

Jesus wept

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[0 : 00] Two moments of verses 41 and 42. Luke 19 verses 41 and 42. And so here it's talking about Jesus, it says, as he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, if you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace, but now it is hidden from your eyes.

And as it says in the authorised verses, and when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, as thou art known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes.

There can be no more touching sight in the whole of Scripture, in the whole of literature, for that matter, than the Lord Jesus Christ, weeping tears over this city of Jerusalem.

He was the King of Kings, the Son of God, God himself, weeping tears of anger and pain over a city that was to reject him.

Now we may preach God as being invisible, being all-powerful, being all-seeing, being omnichristent, being so powerful that he holds the world in the whole of its hands, that he's unchangeable, from generation to generation, from generation to generation, and that he is eternal, that is, from everlasting to everlasting.

[1 : 42] And these are all true. And men, women and children may understand and marvel and wonder, and yet remain unmoved about the things that concern their own immortal soul.

They can accept it in a sort of superficial way, and still remain unmoved about the things that really concern their own immortal soul.

But surely this picture of a weeping Savior will touch the heart of God, and will bring home to each one of us, from the youngest to the oldest, that here was, and here is, a Savior who cares about people.

This story surely gives us the confidence, that no matter who we are, no matter what condition we're in, or the circumstance that we live in, that here is a Savior that we can run to, and with full confidence, to dare hand in his.

Today we have a tremendous knowledge of biblical background, and all the things concerning the philosophies, and the theology, concerning the relationship between God and man.

[3 : 05] Sometimes, all that education leads to obscuring the Lord to us. may lead to confusion.

But we pray that our study this morning, that the Holy Spirit will engrave on our mind, and on our heart, this picture that we have here, a weeping Savior.

A Savior who weeps over a doomed city. And that we all will come, with our frail, dying life, and then test him with them.

We pray that our thoughts, and the channels that we go on, will be to the eternal welfare of our own souls, and to the glory of God.

Remember we are doing business with God. Not just coming to church, whatever motive brought us here, it is not a life thing. We are here to do business with God.

[4 : 13] And what about? That is the most precious thing you can ever have. Your immortal soul. The soul that is never done. Soul that will last forever more.

Depending on the way that you do business with God, that will decide the abode, the dwelling place, of your immortal soul. Christ here we find was heading towards Jerusalem.

He was heading towards Jerusalem for the last time, because he knew that he was going to be crucified. He had a time table to keep, a time table that had been set from the beginning of time, and he had to keep to the exact minute.

He knew he was going to Jerusalem for the last time, he knew that he was going to be crucified.

And although the disciples tried to dissuade him, tried to persuade him not to go, he, we read, set

his pace to go to Jerusalem.

Because he knew he had what to do, and the disciples didn't really understand. They were concerned about his own personal safety. But he knew that he had to go there, and he had an appointment to keep on the cross at Calvary.

[5 : 22] On his way through Jericho, and through those places on the way to Jerusalem, he taught very many precious lessons, and he performed miracle cures. But he didn't really stay anywhere very long.

He stopped sort of very briefly in different places. He stopped at Jericho, you remember, to heal the blind beggar, and he went on straight away. And he met Sakhay there as well.

And then between Jericho and the Eastern Slope of Olivet, he was teaching the disciples lessons about the Kingdom of God. And telling him about the parable, remember, of the nobleman and the town.

And how the faithless, and those that didn't pay any attention to the God's work, would be punished. And those who did God's work, and who did things faithfully, would be rewarded.

And when we come to the rest of the children, when he had spoken, he went before ascending up to Jerusalem. And when he had come near, he beheld the city and wept over it. Now there are two recorded weepings of Jesus, although we know that there are others.

[6 : 30] We read in the Epistle to the Hebrews that there were other times when Jesus prayed and cried to God. But there are two recorded in the Gospel for us. And they were both on the Mount of Olives.

Both in the same place. One of them you remember was at Bethany, when he wept tears, soft, tender, sympathetic tears for Lazarus. Tears of grief for a friend, where he was sharing sorrow with Martha and Mary.

ordinary, natural, human love. And grief, that he was showing there. And then here, in the sacred Jerusalem, where he wept a different kind of weeping.

Where he wept tears of agony over a city of self-pleasers. A city of Christ crucified. Because that's what we know we're aware.

And it's very interesting as well that David himself, remember King David, who was king of Israel, wept, probably in this exact spot, David wept on this very mountain. Remember when Absalom, his son, rose up against him, and the news came that Absalom had been killed.

[7 : 48] David wept. Remember, O Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God have died for thee, O Absalom, my son. David there was weeping for his own inability. That he was unable to do anything about his prodigal son.

He had missed the opportunity. He started caring for Absalom. And it was too late. And he knew that even if he gave his life for Absalom now, that was of no avail.

That nothing would bring Absalom back. But Christ wept not for the same reason. Christ wept because he was willing, and he was able to do something for this city.

He was willing to die, and he was able to die. He was willing to buy salvation for this city. That he wept because they rejected the salvation.

It wasn't that he was weeping because of his own inability. He was weeping because they refused it point blank. David was saying, I cannot give my life to atone for, and to recall my prodigal son, and even if I did, it would be of no avail.

[9 : 00] But Christ's lamentation is that the prodigal refuses free pardon, and he was willing to give his free pardon. That was already one for him, and three of her tourists. We know that Jerusalem had a special place in Jesus' own heart.

Because remember that Jesus was born a Jew. So the Jews all looked upon Jerusalem with affection. And Jesus would be the same. He would look upon Jerusalem as the city of his ancestors.

But we know that he also did subordinate family and national ties to be about his father's business. He was never a Jew first, and the son of God second.

But at the same time we do know that in his human personality, that he would have a patriotic scheme for Jerusalem. And it would therefore grieve him, when he was able to understand with a flash of divine insight, that we cannot really understand properly.

But he occasionally, even although he was a human, he had flashes of divine insight that he saw into the future. And it was with this flash of divine insight that we read that he saw Rome as well,

piled up on top of the raised city.

[10:22] He saw a flash of that. Did he read about in verse 43? But the lamentation of Christ had a higher than a social or a political meaning.

Jerusalem wasn't merely a city, he said to Christ. It wasn't merely a capital of Israel. It wasn't really a center.

It wasn't as a city he was looking at it. He was looking at it as a place where people dwelt. When he looked at Jerusalem, he saw a hive of human souls.

He saw men, he saw women, he saw children, he saw human beings. And he saw people that he had preached to himself.

He himself had gone and preached the word of God to them. God himself came down from heaven in the presence of his son and preached his own word.

[11:22] And the people didn't listen. No, Christ didn't weep for the architecture of the city. He didn't weep because of the listed buildings that may have been there.

Jesus wept for the souls of the people. It was to souls that Jesus speaks. Not to the buildings, not to the city, although the city was beautiful.

It was to souls he said, if thou had known, even thou. And he is speaking personally, directly, individually to the people.

Or he is speaking collectively to them as a group. He is saying, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem. But remember that this is the Christ who says, Taimon, son of Jonas, love us thou means. Christ is personal and direct with everybody.

With everybody. He says, Saul, Saul, why persecutive thou me? By their first name he calls them. And it's the same Jesus who is speaking to individuals in Jerusalem.

[12:29] He is looking directly at them. And my friend, he is looking directly at each one of us today. There is no hiding amongst a group. There is no sort of easy floating along in a nondescript, anonymous way.

Fulfilling all the ordinary, normal things of coming to church and thinking that you can slide along with the rest. No. He looks at everybody individually. He looks directly into your heart.

And calls you by your first name. Each invitation, each time Christ speaks in the Bible, he's got your name beginning it.

He doesn't say it and then look round where he's going to say it. He knows and he speaks directly. See, that's what we're taught in Scripture. And there are individuals here in this city who had chosen to remain ignorant.

They had chosen. Christ preached to them. And they chose, deliberately chose to remain ignorant. And even as Christ was weeping tears over them, they were joining hands together to form that tremendous circle of people who shouted out, Crucify him, crucify him.

[13:47] It wasn't this sin of Jerusalem that made Jesus weep. Because Jerusalem in that way was only like every other city. Tears had already been wept in heaven over the sin of man.

Tears had been wept in heaven for the fall of man. But these tears had been dried up when the Lord Jesus Christ himself had come and volunteered to be the sacrifice.

To satisfy divine justice. But what caused these tears to flow afresh was the rejection of this atonement. Was the rejection of this sacrament.

Of this sacrifice. Because you notice that Christ didn't say, oh if you had never sinned. What he says is, if you have known and recognized and accepted the redemption I bring.

He was accepting that there were sinners. But what he is saying is, I am bringing full satisfaction. I am paying your debt. I have finished the work.

[14:54] I have done everything for you. All you have got to do is to receive it. And then he says, in this thy day. In this thy day.

Now there is a tremendous warning here. It means that Jerusalem had a day. Just as every community has a day. Just as every individual has a day. A day of mercy.

A day where God looks down upon them in love. And pours mercy on them. And gives them invitation. But Christ hears when he says, in this thy day.

When he pinpoints this time. Specific time. He places a time limit on the day of mercy. A time limit when during the time of mercy. When we can repent and prepare.

It's as if we are moving across a circle. A circle round about us. And as we are moving across this circle. We are in receipt of mercy and grace. But we have to accept that mercy and grace.

[15 : 58] Before we move across the circle. Because when we move over the boundary line. The day of grace is over. And the final abode of our souls.

Is decided. Now that could happen during your lifetime. It can happen during my lifetime. We do not know. When our day of grace is over.

There's a story told of the king of Syria. Who attacked Egypt. Egypt at the time. Was an ally of Rome. And Rome sent two senators.

To the king of Syria. To reason with him. And the two senators who came. One of them was a close personal friend. Of the king of Syria. And when they arrived at the Syrian camp.

The king of Syria came out. To meet him. And stuck out his hand. To greet his friend. If the senator was his friend. Wouldn't shake hands with him. But immediately got down to business. And asked him to withdraw his troops out of Egypt.

[17 : 04] Immediately. Or else. To suffer the consequences. That Rome. Would send an army. To punish them. And the king of Syria. Hummed and hoared.

And said. Well. I'll think about it. I'll go back. And think about it. And I'll let you know. And the senator says. That's not good enough. And with his wand. He drew a circle. In the sand.

And he says. Before you step out of this circle. I want your answer. The king of Syria. Gave him the answer. Yes.

That he would withdraw. Immediately he said that. The senator stuck out his hand. And resumed normal friendly relationships with. Now that is how God has done.

Speaking respectfully. God has placed us. A circle round us. And he demands a response. Before we move out of that circle. We do not know where. We do not know when.

[18 : 00] But yet we do know. That we are enclosed in this circle. That God demands. That we make a choice. Before we move out of that circle. God has a definite message for us.

You see. It's not a message that has. There to float over our heads. And to be accepted. When and as how we feel like it. It is a message.

A definite message. That demands a definite response. It's not just a mess. A general message that you can take or leave. It's not even a message that we have a right.

To have an opinion on it. A prayer puny man shakes his fists at God. And says that this. Is what God should have said. Or that this.

Is the way that we should read it. That is not so. God gives us a message. A definite. Unambiguous message. And it challenges us.

[18 : 58] To do something about it. I know that some people might say. That we shouldn't push people to make decisions. I know that we shouldn't may pressurize people.

Some people say. Oh. It's pushing too much to the gospel. My friend. If you could only understand the sheer urgency of the matter. If you could only see things.

As if you are leaving them for the last time. If you can see them from the vantage point of Calvary.

Then you would wonder. Why Christians don't grasp you and shake you.

Until you see and understand. It is urgent. We haven't got time to reason and argue and talk.

The place is not lasting. You are not lasting. We are all frail. This might be the last time we will ever meet.

[20 : 00] I am not being emotional about it. Just for the sake of making a sort of scare mechanism. But it is true. And you know it. And yet we sit under the gospel.

And we do nothing about it. And God himself. Has given us the miracle of his own word. Where it states clearly. Whosoever believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We will be saved. And yet we prevaricate. We argue. We talk. We look for reasons. We point at ministers. Churches.

Things that go wrong. Waste your eyes to Christ and to his word. And see how clearly it is before us. That it demands a response from us.

Be like the good man in the Old Testament. As for me and my house. We will follow the Lord. In other words. You don't need to understand. You don't need to have your circumstances right.

[21 : 00] You don't need to have everything shaped and in order. As for me and my house. We will follow the Lord. The things which belong unto thy peace.

The things which belong unto thy peace. Do we know what peace really is? Do we know what peace with God really means? If these things that Christ had been offering have been harsh.

Or forbidding. Or distasteful. We will see a reason for them for refusing it. But no. They concerned their peace. Peace through party.

Peace with God. Peace from God. For the soldiers of the Roman soldiers there. They knew all about the tactics of warfare. The merchants of the place.

Knew all about the price of the stocks and shares of their day. Whatever it was. The scribes of the Pharisees. Were well up on religion.

[22 : 04] Or on the legality of certain things. But peace for tired weary pilgrims. They did not know about you.

Nor were they interested. Are we not the same? Are we not tremendously interested? And rightly so. In everything that goes on round about us.

Are we not interested in the football results yesterday? Are we not interested in what President Reagan is going to do next week? Or whatever Gorbachev is going to do the following week? Are we not interested in all of those things?

Were you? How much time do we place at the disposal of our own immortal souls?

The things concerning the peace of our immortal souls. We remain ignorant of them. And we make no trial. No tremendous striving to find out about them.

[23 : 07] They are hid from their eyes. Remember God says in the Old Testament The ox knoweth his owner and the ass his master's crib. But Israel doth not know. My people doth not consider.

How can the tender messes of God So tenderly and openly, freely held out By the Son of God himself How could they behave?

Christ himself preaching about himself And backing it up with miracles And showing the power And everything that he did was good We cannot understand And even the hardest of us will probably say That if Christ spoke to me I would have taken heed But again you see It is this strange thing That we cannot properly understand either That God respects man's freedom of choice He seems to divide his sovereignty with man in this case And man doesn't willingly come to God Man as natural man doesn't willingly come to God There's got to be a change A man has to be wrestled with To keep him out of hell Have you imagined that?

That a man is headlong going to hell And he's got to be wrestled with And he's fighting people off In order to plunge forever more into eternal damnation See how far wrong we've gone See how out of joint the whole place is Because of the sin of man That we're so blind that we rush headlong to destruction And shake off and hit off Everything that tries to wrestle with us Oh and now wrestling once again today May we bring before you this weeping Saviour Why will you die? He says And he weeps tears of sorrow But beware these very tears that tell us Of the earnestness of a Saviour To pluck a brand from the burning Also tells us That there is a burning You see if there was no reason If the people who rejected Christ Were going to somewhere else that was good Christ wouldn't have cried And my friend even if you don't understand all that is About religion And when people talk about salvation That you don't really understand it Please note the tears of Christ Because you understand these Because every single person here has at some time wept You know what tears mean?

[25 : 55] You know what it means to have your heart Moving your eyes in such a way that teardrops fall Tears of anguish Tears of sincere Full of pity These tears of Christ For the inhabitants of Jerusalem And have you noticed That the fall of those tears Is recorded for you And for me Whilst we are still in a day of grace These very tears That happened so many hundreds of years ago Their fall is recorded so that you and I can see And will be affected by them And change our lives By reaching out to the Lord Jesus Christ Oh may he look down upon each one of you And may he see of the trial of a soul And be satisfied It is the earnest prayer of the preacher

And of every author's bearer here And of every Christian here Each and every one of us Would be brought to see the loveliness of Christ And for his son And that these tears The fall of those tears Will not have been recorded in vain Amen Let us pray O Lord of heaven and earth We bless thy name For the way that thou hast recorded The fall of thine own tears for us And we pray that not a single heart Will be so hard As to reject them Help us to reach out to thee We know that we cannot do it naturally But O Lord God send thine own spirit in amongst us To touch our hearts So that we will cry out To our Saviour who cares Who cares so much That he wept before us Help us and bless our meeting here today We pray For we ask it In the name of our blessed Saviour The Lord Jesus Christ Amen