

Luke 13:31-35 – Jerusalem Must Kill Jesus – Sermon Outline

Intro: Why must Jesus die in Jerusalem? Why must Jerusalem crucify its Lord?

Need: God in human flesh died at the hands of His own treacherous people. Yet this wicked tragedy has become the means by which Christ is the victor, ridding the world of wicked tragedies to bring in righteous triumphs for His redeemed people forever.

Theme: Christ is Crucified according to His Father's Plan to Redeem His People:

1. The time and place of Christ's death is appointed by the Father and offered willingly. (31-33)
2. The purpose and desire of Christ's death is to gather His people to Himself in love. (34-35)

I. The time and place of Christ's death is appointed by the Father and offered willingly. (31-33)

A. Pharisees warn Jesus Herod wants to kill Him, due to His preaching of Himself and against Israel.

1. Herod Antipas ruled over the region of Galilee, where Christ was now coming.
2. Recall in Luke 9, Herod feared Jesus was the ghost of John the Baptist come back to haunt him or something to that effect. Herod was paranoid, perhaps sent the Pharisees to head Jesus off, or the Pharisees came on their own, out of good will, or wanting to deter Jesus from teaching near them.
3. Many Pharisees were hostile to Christ, but some like Nicodemus were friendly. Whether these were deceptive Pharisees like deceiving, "fox"-like Herod is beside the point. We are not told.
4. We are told this report reaches Jesus the same day He has excoriated the Jews for rejecting Him.
5. He has taught about the narrow gate, and said many Gentiles will enter while they are cast out.
6. Some may take it as God warning your preaching has been a little overheated, when the ruler of the Jews in the region now wants to kill you. But Jesus doesn't back down or hide in a corner.

B. Herod will become friends with Pilate; both will be involved in the trials leading to Christ's crucifixion.

1. Just the same, Christ tells the Pharisees to tell that "fox", Herod, that trickster and mocker, that He is unstoppable; He is casting out demons, performing cures, and then on the third day will be perfected.
2. This is an allusion of course to His resurrection, even though it isn't literally three days away at this point. His death will happen at the time and place the Father appointed, and Christ will give His life willingly, and His death will not be His defeat but His triumph, His perfection in atoning then rising.
3. This should have signaled to His disciples what was about to happen also, for in Lk. 9:22 He already told them He will be raised on the 3rd day after suffering and being rejected by the religious leaders.

C. The appointed time coincides with the appointed place of Christ's crucifixion – in Jerusalem.

1. Herod had no authority, no jurisdiction in Galilee, over Christ's death. Jesus knows this, not merely because He is God in human flesh, but because He is well-acquainted with the Scriptures.
2. Remember, He will later open His disciples minds to know all the O.T. Scriptures in regards to what they said about Him. Jesus was a student of His own words, and learned He must die in Jerusalem.
3. Christ knows He must perish, and presses on to do so, His face is set on journeying toward Jerusalem. Christ is willingly laying down His life for His people – though they are treacherous!

D. Christ must perish in Jerusalem because He is our Passover Lamb & firstborn/firstfruits from the dead:

1. We know at Passover, just before His crucifixion, Christ will institute the Lord's Supper in the upper room with His disciples, a foretaste of the heavenly banquet in the upper room of heaven itself that all God's people will one day share in.

2. Now, back in Luke 2, the child Jesus was taken by his parents to be dedicated at the Temple.
 3. Ex. 13 gives the instructions to Israel to dedicate their firstborn and the firstborn of their livestock.
 4. The firstborn was consecrated to God and representative of the whole family, for the firstborn perished in Egypt if the blood of the Passover lamb was not on the doorposts of the house.
 5. Well, Christ is our Passover, redeeming families, and He is also the firstborn, only begotten of God.
 6. His blood must be shed, but in being the Lamb without blemish and the only begotten Son of God, He becomes the firstborn of the resurrection, the firstfruits of the new life, for His sacrifice truly atoned for sin, God's wrath fell upon Him, but did not destroy Him, for He is risen triumphant over sin.
 7. The Feast of Firstfruits took place on the day after the Sabbath following the week-long Passover ceremony, Lev. 23:4-8. Then 50 days later came Pentecost, the fulfillment of the Feast of Firstfruits.
 8. These feasts were celebrated in Jerusalem, and Christ fulfills each of them, so it was necessary that He die during the time of Passover, be raised at the time of the Feast of Firstfruits, and then 50 days from there, pour out His Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, also while the disciples waited in Jerusalem.
 9. Because Christ fulfills the feasts of Israel, and is the true temple, that whole inferior system of worship is completed, the shadows have given way to their substance, fulfillment, in Christ Himself.
- E. So Jesus must perish in Jerusalem, only to be "born" again as the risen Lamb that was slain.
1. And thereby open the gates of heaven, that narrow gate, so that His people may go in.
 2. His true people follow the narrow way of Himself, the way of the cross, seeking first His kingdom and righteousness as the firstborn/first-fruits from the dead, resurrected in Him to/for the Father.
 3. So it is fitting Christ would perish in Jerusalem as our Passover Lamb and firstborn of the new creation, as the firstfruits to the Lord, for the sake of the heavenly New Jerusalem/God's people.
 4. And being sacrificed on a hill, raised and lifted up, He will be a light to all the nations, who will come from every corner of the Earth into the New Jerusalem by faith and repentance in Christ Jesus.
 5. So, the time (during Passover/feast days) and place (in Jerusalem, where the Temple/God's presence and His feasts were celebrated at the appointed time by His covenant people journeying there) of Christ's crucifixion is not incidental, but ordained from eternity past. Jesus scoffs at Herod.
 6. Herod has no power to kill Jesus, even though he cut off John the Baptist's head. John said he must decrease, Christ must increase, that Christ baptizes with the Spirit, that John is unworthy of Jesus.
 7. Jesus knows He must die at the appointed time and place, and yet continues to journey there to do so, even as His rebellious people would make their pilgrim journey to cruelly crucify their Messiah.
 8. Jesus gladly laid down His life for Israel, in order to rise for His glory in power & love for His people.
- II. **The purpose and desire of Christ in His death is to gather His people to Himself in love. (34-35)**
- A. So the lament bursts forth from Jesus' lips, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!" They don't get it – who Jesus is, when and where and why He must die.
1. The Pharisees, the religious rulers and theologians of God's people, even if they came to Him in earnest and not treachery, they too don't get it! Christ **must** die in Jerusalem, to fulfill all things.
 2. They will greet Him in the streets when He enters, but most will cry out "crucify Him, crucify Him!"
 3. Jesus knows this. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her." And Christ Himself has now been sent, desiring to gather them together as a mother hen does her chicks, yet they refused! Chicks don't refuse the hen's protection. Yet Israel refuses His!

- B. Here's another divine must, not explicitly said by Christ but deduced from Scripture's teaching – **Jerusalem must kill Jesus.** Not Herod, not even Pilate who washed His hands, but Jerusalem.
1. Because as the capital city of God's wicked people, it is the proper place for Christ, the final prophet, the Son of God, to die at the hands of His rebellious people.
 2. The faithful prophets were always disregarded, killed, by Israel, stoning them.
 3. The desire to gather them in love and salvation as a hen gathers her chicks and protects them under her wings is Christ's desire, and the Lord desires this for all His covenant people, and the call to repent is extended to the ends of the earth.
 4. Yet man is not willing. God is willing and able to save, but man is not. We all killed Christ on that day.
 5. As Adam represented us in rebellion, so Israel represents us in betrayal and hatred of Christ.
 6. Yet in God's sheer, sovereign mercy, He will preserve a remnant, an elect people, He will redeem them through the blood of His Son. Some will be cut to the heart, not in hatred, but repentance.
- C. God sovereignly saves His elect people, and Christ's atonement is such that it is limitless in power.
1. Christ's sacrifice is capable in its power to save every person who has ever lived. The question is not can Christ's atonement save the world, but rather, did Christ in His atonement intend to save all?
 2. The answer to that is plainly no, Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for His elect people in particular, not every sinner that has ever lived. Therefore, the atonement is applied only to His elect people when they are united to Christ in the new birth and the born-again cry of repentance and faith.
 3. Don't miss the obvious – God covenanted exclusively with one nation, Israel, for thousands of years.
 4. Christ did die such that He is offered to all, and all are commanded to repent and trust in Him for salvation, and any and all who do repent and believe will be saved in union with Christ.
 5. The Calvinist says Christ saved all for whom He died for, His atonement ensured faith for His elect.
 6. Others say Christ did not save all for whom He died and that His atonement ensured faith for none.
 7. Remember the animal sacrifices, temple worship, etc. It all pointed to Christ. But the whole point was that, without a heart of true faith and repentance, these sacrifices are powerless, meaningless.
- D. But when Christ comes, He is mighty to save, to give a heart of faith, for His blood truly atones.
1. His blood sprinkled on His people, His Spirit poured out upon them, produces the born again heart of faith and repentance. Jer. 31:31-33, Ezek. 36:24-28 couldn't be clearer.
 2. Yet for His own people who remained dead in their sins, without the atoning work of Christ, He says to them, "All day long I have held out My hands to a disobedient and obstinate people" as Paul quotes God/Christ in Rom. 10:21, quoting from Isaiah 65:2.
 3. Why is it now that the nations are not as uniformly disobedient and obstinate? What gave the Gospel sudden success and the Church/kingdom of God is found all over the world today? Did man suddenly become good and holy by his or her own willpower? No, it is God's power, Christ's blood & Spirit.
- E. V. 34, So, "gather together" is a term loaded with meaning as Christ laments His wayward people whom He has throughout their generations been holding out His arms to, if they would only come.
1. Israel was unwilling, time after time, generation after generation, because of their uncircumcised hearts. They were dead in trespasses and sins, as we all are without the atoning work of Christ.
 2. Since the Garden of Eden, God has been scattering man, from His holy presence, from man's sinful endeavors at the tower of Babel, through the floodwaters, in the wilderness, from the Promised Land when turning back to pagan idols and practices, etc.

3. But through the blood of Christ and outpouring of His Spirit, He will gather His elect in, from every tribe, tongue, and nation. But for Israel and those clinging to the shadows of temple worship, thinking by their rituals they could merit favor with God and eternal life, their house is left to them "**desolate**".
 4. God's people were to be His house, for His name and glory, but instead by their willpower and self-righteous efforts, they thought they were good with God. But the glory of God had long departed the temple by Jesus' day, in fact, Jesus is the true temple, and He is filled with the Spirit/God's glory.
 5. Yet as they disregarded God's glory in the temple made with hands, they disregard and destroy the temple of God in the flesh, in the God-Man Jesus Christ. So they will be abandoned by God, who was long patient through generations with them, and the Gospel will save the pagan nations.
 6. Their house being left desolate, both their temple and Jewish people, is repeated by Christ in Matt. 23:37ff., and right after He launches into the destruction of the temple in chapter 24.
- F. **V. 35**, so what does Jesus mean in saying "you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"
1. See Ps. 118:26, "**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.**" some say this was chanted to incoming pilgrims on feast days in Jerusalem.
 2. When does this refer, what "**time**"? In chapter 14, Jesus goes to eat with a ruler of the pharisees, and the Pharisees continue to dispute with Him. They still "see" Him. But when will they see Him with the eyes of faith?
 3. Perhaps a foretaste of that is His entry into Jerusalem, for the people say these words in Lk. 19:37-38, yet there the Pharisees try to stop them from saying this. But remember Christ is the narrow gate.
 4. His entry into the earthly Jerusalem amidst praise by His disciples foreshadows His heavenly entrance, and ultimately the opened gates of the New heavens/Earth, the New Jerusalem of God's people who enter in, who praise the Son, the Lamb that was slain, who is the eternal, risen King.
 5. So God/Christ's disposition is one of love to the world, God so loved the world that He gave His Son, and all who repent and believe in Him will not perish but have eternal life. But Christ's saving love is reserved for His bride, His elect people. They alone will be gathered under His wings.
 6. Ezek. 36:16-36, *Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying: "Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own ways and deeds; to Me their way was like the uncleanness of a woman in her customary impurity. Therefore I poured out My fury on them for the blood they had shed on the land, and for their idols with which they had defiled it. So I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed throughout the countries; I judged them according to their ways and their deeds. When they came to the nations, wherever they went, they profaned My holy name—when they said of them, 'These are the people of the Lord, and yet they have gone out of His land.' But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went. "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord God: "I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord," says the Lord God, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes. **For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.** Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do*

them. Then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; you shall be My people, and I will be your God. I will deliver you from all your uncleannesses. I will call for the grain and multiply it, and bring no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of your trees and the increase of your fields, so that you need never again bear the reproach of famine among the nations. Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good; and you will loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and your abominations. Not for your sake do I do this,” says the Lord God, “let it be known to you. Be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel!”

7. Remember, all who have faith like Father Abraham are the House of Israel/the elect of God.

G. **Summary:** Nothing can thwart the Father's plan for His Son to atone for sin at the appointed place, at Calvary at the appointed time, during the Passover feasts, for He is our true Passover.

1. Herod has no power over Christ. Christ lays down His life willingly, not contrary to the Father's plan, but according to His perfect plan, held up to all, but intended to redeem and save His elect alone.
2. As Joseph was delivered over to the Egyptians and experienced a death from his own brothers, so Christ, at the hands of his own brothers, His countrymen, is delivered over to the death of the cross.
3. Christ is betrayed by His own, and yet the very betrayal will be the means by which Jesus saves His wicked brothers, even as Joseph's betrayal for being the favored son of the father was the means by which he saved his brothers. But Christ gives us the true salvation, the true manna from heaven.
4. In Christ, His people are delivered from hell, not mere famine, not earthly tyrants, but the holy wrath of God, our own twisted love for sin and depravity, and from the snares of tyrannical Satan himself.

III. Concluding Application: The words of Christ apply to the American Church Today:

- A. The American Church/its house are being left desolate. It has turned from true preachers and churches and heaped up false teachers and churches that coddle their sinful desires.
- B. The biblical Christ, the God of Scripture, is not a God that even many Evangelicals can stomach.
- C. They worship a God of their own imagination, and are syncretistic, borrowing from the Scriptures to fashion God in their own image and likeness, rather than submitting to His Word and the reality that they are made in His image, & so must conform to His likeness according to His commands.
- D. But let us be gathered in under the banner of Christ's love, may He never lament of us, "O Heritage, O Heritage", as He casts us into the pit of hell for our sin. May we not be wayward, apostate sons and daughters, but true sons of the King of Kings.
- E. Embrace the Lord, trust and obey, and even when many who take on His name refuse to do so, know the Lord loves and provides for His own.
- F. Even the betrayals that we see, whether in secular or Church government, all work according to His sovereign plan, and He will bring the plans of the treacherous to nothing, and redeem His righteous.
- G. May we grieve with the Lord, seeing the Church turn astray, and cry out to them to return in true faith and repentance, examining our own hearts first, to be sure we are not false, wicked, unregenerates.
- H. Christ truly grieves the rebellious Jewish people, His lament is not play-acting, the atonement made for the elect does not negate the real sorrow He has for the old covenant people hating and rejecting Him.
- I. We know something of that ache when our own flesh and blood family departs from and denies Christ.
- J. We feel the ache at a national level, when our nation turns its back upon the God it once loved, or at least claimed to love and serve. We see the judgment upon us as He gives us over to wicked rulers, and the wicked rise up in increasing layers of depravity and violence against us and one another.

- K. As God left Israel desolate, it may be He is leaving The United States desolate, His glory departing.
- L. And yet, even if so, the Lord preserves a faithful remnant, and that remnant may grow in great number over generations to come.
- M. Raise your children in the fear and nurture of the Lord, remember His covenant promises. In your old age, may God grant that you see your children and grandchildren walking in the ways of the Lord.
- N. May Heritage and all faithful churches see their numbers increase, filled with true worshipers, and may we be bastions of Christ in a world of darkness, and may the Lord grant that the darkness flee away and the gates of hell not prevail as the King of heaven works through His redeemed people.
- O. Christ's kingdom grows slow, over thousands of years, and dark periods can last hundreds of years. But even the valleys serve to bring about the highest of heights of righteousness and glory for the Lord, and blessing upon His people. We know this because the deepest valley was the cross of Christ – the crucifixion of God in human flesh at the hands of His own wayward, rebellious people.
- P. Yet by this, He has triumphed over sin, death, the devil, and perhaps most grievous of all, the hatred of His own covenant people. He died, after all, to redeem us from our hatred of Him.
- Q. He died to love us to the saving of our souls, to the giving of new life, so Christ is our Passover, Christ is the firstborn from the dead, Christ has begun the new creation, for Jerusalem has killed Jesus, and Jesus has risen to birth the New Jerusalem.
- R. That New Jerusalem, that city of God, His people, is being gathered to Himself every second, even when we do not see it. Christ is at work reconciling the world to Himself even now, so in that great hope, let us pray.