"The following is a direct script of a teaching that is intended to be presented via video, incorporating relevant text, slides, media, and graphics to assist in illustration, thus facilitating the presentation of the material. In some places, this may cause the written material to not flow or sound rather awkward in some places. In addition, there may be grammatical errors that are often not acceptable in literary work. We encourage the viewing of the video teachings to complement the written teaching you see below."

Forgive them ... not?

Luke 23:34

> (Yeshua) Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.

Though translations will vary a little here and there, this has been what is generally accepted for the understanding of Luke 23:34. However, there has been some that have recently believed that this verse could actually be saying that Yeshua was praying for the Father to NOT forgive them because they KNEW what they were doing.

Here is the Greek for Yeshua's prayer in this verse with the word for word underneath.

πάτερ, ἄφες αὐτοῖς, οὐ γὰρ οἴδασιν τί ποιοῦσιν.

Father - to forgive - them - not - for - to know - what - to do

Looking at this alone, we can see where the confusion can come from. A plausible case could easily be implied for this if we look at this verse alone. But when we look at the interpretation for NOT forgiving them in comparison to the rest of Yeshua's ministry, we see that it seems to be completely out of place. It seems as if it would be the exact opposite of what His life was all about.

Interpreting it this way would prevent forgiveness for these individuals if they so chose to repent. While this has been debated in some circles, we lean to it being translated "... forgive them, they know not what they do." The main reason would be that the people really did not know that they were killing the messiah. If they really thought He was the messiah, they would not have done so.

More than that, this was not the unpardonable sin. Thus, there is no reason for the Father to not forgive them if they would so ask. This reason alone makes it difficult to interpret this verse any other way than having Yeshua say "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

But here's the thing, we actually have a witness to this interpretation just a little later in the book of Acts. Pay close attention to who Peter is talking to here.

Acts 3:13-15

> The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

The audience is clear. Many of these people were right there at Yeshua's crucifixion. Many of these people were the very ones yelling "crucify him" over and over. In the next verse we actually see Peter offering grace to those very people.

Acts 3:17-18

> "Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer.

They acted in ignorance. And in reality, they were just fulfilling what the prophets said would happen. Even though they had no idea that they were playing such a role. It's the next verse that truly serves as the witness the existing interpretation of Luke 23:34. Peter offered the right hand of fellowship in the body of Messiah.

Acts 3:19-20

> Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you —even Jesus.

"Repent" he said. Showing us what? Repentance was indeed available to them. They truly had no idea what they were doing and Yeshua knew that. Thus, His words "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

We hope you have enjoyed this study. Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom!

For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at www.testeverything.net

Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.

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