

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #198

Jesus' Ministry in Jerusalem at the Feast of dedication

Jesus' First Lament Over Jerusalem Luke 13.31-35 (Repeated Text: MT 23.37-39)

31 At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you."

32 He replied, *"Go tell that fox, 'I will keep on driving out demons and healing people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.' 33 In any case, I must press on today and tomorrow and the next day--for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!"*

34 *"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. 35 Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.'"* (PS. 118.26A)

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	Somewhere in Judea, Probably Near Jerusalem
Timeline	Early December (Month 35)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VI: Jesus' Later Judean Ministry
	E. Jesus' Ministry in Jerusalem at the Feast of Dedication
Title	2. Jesus' First Lament Over Jerusalem

COMMENT:

Today's reading gives us another example of a repeated gospel text, in which Jesus repeated the same content (usually word for word) in two or more different settings. These texts indicate the repetition that Jesus employed in his teaching.

Jesus repeated his words of sorrow, or lament over Jerusalem three times in the gospel record. The first incident was today's reading; the second occurred during Passion Week on "Palm Sunday," as Jesus made his "triumphal entry" to Jerusalem. Jesus made his third lament two days later on Tuesday, at the conclusion of his scathing "7-Fold Woe to the Pharisees" message in MT 23. The first and third laments contain exactly the same words.

In the DJN we do not "blend" repeated passages, because they describe different events, which occurred at different times, in different contexts. We want to preserve everything the Scriptures tell us about Jesus, in each particular event.

When multiple gospels describe the same event, we call these "parallel" passages and blend the content of each related passage into one comprehensive narrative in the DJN. The goal in blended passages is to include all the

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #198

information provided by each author, without duplicating anything. The distinction between "repeated" and "parallel" passages in the gospel is an important one.

This text gives us a rare example of some Pharisees doing something helpful for Jesus. We do not know whether they used these words as an excuse to rush Jesus out of their region, or if there was a degree of sincerity in them. Given their own desire to see Jesus dead, it is doubtful that they were really trying to help him out. For whatever reason then, the Pharisees warned him about Herod's death-plot against him.

Jesus was not giving Herod a backhanded compliment in calling him a "fox." It was a purely negative reference. We see our Lord's awareness of his death, and his prophetic ministry as the Messiah in his reply. Both the Scriptures, and Jesus himself had predicted his death in Jerusalem. Ironically, Herod would have a part in one phase of Jesus' Roman trial that ended in his death sentence.

Thoughts of his own death in Jerusalem led Jesus into deep sorrow over the fate of Zion. He spoke of wanting to take the city, representing all of the nation, under his wing to protect and care for it. This image had been used many times in the Old Testament to illustrate YHWH's love and presence with his people. It was another divine claim for Jesus to use the image concerning himself.

By rejecting him, Jesus knew the capital, and ultimately the nation would be destroyed. This broke his heart, for he loved his people, and the Temple where he was so much at home in the presence of his Father.

Jesus arrived in Jerusalem on Dec.18th, for the Feast of Dedication, with a heavy heart. He was not grieved about his own personal suffering that would come to him next Spring, at Passover. Jesus was crushed in spirit about the consequences of rejecting him for his own people, whom he loved so much. We see Jesus' selflessness here. It is profoundly beautiful.

Jesus would speak many parables during his time in Perea, on the final journey to Jerusalem, and during Passion Week to warn and plead with the Jewish leadership, and the people in Jerusalem about the consequences of rejecting him. Each appeal arose from the deep sorrow and concern he expressed in this lament.

Only God's kind of unconditional love could continue to care for, and reach out with invitations to repentance to his enemies—his own people, who ultimately clamored for his crucifixion and were only satisfied when he was dead and buried. These words prepare us to understand the unconditional nature of God's kind of love that was revealed to all creation when Jesus died.

APPLICATION:

When people reject us we are usually hurt by what that rejection does to us.

Jesus suffered more deeply than anyone else due to the cost of being rejected. Yet, he was hurt by what his people's rejection cost them, not him. What an example of love, mercy, compassion, and grace we see in his attitude toward Jerusalem.

Do you focus on the damage done to you, or what people are doing to themselves when they reject you?

It is only by seeing the example of Jesus in this, and praying for the power of the Holy Spirit to change our hearts into likeness with his, that we can follow Jesus in his kind of love.

How will you do that?