

## Do You Know What's Good for You?

Scripture Reading: Luke 13:31-35

Jesus' enemies wanted to scare Him away. Instead of personally threatening Him, they told Jesus that Herod was going to kill Him. Jesus showed no fear. Rather, He showed that He was on His own timetable. Jesus was operating according to the plan that His Father had given Him. Luke 13:32 has an expression in it that should not be taken literally as a schedule of three days. *"Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected."* In other words, Jesus is going to do His appointed business for His Father, but there is a particular day that he will die. The statement, *"I shall be perfected"* is a reference to the completion of His work on earth. Jesus will die for our sins on the cross and then rise from the dead in His glorified body – never to die again (Revelation 1:5-7,17-18). This sense of timing, that everything was leading to a climactic moment in Christ's ministry, is prevalent throughout the narrative of Christ's work on earth (John 7:30; 8:20; 13:1; 17:1).

Jesus next reveals His plan to make the trip to Jerusalem. Jesus has an appointment to die there at the time of the Passover. As He comments on the history and legacy of that city being the place of so many deaths of God's prophets, Jesus offers a lament:

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you were not willing!"* (Luke 13:33-34 – NKJV)

Then, in Luke 13:35, Jesus foretells His triumphal entry into Jerusalem and the terrible desolation that will happen to Jerusalem much later (Luke 19:43-44; 23:23-31 cp. Hosea 10:8). He will be honored first, before He is put on trial and crucified (Luke 23:33-34 – *"...Father forgive them; for they know not what they do..."*). We now must go to that moment, in Luke 19:28-44, that is known as "The triumphal entry." For the sake of this message, we must only focus on Christ weeping over Jerusalem:

*"Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."* (Luke 19:41-44)

The chosen and anointed Savior had come to His people Israel. They officially rejected Him and caused Him to be crucified (Isaiah 53:1-4; John 1:11). The blessings that Jesus could have given them were not fulfilled because:

- The people were not willing (Luke 13:33-34).
- The people were ignorant – willingly ignorant (Luke 19:41-42; John 5:30-47; 8:37-47).
- The people were making terrible choices through their ignorance and unbelief (Luke 23:33-34).

The ignorance and unbelief of men led them to do terrible things – most of all, to crucify the Lord of glory (I Corinthians 2:7-8). Yet, these things were used of God to make a way of salvation for millions and millions of people (Romans 11:25 cp. Acts 2:22-23; 3:13-18; 4:24-28). The failure and sin of men was used in the hands of God to serve a greater purpose (Galatians 3:13-14).

This now brings us to Romans 8:28. This is one of the most well-known / well-loved verses in the Bible – perhaps second only to John 3:16. However, this may not be one of the best understood verses in the Bible. This verse does **not** teach:

- That everything that happens in life is good.
- That everything works out for good to everyone.
- That, if you love God, you will have no problems.

This verse **does** teach that, if you love God, if you are one of His that has been called according to His purpose:

- Everything is working together for your ultimate good and God's glory.
- Everything happening in your life is part of a bigger purpose that God has for you.

This leads us to some important questions:

- Do you love God?
- Have you answered His call to come to Christ and follow Him?
- Do you know, with other believers, that God has good and wonderful plans for His people?
- Do you know, with other believers, that God's love for you and His plans for you are settled and unchangeable?
- Do you remember what you know of God's love and promises when difficult and bad things are happening in your life and in your world? See II Timothy 1:12; 2:3-4,8-10.

Consider Romans 8:1-4,14-18,26-39; 5:1-5; James 1:2-8,12; I Peter 1:3-9; II Corinthians 4:6-18.