

"Beginning at Jerusalem"
Luke 24:45-53

Intro: I want to consider with you this morning the place which Jerusalem had in the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke mentions Jerusalem by name a total of 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ x - almost as much as the other three Gospel writers combined! Heavy emphasis continues in the book of Acts, also written by Luke, where we are permitted to see the tremendous impact of the Gospel upon Jerusalem.

"Beginning at Jerusalem." This same point is made in our Lord's words in Acts 1:8 - "begin in Jerusalem."

This emphasis is quite surprising in view of all the ministering that had been done in Jerusalem. It is surely accurate to say that, at this time, NO CITY IN ALL THE WORLD HAD BEEN THE OBJECT OF EVANGELISTIC MINISTRY LIKE JERUSALEM HAD!

Note: Luke 13:34, 35, 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem which killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I..." LONG BEFORE JESUS CHRIST CAME TO THE EARTH HE HAD MINISTERED OFTEN TO JERUSALEM THROUGH PROPHETS HE HAD SENT.

And yet there was no city which was more firmly opposed to the Gospel than Jerusalem was. Their opposition, in fact, was the concern of OT prophets, (cf. Luke 18:31-34)

and it was what Moses and Elijah talked to the Lord Jesus about on the mount of transfiguration. Cf. Luke 9:31. Jerusalem was notorious for its opposition to the Gospel.

"Jerusalem" is often likened to the home field by missionary speakers. I believe that there is real justification for doing this. Possibly Luke has given us such a candid picture of Jerusalem so that we would know that the Lord Jesus Himself knew the problem intimately of ministering in a hard field where a good report could not be given. How does "Jerusalem" compare with the home field today, and how does the attitude of the Lord Jesus help us?

I. Jerusalem.

A. It was a city that was bustling with religious activity. Scribes, Pharisees, priests were everywhere. The temple was there. Jews came from everywhere else to Jerusalem on the feast days.

B. It was a city which was in bondage. This is how Paul described it Gal. 4:25.

Religiously they were in bondage.
Politically they were in bondage.
Priests were in the streets, but so were Roman soldiers.

The people were not free & glad, but laboring under bondage in all

Directions.

- c. It was a city of ^{moral} corruption.
note what the Lord said about
the scribes in Luke 20: 45-47.
Think also of the money changers,
what about the scribes and
Pharisees who had caught the
woman in the act of adultery?
"~~For he~~ but is without sin..."
(John 8:7).
- D. It was a city that was scripturally
hardened and spiritually blinded.
where the prophets had come
in the greatest numbers the people
seemed to know the least.

Note: Other things could be said,
but this is enough so that
we can see the situation.

II. The attitude of the Lord Jesus.

It certainly reflects the deity of the
son of God, because His attitude
was certainly not characteristic of
men.

- A. It had broken His heart. This
is evident throughout the Gospel
of Luke. Cf. Luke 13: 34; 19: 41, 42;
23: 27-31.

Is it true to say that our hearts
also need to be broken by the

sin of men before we will be able to do much to reach them? Sin is disgusting (Rom. 1), but we need to see that sin is tragic!

B. He recognized their twofold problem:

1. "Ye would not" (Luke 13:34).
2. "If thou hadst known..." (Luke 19:42). Cf. Luke 23:34.
See also 1 Cor. 2:7, 8, 14.

C. He refused to let them go. No sooner was the Lord raised than He was speaking of His desire to evangelize Jerusalem. And he in our text gives us the two essential ingredients:

(1) The suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Some feel that our message needs to be changed, and some are changing it. But the world needs to hear of Christ. He is the only hope of men, the only One who can possibly meet our need.

(2) The ministry of the Holy Spirit in the lives of redeemed witnesses.

Don't you tire a little bit of the tendency these days to exalt the one who is doing the ministering? Gifted men are effective only in so far as they are willing to be used by the Holy Spirit. We do not need to

tarry as the early disciples
did because the Spirit of
God has been given, but
we need to realize that our
power comes only from Him!

Concl: Urban America is a lot like
Jerusalem - religious, enslaved,
corrupt, blind, hardened -
often very different from rural
America. But the foundations
must be strengthened here for
missions around the world
by seeing lives changed through
the preaching of a risen Saviour
through the power of the Holy
Spirit.
