This Face Where In The Awesome Wave Of Sin Every Little Love Every Evil Fear Down

In Your Lusting Thou Is The Power Of The Cross Christ Became Sin For To The Blame For The Love!

Love The Love that day by dreams, round and roundly meet.

Praise God's remastered, proudest of God. Good morning to the devil is to lie.

Peace and victory fight is the power of God.

