



## Exploring Easter – Peter’s Story

### Jesus dies on the cross - Luke 23:26-49

All Peter could see as he was pushed roughly down the road by the enormous crowd was the top of Jesus’s head. He knew that it was his because it was still wearing the mock crown the soldiers had made for him out of sharp thorns. Suddenly the head disappeared as Jesus stumbled again and the crowd stopped as he was lifted to his feet again by the soldiers that were taking him to Golgotha. ‘You!’ one of the soldiers shouted. Peter froze terrified that they had noticed him there, but they were pulling another man from the crowd ‘Carry it for him!’ the soldier said as he hefted the large piece of wood onto the man’s back ‘but, I am just a traveller’ the man protested before realising there was no point resisting.

Eventually the crowd came to a stop and Peter was glad he was at the back unable to see as the soldiers nailed Jesus to the wood and lifted him up on to the cross. There was a moment of silence, almost as if some were wondering what on earth they were doing, and then the mocking cries started again ‘save yourself then!’ ‘If you are the Messiah why don’t you save yourself and others too?’

Peter couldn’t decide what was worse the fact that all his hopes and dreams of Jesus were broken in to pieces, or the way the people in the crowd were talking about him now as they watched him die in pain.

This wasn’t how it was supposed to be. If Jesus wasn’t the Son of God, as Peter had believed him to be, then he was still a good man, and didn’t deserve this. Peter started to push his way through the crowd wanting everyone just to shut up and go away. He could see the soldiers throwing dice to decide who was going to get Jesus’ robe and he was reminded of jackals he had seen in the desert squabbling over an animal carcass. Did no-one have any respect? Did no-one realise that this was the best person that had ever lived? Just as Peter turned his back unable to watch any longer, Jesus spoke ‘Father, forgive them, they don’t know what they are doing?’

Peter could feel the sob or worse rising in his stomach. That was it, he couldn't bear it any longer. He squeezed and pushed and as soon as he was at the back of the crowd started to run, with no idea where he was going, just knowing that he didn't want to be there or see his friend die.

He found himself on the steps of the temple – maybe God had some answers to this madness! Suddenly the sky turned dark as if the sun had disappeared from the sky. Peter stopped in his tracks, just as the earth rumbled and an almighty ripping sound came from the sanctuary. That was it - the light of the world had gone out. Jesus was dead.