

# Where Are the Weepers? - Rev. 5:4

by Shane Idleman

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of weeping, intercession, and brokenness for revival and spiritual growth, and warns against the dangers of self-centeredness and a lack of empathy.*

**Duration:** 42:28

**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 30:5, Jeremiah 9:1, Joel 2:17, Matthew 5:4, Luke 19:41, Romans 12:15, Galatians 5:22-23, 1 Peter 5:6, Revelation 5:4

**Topics:** "Revival", "Weeping"

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## Description

Shane Idleman emphasizes the urgent need for weeping and brokenness in the church and society, drawing from Revelation 5:4 where John weeps because no one is found worthy to open the scroll. He reflects on the importance of compassion and humility, arguing that a lack of weeping reveals a lack of the Spirit's operation in our lives. Idleman calls for a revival that begins with deep sorrow for sin and a desperate plea for God's mercy, highlighting that true worship arises from a heart that has wept. He challenges the complacency of the church and urges believers to intercede for the nation, reminding them that revival is birthed in brokenness. Ultimately, he reassures that while weeping may endure for a night, joy comes in the morning through Christ, who is worthy.

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## Transcript

We watched Sound of Freedom last night. And that thought came back every few minutes or so. Where are the weepers? Where are those contending for our nation? And of course, according to God's sovereignty, He knows how to lay it out.

We find ourselves in Revelation 5. And John said in Revelation 5.1, I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside, and on the back it was sealed with seven seals. And so the scroll is rolled up. And scrolls were so important because it was how they would convey the message.

They would actually have runners who would bring the scroll to the people. The king would write something and roll it up in a scroll and send it out. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice.

There's a proof text for my style of preaching. Thank God. But now and then, don't we need that strength? That volume to wake up the sleeping church? And it wasn't a weak, passive angel.

It was a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice who is worthy to open the scroll. Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seal. And so you see John is looking up and vision possibly, and he sees the

throne room and there's this strong angel asking who is worthy to open the scroll.

We want to know what the king says. We want direction. We want to know what is the next step.

And as we're going to of course go on, the seal judgments, the bull judgments, the trumpet judgments are going to be pronounced. And he says who is worthy? And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look at it. And we're probably going to skip about five different slides and different things.

I had to rearrange a lot of things, but I'm not too concerned with that if you're not. But we find that no one had merit or qualifications to open the scroll and pronounce judgments. And the spot that I stopped at, John said, so I wept much.

So I wept much. You can see it there underlined. That tells me it was not a brief tear.

You can look it up later, the word much in the Greek language. It's a travail. It's I wept deeply and prolonged that weeping.

I wept much because no one was found worthy to open the scroll. And I couldn't get it off of my mind all week, so I wept much. Because I've had dozens of other Scriptures to get to, and come on, Lord, don't mess up my teaching.

It's all polished. The points line up. It was a pretty good sermon.

But we have to get back to weeping and brokenness. I just thought of the dozens of counseling appointments going on right now in the church and broken marriages and broken families. 99% can be fixed with brokenness and weeping before the Lord and humbling ourselves.

Our nation needs weeping. And it's hard. I started to reflect, why is this so hard? Why is this so hard? Especially for Americans.

And I don't know about you, but many of us, were you taught not to cry? And I don't want to go into a lot of details. I have many times before. I was taught from my dad's side not to cry.

You don't cry. Almost making fun of when I did. And I remember even when my right arm was hurting a lot.

And my dad, he'd say, don't cry. Because I was one of the all-star pitchers and he wanted to succeed. And we didn't know a lot what we knew back then, but ultimately it led to surgery and never used it well again.

My baseball career went down really quick. But that pain has to come out. Because if you suppress it and being raised that way, and I remember my dad, he was actually an All-American at A.B. High School in 1961.

And he would tell people how you win in sports is you get angry. You get very angry. And he would take that into life.

And so I think a lot of people have that image that crying is for women, for children. The problem is, biblically speaking, that's not correct. Jesus would weep.

The most powerful men in the Bible who wrote prophetic books would weep. Jeremiah the weeping prophet. Paul, oh, I would weep for the sins of my people.

David, there's something profound and powerful when weeping occurs. And thank God for my mom. Mom's help, of course, and help to influence, but there's something different with dads.

That's why there's different roles. We believe in complementarianism. We complement each other.

There's strengths that women give children that men can't. But one of the things, men, that we do give our children is that type of influence. What does a man look like? How are we supposed to lead our families? And my concern is a lack of compassion reveals a lack of the Spirit's operation in your life.

A lack of compassion reveals a lack of the Spirit's operation in your life. If you lack compassion and humility and brokenness and mercy, I doubt that the Holy Spirit is giving full reign and rule in your heart. Because the fruit of the Spirit is compassion and humility.

Now, don't make the mistake that many people do and think that I'm throwing to the side strength and boldness, because I'm not. As a matter of fact, you can gain a lot more momentum in your strength when it's covered with mercy, when it's covered with compassion. From Jesus to Jeremiah, great men weep.

We need more men like Jeremiah. More weeping prophets. And we need more women like Hannah.

You know Hannah? Her son was one of the most powerful prophets who ever lived, Samuel. And she wept, give me a son. Give me a son that He may honor.

God showed me so much that we're praying for revival, but it's not going to come without weeping. He wept much. He wept much.

And I realize that God often lets things sink in before we stand up. Why am I going through this? Why is this delayed? It sinks in, and then we stand up. And one of the difficulties with, obviously I mentioned that movie, Sound of Freedom.

This will go out on the radio and media, and of course I encourage people to watch it. You have to be careful, you know, with the age of your children. I would not recommend the children watching it, or maybe even young adults who have a good grip on what's going on possibly, because it will fracture you.

And what happened is God lets things sink in. And I've heard about it, of course, in the sex trafficking, but I did not realize to the extent, not in another country, folks, America is the number one producer and supporter of the fastest growing industry, criminal industry in the world. What type of sick, perverted people allow this to continue? Now is there hope for them? Absolutely.

But I begin to realize that revival is the only hope in so many ways. Is it not? I can't do what Tim Ballard does or Victor Marx does. I'm not going to go fight.

Hello? But I can pray and I can fast and I can intercede and I can allow God to bring revival to Southern California. And from the brokenness and revival, that's how you go out. And can you imagine the traffickers being brought to their knees and broken by the power of God? And children being restored and hope being given again.

That's our only hope. Brokenness and tears. But the excuse I hear the most as I've shared before is this wonderful excuse that I use many times.

I'm just not emotional. I'm just not emotional. We might have other screens, Cindy, maybe where some of this is.

I don't know, it was all over the place in my heart. But a lack of weeping, intercession, and travail severely hinders revival. And the very thing we're praying for is the very thing we need, but you have to plant the seeds of revival.

And those come from brokenness and from tears. Again, a lack of weeping, intercession, and travail, that will hinder revival. We say, Lord, You are our only hope.

We need a spiritual awakening. And for the life of me, I hate to keep bringing this up, but it's such a perfect indication of the spiritual hunger of God's people is why are so few here at 6 a.m. worship? We'll give you a gas card. Why sleep in? Well, okay, set the alarm.

And I don't say that to beat people up or get convicted. It doesn't really matter to me. I come regardless.

But if we're really that hungry and concerned, well, I can do that at home. So can I. But there's something unique when the body comes together corporately and seeks the heart of God corporately, and we do things that are difficult and challenging from time to time, and without the weeping and the intercession and the travail, I don't know if revival is going to come. And looking back, I just thought about this recently.

Robert Murray McShaney and John Knox in Scotland, their tears staying pleased to the congregations and to their cities. And I remember reading about Duncan Campbell and New Hebrides and the two blind women that would pray and weep for their little island there. And Evan Roberts and Wells and Whitfield and Moody crying over the sins of America and asking God to bring America.

Bring revival. And I hear it. Don't get me wrong, I hear it.

And I know it's difficult, I just don't see it. I see dead churches going through the motions. And it's so good to be back here.

Morgan mentioned the same thing with Westside because we are a unique body. I've traveled, I've went to different places, and there's something special that God is doing for sure. Business as usual is not going to cut it and we realize that.

But I want to give you a truth bomb and we might have it up there on the screen. My people-pleasing demeanor came out yesterday. And I changed the word you to we, but I couldn't do that.

I had to shoot you straight like I believe God put it in my heart. And I want to soften this up a little bit because I don't want you to be too mad. But could it be that you lack empathy because you're self-centered? You're mean and unkind because you're arrogant? You lack the love of Christ because you're quenching His Spirit? You're rude because you're restless.

You're either not saved or you have so grieved the Spirit that the flame of compassion has nearly burned out. You are spiritually blind and spiritually bankrupt without compassion and mercy. I just find it so interesting that so many times throughout the Bible, God said, I desire sound theology, which of course we need, we love.

The opposite of sound theology is bad theology. But throughout Scripture, He would often say, I desire mercy, not sacrifice. I think it was Hosea, maybe Amos now, that said, sow righteousness, reap mercy,

plow up your fallow ground.

The hardness of our hearts. It's time to seek the Lord. 2 Timothy, but understand this, that in the last days, and I'm pretty sure we live in the last days.

I mean, even the mark of the beast is just years if not months away. You can see where everything is going. That in the last days, there will come difficult times.

For people will what? Love themselves. Oh, my goodness. Have you ever seen this more profound? More profound than today.

Here's a good example. And then the puffy lips. What is this? Why do you got to puff your lips? 780 pictures.

Now, of course, we do selfies, so it's fun on vacation. Thank God for WISE, because we would actually have no pictures if it were up to me. Can anyone relate? Zero pictures.

It doesn't even enter my mind to take a picture. But we're glad we do looking back. But they will be lovers of self.

What is a lover of self? Self-gratification. Self-gratification. And so it's not too far out there to make the connection between even the trafficking that's going on.

Lovers of self. Lovers of pleasure. Giving themselves over to a debased and corrupted mind.

And you begin to wonder how can these things happen? And again, if you struggle with any type of sin, you are welcome in this church. We want people to come and find freedom and wholeness and be prayed for. We welcome, but we don't affirm.

There's a big difference there. And these people, they love their self. They love everything about feeding, really loving self is feeding the lust of the flesh.

It's feeding that. And as things get darker, we can see things get more perverted because man has given over to a debased and corrupted mind. And a debased mind is like cancer.

It metastasizes. It goes to other areas. And it keeps growing and becoming more perverted, more wretched.

Lovers of money. Lovers of money. I've been having a talk with my kids about this topic.

Don't focus on money. Let it find you. Let God bless you.

Because if we focus, like, this is what I want to do. I want to retire at 40. I want to be a millionaire.

That's the idol. And that becomes your God. And that's a very rough and dangerous and destructive life.

They are proud. They are arrogant. They are abusive, disobedient to their parents.

Ungrateful, unholy. And that is what is happening now. Where are the weepers? Excuses must die.

We must own it. Excuses must die. We must own it.

And I think we have Joel 2 up there as well. Joel 2.17, on this topic of where are the weepers. He said, let the priests, let the priests who minister to the Lord, let the priests weep between the porch and the altar.

Let them say, spare your people, O the Lord. Now, it's interesting. The porch where the people are in the altar was where incense and the sacrifice went up to please God.

And God said, stand right there in between and intercede on behalf of the people. I sought for a man who would stand in the gap before me on behalf of the nation that I might not destroy it. And the priests, they would weep.

They would travail. Oh God, protect us. Look at our little ones.

Look at the women, children that don't deserve this. Oh God, we plead the blood of these bulls and goats, but how much more now can we plead the precious blood of Jesus Christ as we stand and we intercede on behalf of our nation? Where are the weepers? Where are they? Did you also know the weeping opens the door to your calling? Tears can point you in God's direction. Mourning, mourning often leads to a movement.

Ask Tim Ballard and Caviezel. Oh, we are up against some ungodliness. I don't know how many of you know the background of, but Disney, I guess, produced it, Let It Go.

Nobody wanted it. Netflix didn't want it. I bet you don't want it.

You can promote cuties and all kinds of garbage, but when it comes to something that exposes evil, they don't want to have anything to do with it. Some of you need to check your heart about what you're supporting as well. The lines of demarcation are being clearly drawn in the sand at the risk of not being political.

I don't apologize. The left has their face buried in the sand, and they are trying to protect, protect the guilty and marginalize the victims. God help us.

Moses even interceded for the people, did he not? And David and Jeremiah and Jesus and Paul, and I begin to realize, please hear my heart, I love good teaching. I love good preaching. I love activity in the church, but unless we begin to intercede and weep and really ask for God to break us, I don't know if we're going to receive that revival we've been praying for.

Because you must be broken to battle this enemy. You must be broken to battle this enemy. Revival is conceived in the womb of brokenness and is born in adversity.

The breadth of revival is prayer, but the depth of revival is determined by desperation. Desperation. I have yet to meet an arrogant, uncompassionate, unloving, spirit-filled believer.

Have you? Let me know who they are. I'd love to meet this person. You see, we have two opposing things now.

We want that spirit-filled life. We want God to revive the churches and make a difference in our families and our homes, and how does it not move us when an eight-year-old is trafficked? Well, let me just put on golf. NASCAR, I can't go to church today.

We've got NASCAR on. I was up late watching the Lakers. I can't make morning worship.

And you think God's going to revive an arrogant people? Revival is always determined by desperation. Desperation. You know, all the verses we use here.

If my people, if my people, if they become desperate, they humble themselves and they seek my face and they turn from their wicked ways. And what we just read, let the priest weep between the altar there and the porch and let them intercede for the people. What about call a sacred assembly? Joel said, call a sacred assembly and cry out to the Lord.

Cry out to the Lord. Maybe he will hear our prayers. Or what about everything that is named after the thing we do with rend the heavens? Is a prayer, oh God, would you rend the heavens and come down and visit your people? And of course, Jesus, oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the weeping, Jesus say, look at this, look at my people, your Savior is here.

Complacency, complacency kills spiritual growth and apathy kindles the fire of the Spirit. Or kills, I should say, the fire of the Spirit. The reason I give messages like this is to wake us, wake us up.

That's what God uses different instruments. I realize that even driving, you know, a lot of times, for example, I'll put on Chuck Smith for an hour. Just, man, that's some good, solid Bible teaching.

That's a lot I didn't understand about the Southern Kingdom, the Northern Kingdom. You need that teaching. That's how we grow.

But then if I need to get fired up, I might put on Jensen Franklin. And if I need to even question my salvation and be broken before Lord, I'll put on Paul Washer. Oh boy, right? And if I just want to just be, again, oh Lord, and feel the weight of His glory, I'll put on David Wilkerson, a call to anguish.

You see, God uses different voices for different reasons. Thank God for different giftings, but don't try to put on me the calling of someone else because I will not walk in it. Pastor, why aren't you like Calvary Chapel? Verse by verse, expository.

Heck if I know. I just preach what God puts on my heart. I can do that.

It's pretty easy. It's not difficult. It's not difficult.

It's actually very easy. I've got my outline done. I don't have to work on my sermon until Saturday night.

But when I've got to preach it from the depths of my heart and pull apart Scriptures and read books that kindle the fire, it takes a lot of work. And here's the wonderful thing. Weepers become worshipers.

There's no slide for that. Weepers become worshipers. Weepers.

Oh, the best worshipers have first wept. Show me a worshiper who has never wept. And I'll show you a legalistic Pharisee.

Now I'm not saying just make up tears. That's phony. That's bad.

And many people, I know I've been through seasons of that where it's hard to find those tears, isn't it? The hardness of the heart has even got harder and more callous. And Lord, I don't feel that anymore. Ask Him to give you that again.

Ask, ask and you will receive. Ask for that brokenness. Ask that humility.

And you keep pressing in, you keep pressing in because a heart cry is going to be your battle cry. So many people are afraid of where things are going. Hey, I can relate.

Fear comes into my heart as well. But the heart cry is going to be our battle cry. It all begins with brokenness and weeping from the sinner being converted to a saint being filled.

Isn't that true? When a sinner is converted, first they are broken. Broken by their sin. If you preach the Gospel the right way, not just, hey, say a little prayer if you want to try Jesus out, He'll take away all your problems.

You might have some more problems. Because now you're on the side of light and the darkness hates you. But it all begins with brokenness and weeping.

The sinner being converted. And isn't that so true? The Gospel condemns me before it releases me. Think that through.

You read the Bible as a sinner, it condemns you. You repent and believe, then you're released. And it has to start with knowing our sinful condition.

And that's why I do believe the seeker-sensitive movement didn't work out too great. You see a lot of pastors who were leading that now had moral failings and fallings. You see a lot of weak Christians because the Gospel is not meant to be popular.

It's meant to be powerful. It confronts. Jesus said, I didn't come to bring peace.

Jesus, not me. All these churches out there think Jesus was just some kind of like, cool man, let's see whatever happens. Man, God is love, who cares? I'm just gonna love them.

They need to read the Bible. He said, I'm going to bring division. I'm going to divide homes.

Jesus, what are you talking about? What divides the home? The Gospel. The Gospel. Especially in the Middle East or in China.

What happens to people who believe the Gospel in North Korea? Executed immediately. It brings division. And it should be preached in all of its purity.

And that's something I praise God that I don't really worry too much about is trying to make the Gospel soft and appealing so people bite. It's not a fishing lure. My goal is to present it as the Bible presents it.

That we are lost without Christ. That you are under the wrath and judgment of God. But praise God Jesus set you free if you repent and believe.

And so you shoot people straight and because of that, and I have seen the deeper, the mourning over their sin, the deeper the relationship. Like you're like, why are people walking away from God and all these Christian authors and books I used to read? Or Christian worship leaders? I can't believe it. What's happening? Well, probably they didn't weep over their sin.

They had Jesus was their butler, and now their life is difficult. Now they're questioning their faith. Now they walk away from that because they never really had that deep and abiding relationship.

They never knew a Savior who set them free. Because once you experience that, it's hard to go back. It's hard to go back.

Oh, that rugged cross that set me free. And then thank God, He doesn't leave us hanging there. There's some encouragement.

But one of the elders, remember John left off 30 minutes ago saying, I wept much. I wept much. But one of the elders said to him, do not weep.

Do not weep. Oh, thank God. I'm so glad he didn't say, yes, you need to weep.

Things are getting difficult and there's nothing we can do. That's how some of us live. Do not weep.

Behold the lion of the tribe of Judah. It's funny, first we see him as a lamb. And now he's saying, the lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, not is going to prevail, not might has prevailed.

He has prevailed. He has already prevailed and now he will open the scroll and he will loose the judgments of God. So take heart, be encouraged.

He said, don't weep. Don't weep. But it's funny, he allowed him to weep for a season.

We don't know how many minutes. Who knows? God's not on our timetable. But he wept much and there was a time of looking at the pain and God again will use those dark moments.

Spurgeon used to call it the dark season of the soul in his writings. Anybody been there? Again, one of my challenges often when preaching is what do I say? What don't I say? But for many pastors, and there's people in worse dark seasons for sure, but with the last couple of years, of course, fighting through COVID and all the different things, and many of you, I don't know the statistics, thousands of pastors resign or quit each month. Just a few over the hill.

Maybe you know about it, maybe you don't. And the dark season of the soul hits in many different ways. One way can be what we see going on around us.

And the number one question I ask now with people dealing with a lot of fear and the dark night of the soul is tell me how much time you're spending on the media. I'm sure they're out there, so don't email me. But I've never, ever had a person say, Pastor, I'm not spending much time at all.

I'm burying my face in the Word of God. I'm praying, I'm fasting, I'm worshiping. Never.

Oh, I know. That's what they say. Oh, I know, I shouldn't be doing that.

Talk to them again a month later. Oh, I know, I shouldn't. Talk to them a year later.

Oh, I know. But there's something about it, right, that stirs that fear. And I'm still trying to get unhooked from it.

I'm going to figure out how. But last year, I got a letter in the mail, my wife did. They go, oh, if you'd like to know what's going on in your neighborhood, just join this app.

That sounds cool. No, it's not cool. 99.9% is negative.

Watch out for this person, they tried to get in my car. This house is just burglarized. This person's walking around stealing mail.

Boom, boom, boom. Like, unsubscribe, unsubscribe, unsubscribe. Inundated with the negative and the dark season of the soul and what's happening to the churches.

And we look around. I don't want to look for it now, but the California Assembly, they just struck down something dealing with sex trafficking. And they're not going to prosecute them as a felony.

It's like, have we lost our mind? Listen, I'm done apologizing, but if you support the Democratic Party, you need a wake up call. You need to check your heart. Hey, be an independent, be nothing.

I don't care, but to support that way, there's bad Republicans who absolutely, I call them out all the time in articles and the pride and the arrogance of our hearts. But when a party's platform rejects God and protects traffickers and says they can take your children away if you disagree with their identity, that is evil. And the problem is that more pastors aren't saying it.

I don't know, hopefully Victor Marks is going to be on my podcast this month, but we were talking last time I was on his, and one of their biggest frustrations, I don't know if you know who that is, but he kind of does what Tim Ballard does. But they go into the Middle East and ISIS territory. And he says, Shane, we put our lives on the line, we do all this, and the pulpits are silent.

Passive, cowardly pastors. You don't have to go shoot somebody and go into enemy territories, but for the love of God, get the fire of God back into your heart and begin preaching the truth of God's Word. Begin calling out people.

Did you know they used to call out people? It's okay to say Governor Newsom, your policies are perversions. Sacramento, get your head on straight. We need to speak the truth in love.

And if many of you saw it, I wrote an article specifically against Trump's attitude. And I know it got to his kids. The article did.

I'll speak to any group, any person that is prideful and arrogant and needs to humble themselves. But my goodness, how do these people even get elected? School boards letting in perversion. Where's the weeping? Where's the mourning? The church has been lulled to sleep.

I'll come twice a month, feed me my sermon, I hope worship isn't too long, and I'm heading to In-N-Out Burger. That's the extent of Sunday worship. It's the Lord's day, not the Lord's hour.

The dark season of the soul. And so it wasn't just what's going on around us, but also what's going on within us in the church. He has prevailed.

He opened the scroll to lucid seals. Thank God for Psalm 30. Anybody know that one offhand? Psalm 30, verse 5. It's okay if you don't.

I'm not real good on chapter and verses. I know it is written, like Jesus said. I'll never forget the day.

What, you remember this too? We started the church and the... Yeah. And people start to criticize the pastor. You didn't say the chapter and verse.

And I'm like, well, neither did Jesus. I mean, sometimes it just comes out. Sometimes it just comes out.

You can't just... Oh, ran the heavens, Isaiah 64, verse 1. Oh, and weeping between... Oh, that's Joel 2. And then call the sacred assembly, that's Joel 3. And then... It is written, it is written, it is written. God's word comes alive. And that verse is weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Thank God there is joy coming in the morning. And that tells me there is weeping throughout the night. Weeping may endure throughout the night.

It may be a night season, the dark season of the soul, but at some point joy will come in the morning. And basically what the Christian believers called to do, they're called to hold on to the anchor. They're called to hold on to Christ.

They're called to build their house upon the rock because when the storm comes and it will come, let me tell you, Jesus said the storm won't come. He actually said the storm will come. But those who hear my word and they do my word, I will liken Him to the man who built his house on the rock and it did not fall.

I don't know the chapter and I don't know the verse, but I know that's what God said. You know, we got to thank God for Abram's text. Pastor, do you want to preach this Sunday? I read that Thursday morning.

I'm like, oh my goodness. Thank you, Lord. But then he did a great job the two Sundays beforehand.

God's doing it. And God does that. It's different gifting, different callings.

Alright, Shane, it's time for you to take a break for a while. That's somebody else and somebody else. That's why there's different giftings.

We have different guest speakers. I mean, I still remember, I think Donna, you're here, I don't know if David's here, but David, one of our elders, just monotone, quiet. Mike, we had to turn up the mic all the way.

But I'll still remember his testimony and the tears and how he came to know the Lord. Oh, man, I rewinded it a few times. And God's using different people in different ways.

But always remember this. Who is worthy takes away your worry. Did you catch that? He who is worthy has opened the scroll.

So who is worthy takes away your worry. Who is worthy takes away your worry. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.

Thank God for that. The final word, even in all of this chaos, He is still the King.

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/31/SID31647.mp3>

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