

Luke 13:31-35; Psalm 118:19-29; Concern over the Lost I. Israel's Rebellion II. Jesus' Desire III. The Realization of His Desire

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, does Jesus want people to be saved? Do you want people to be saved? Today we come to a moving passage that reveals the tender heart of Jesus for the lost sheep of Israel. Our passage opens with a veiled threat to the well-being of Jesus; one which Jesus brushes aside because He has work to be done. Last week we saw that Jesus does not answer the question- how many- but rather how you might be saved. This week we find a glimpse into the current state of Israel- what was the nation like in which Jesus lived and ministered. The fact is, not many believed during His day. But does Jesus give up on them? Today we see this theme: Jesus mourns over the rebellion of His people. Children, how would you feel if you invited a friend to come over and he said- no thanks. It would hurt, wouldn't it! Well, when we speak to others about Jesus Christ- when we invite them into our home or invite them to come to church- we are rightly grieved when this invitation is rejected. We must keep in mind that they are hardened against God- the unbeliever cannot see or accept spiritual things! However, we must learn from Jesus that this initial rejection does not mean that all hope is lost! One plants, another waters but it is God who must cause the growth and increase. And God does this in His time- not ours. So we can learn the true heart of love for the lost as we focus on v. 33-35.

### **I. Israel's Rebellion**

We start by seeing the rebellion of God's people- the stubborn rejection made evident in the holy city of Jerusalem. Now remember that Jerusalem was a source of great pride- it was the center of commercial and spiritual life for the Israelites. It was the holy city- the city of David. But Jesus starts in v. 34 by saying Jerusalem is a city of blood! Not a holy city, but a rebellious city. Just like Jesus said about the temple- turned into a den of robbers. The city of Jerusalem had been turned into a city of murderers! The people- their rebellious heart and the rejection evident in their forefathers as well- continually persecuted God's prophets and messengers. The mentality of the people is that of the wicked tenants

of Mt. 21- the owner sends servants and even his Son- but the tenants mistreat, abuse and even kill those who were sent by the land owner. Instead of receiving the word of the prophets long ago- by in large the people of Israel scoffed at them, persecuted them, and even killed them. As I Kings 18 illustrates, Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord. Jeremiah was thrown in a pit- and Isaiah was sawn in two. Even think of what would soon happen to Stephan in Acts 7- stoned for speaking the truth concerning the identity of Christ! And as Mt. 21 continues- it is because of this rejection that the vineyard will be turned over to others who will produce fruit! But not only did they reject the prophets of old- the Israelites were in the process of rejecting Thee Prophet! Basically, Jesus is saying- it is not fit for me to die anywhere else! I am on my way to Jerusalem- knowing that I will- that I must be killed right outside the city gates! That is where the sacrifice needs to be made- that is where my blood needs to be shed! As Zech. 12 foretold- the inhabitants of Jerusalem will look upon Him whom they have pierced! Jesus was resolute- not Herod- not the Pharisees- not even the rejection of the people would deter Jesus from carrying out His mission! As Peter said in Acts 2- Jesus was delivered up according to God's foreknowledge- He was crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men! In fact, it would be through His death, resurrection and the sending of the Holy Spirit by which many will in fact be saved!

## **II. Jesus' Desire**

But the love and commitment of Jesus runs even deeper than this! Not only was Jesus committing to carrying out His calling as the Lamb of God who would die to take away the sins of the world- Jesus was also committed to the saving of His people! AS v. 34 continues- O Jerusalem- Jerusalem. The repeated name indicates his deep desire- like Martha, Martha- or Simon, Simon. Jesus is in agony as He repeats the name of this holy city! How often have I desired to gather you! How often I have longed and wanted you to come to me! This word- desire- is the same one used by Peter in Mt. 18- how long or how often should I forgive? 77\*7! How long or how often has Jesus desired this people? Constantly and continually! My heart breaks for them! Like a mother hen desires her chicks to run to her when the

cat comes into the henhouse- like the shepherd pines over his little lambs when the wolf attacks! I would be a shelter to you- a fortress and defender! I would be your shade and your deliverer! We often undermine or minimise the agony that Jesus had over the lost people of Israel! His love for the straying- like the love of the Father who sees his wayward son departing from the home. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost- and He rightly desires them to come to Him and be saved! As Ez. 18 puts it- I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, rather that they would turn to me and live! Or I Tim. 2:4- God desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth! And as Paul said in Rom. 10:1- my heart's desire and pray to God for them is that they may be saved! This is what we call the genuine or free offer of the gospel! Turn and be healed- repent, believe and be saved! God gives us a promised gift of rest and life- for all those who will cling to Jesus His son! This well-meant offer of the gospel means that God is grieved with mans sins- and He promises salvation for all those who come to Christ- these will never be turned away! As our Canons of Dort say in 2:5- the promise of salvation is for all who believe in Jesus Christ. This gospel should be announced and declared to all without differentiation or discrimination. Or 3/4: 8- all who are called to believe are called seriously! God promises rest and life seriously- genuinely to all who believe! God's heart breaks for the lost! And so should ours! He desires that man should repent, believe and be saved! We must share this desire! The good news is not a secret- but something we want everyone to know and embrace! But as Acts 7 says- that generation was stiff necked- they resisted the gospel and the Holy Spirit! But can the will of God be thwarted by the rebellion of man? No- God knows those who are His and not one of His chosen ones will be lost!

### **III. The Realization of His Desire**

Is it possible that one of the elect will be lost- that a lost chick or a straying sheep that God has chosen will not be brought into the Kingdom? As you know, not one will be lost! In speaking about the will of God, we distinguish between God will in command and His will of sovereign decree. In Scripture the commands read- this thing should be done. But the question is- will it actually be done? Shall it take

place? All men are called to faith and repentance- but not all will obey! Only those who have the HS working in them will be enabled to do that which God commands! In v. 35 Jesus quotes from Psalm 118- when will this event take place? When will the people see the Son and cry out- blessed is He who comes? As you know, these words are the words used by the children when Jesus entered into Jerusalem on Psalm Sunday. The event- sometimes called the Triumphant Entry- saw children crying out to Hosanna- the One who comes in the name of the Lord. But remember that the Pharisees were in an uproar- the very group noted in v. 31. The Pharisees told Jesus to silence the crowds- to reject this word of praise in Luke 19. As Isaiah 65 puts it- I have spread out my hands all day unto a rebellious people! Luke 19 continues with Jesus weeping over the city- knowing of its impending doom for rejecting the Son. The fact is- because of Israel's rejection in v. 34- their house would be forsaken in v. 35. The city and the temple would be deserted- as the city would be burned and the people struck down with the sword. But in Mt. 23:39 we find a parallel passage to our text. In Mt. 23- Jesus pronounces this promise after His triumphant entry! Why is this important? Well- in Mt. Jesus is saying that there is a future time- an event to come in which the Israelites will cry out- Hosanna! The Hosanna that was heard on Palm Sunday is not the final fulfillment of v. 35. There is a future return in which the Israelites will see the Son- and on that Day they will cry out- Hosanna! Note that Jesus says- you will say Hosanna! Abraham's descendants will shout this word. The word- Hosanna is a word of welcome, worship and praise! At some time- in the future- the Israelite people who had once rejected Him- in mass- will that day embrace Him! Rom. 11 puts it this way- God has not rejected the people whom He foreknew! There is a remnant chosen by grace! Yes, there is a partial hardening at present Paul said- but in the future there will be turning- and in this way all Israel will be saved! The deliverer will come to His people! When Jesus comes back on that last day- many Jews will have believed in Him! Many more than in Jesus day- there will be thousands upon thousands of Israelites who will cry out- Hosanna! The branch of Israel cut off will be re-grafted onto the vine- and many of Abraham's seed will be saved! The

house of Jacob that was forsaken and broken down will be rebuilt- all Israel will be saved in this way- as the Kingdom of God is built- the church will continue to grow until it covers the entire earth- and Jew along with Gentile will be made one as they rejoice in the coming of the King! The fact is- Jesus will have His desire! In Psalm 2 Jesus was promised- here are the nations- the people of your inheritance! Or as Is. 55 says- a people you did not know will become yours! They will come from the east and the west as we say last week- but what about Israel? As Rom. 11 says- if the failure of the Israelites means riches for the Gentiles- how much more will their full inclusion mean! As Jeremiah 31 says- the days are coming when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. On that day I will write my law on their hearts- I will be their God, and they will be my people. We can have great confidence that Jesus will have His bride- that the church will include both Jew and Gentile- and together we will shout Hosanna on that last day! Weeping may last for the night- but Joy comes in the morning! Jesus desire for His people will be met as His people are made one in Him!

To conclude, the desire of Jesus is one that should move us! We must have a heart for the lost- be they Jew or Gentile! In our passage, Jesus mourns over the rebellious people. Our hearts should break when we see people walking in darkness! So we should pray to the Lord of the Harvest- sent for laborers! And we should say by the Spirit- Here I am- send me! Lord give me the opportunity to share your love for the lost- and move their hearts by the Spirit- so that one day they too might sing- Hosanna- blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!