

The title this morning's sermon is, "*Bowing the Knee to Jesus Christ.*"

On Sunday mornings we're working our way through Luke's gospel verse by verse and we find ourselves at chapter 13, verses 31-35. We started these verses last week and we will finish them this morning.

Please stand with me for the reading of God's Word.

**Luke 13: 31 At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." 32 And he said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course. 33 Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.' 34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! 35 Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"**

Let's pray.

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Because we have to read Scripture instead of listen to it, or to be specific for this morning's verses, because we have to read Jesus's words, versus hear them, we have to guess how he said this to the Jews.

As we talked about last week:

- Because the Jews murdered the prophets...
- Because they would murder Jesus...
- Because Jesus – according to his own words – **often** reached out to them, and they **were not willing**...

How would you expect Jesus to say, "**O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,**" to the Jews?

I would expect him to be angry.

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To understand how Jesus said these words we are going to do something a little different. Instead of jumping right into the verses, we are going to look at the other times Jesus said names twice.

This will give us a good idea how he said these words to the Jews, because he always seemed to have the same tone when repeating names.

There's one other thing I want to mention about these examples before we look at them. It seems like whenever Christ repeated people's names, they were in weak, vulnerable positions of failure, but they would recover and do well in the future...and this brings us to lesson one...

**Lesson one: Jesus repeated people's names when they failed but would recover.**

First, please turn to the left to **Luke 10**.

**Luke 10:38 Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to his teaching. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving. And she went up to him and said, "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me." 41 But the Lord answered her, "MARTHA, MARTHA, you are anxious and troubled about many things, 42 but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her."**

How do you think Jesus spoke to Martha when he said her name twice?

Even though she:

- Interrupted Him when he was teaching...
- Criticized him, saying that he didn't care that Mary was mistreating her...
- And ordered him to do something – "Tell my sister to help me!"...

I think he spoke gently to her. I think He felt sorry for her for serving with this attitude.

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And as far as Martha recovering from this and doing well in the future, briefly turn to the right to **John 12**.

Look at **verse 1**...

**John 12:1** Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. **2** So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table.

Martha prepared a meal for Jesus, the Twelve, her brother, and her sister. That's 15 people!

Look at **verse 3**...

**John 12:3** Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. **4** But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, **5** "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" **6** He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. **7** Jesus said, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. **8** For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me."

This account took place less than a year after the account in **Luke 10** and there are several similarities between them:

- Jesus is in the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus again.
- Mary is back at Jesus' feet engaging in another act of devotion.
- Martha is back to serving again.
- Jesus defends Mary's behavior again:
  - Previously He defended Mary to Martha.
  - Now He defends Mary to Judas.

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And let me ask you a question...

Since Martha is serving again and Mary is showing her devotion again, what else would we expect?

We would expect Jesus to rebuke Martha again, but He didn't, and there are two reasons for that:

1. First, Jesus was eating instead of teaching. There was nothing better for Martha to choose this time.
2. Second, Martha served with the right attitude. She's not overwhelmed, feeling sorry for herself, or annoyed with others or the Lord.

So Jesus rebuked her and she recovered well.

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For the next example, turn to **Luke 22**.

Here's the context:

- In **Luke 22:1-23** Jesus says he will be betrayed, but all the disciples deny it
- Then in **Luke 22:24-30** the disciples argue about who is the greatest

Then Peter boldly declared that he would never betray Christ. Look how Jesus responded in **verse 31**...

**Luke 22:31 “SIMON, SIMON, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”**

Even though Jesus knew Peter would deny him – three times – how do you think Jesus spoke to Peter when he said his name twice?

I think he spoke kindly to him.

He knew Peter would fail, so he prayed for him and told him what to do when he repented and was restored: use what he learned to strengthen, or encourage, other Christians.

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And did Peter recover well?

Yes, he went on to become the leader of the apostles in the early church.

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Now turn to **Acts 9** for the third example. This is Saul’s famous conversion on the road to Damascus.

**Acts 9:1 But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. 4 And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “SAUL, SAUL, why are you persecuting me?” 5 And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.**

Saul was on his way to arrest, imprison, or murder as many Christians as he could. He never reached Damascus because the Lord called out to him by using his name twice and asked him why he was persecuting him.

How do you think Jesus spoke to him?

Firmly, but kindly. For persecuting Jesus, Jesus could’ve spoken very harshly to Saul.

And Saul recovered incredibly well after this. He’s the most prominent apostle in the church and he wrote one third of the books of the New Testament.

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With this familiarity with Jesus repeating people’s names, go ahead and turn back to **Luke 13:34**...

**Luke 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!**

How did Jesus feel about the Jews’ refusal to repent?

We see sorrow in his response.

One commentator said, *“Intense emotion, unfathomable pathos [or sadness], finds its expression in the repetition of the word Jerusalem.”*

And this brings us to lesson two...

**Lesson two: Sorrow is a Christlike response to sin.**

I can't say sorrow is the ONLY proper response to sin, because we know from elsewhere in the Gospels that Jesus got angry at people's sin, but He doesn't look angry in these verses. Instead, He seems sorrowful.

If we have a heart like Christ, then when we learn about people's sin, we should sorrow...and we should especially sorrow over our own sin.

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This past week I read about a pastor who learned that a friend had committed adultery. The pastor went to visit the man and wanted to lecture him. But he said that when he arrived all he could do was weep. Nothing was ever said. Just tears.

Interestingly, the pastor also said that his sorrow over the man's sin is what ended up breaking the man's heart and bringing him to repentance.

Just like this pastor's sorrow led this man to repentance, we would hope that Christ's sorrow would lead the Jews to repentance. But that wasn't the case. Look at the last four words of the verse...

**you were not willing.**

Notice the contrast:

- Jesus says, "**How often would I have...**"
- But the end of the verse, "**...you were not willing.**"

Jesus's willingness to protect them is contrasted with their unwillingness to come to him.

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Soon after I became a Christian I started wrestling with God's sovereignty and man's free moral agency and how they could both be true. It seemed to me that if God was sovereign, man couldn't be a free moral agent, and if man was a free moral agent, God couldn't be sovereign. These two truths seemed to be mutually exclusive.

Every time I met a Christian who seemed to know the Bible well I would ask him to explain this to me.

I finally reached the point that I stopped asking people and accepted that the Bible teaches both, so I would embrace both.

Listen to just these two verses:

- **1 Corinthians 15:10** **By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain.** (Paul attributes who he is to God's grace, but now listen to this...) **On the contrary** (Paul even argues with himself...), **I worked harder than any of them** (now he's the one working...), **though it was not I** (now he goes back again), **but the grace of God that is with me.** Paul sounds like he doesn't know what he's talking about as he tries to reconcile these truths.
- **Colossians 1:29** **For this I toil, struggling with all his energy** (Paul is working hard, but then he says...) **that he powerfully works within me.** He begins by talking about how hard he's working, but concludes by talking about how powerfully God is working in Him.

My finite mind can't understand how God's sovereignty can be reconciled with my free will, but maybe it will make more sense to me in heaven.

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The reason I mention this is we are looking at a good example of man's free moral agency in resisting God's mercy.

The word **often** shows how frequently Jesus pleaded with the Jews to repent, but as **often** as He pleaded with them, they **were not willing** to repent:

- The problem was not Jesus's willingness to protect them.
- The problem was their hardheartedness.

They wouldn't bow the knee to Christ.

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The same is true today.

Christ can plead with people to repent, but they can be as unwilling as the Jews.

- How many people have heard the gospel throughout their lives, but they won't repent?
- How many times have we become convicted of sin, but we won't repent?

Hopefully, if this has been the case for us, we can be challenged by what happened to the Jews. Because they **were not willing** – which is to say they wouldn't bow the knee to Christ – look what will happen...

**Luke 13:35a Behold, your house is forsaken.**

This refers to Rome attacking Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

The word **house** probably has a double meaning:

- It refers to the house, or household, of the Jews who would be slaughtered.
- It refers to the temple, or house of God, which would be destroyed.
- Then the Jews were scattered all over the world for over nineteen hundred years. I'd say they definitely felt **forsaken**.

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So there is an interesting irony...

Jesus identified himself as a mother hen, which probably flows from calling Herod a fox. Chicks need to be protected from foxes. We even talk about a fox in the hen house.

Hens gather their chicks under their wings when they are in danger. The Jews warned Jesus that he needed to flee from Herod, but they were the ones in danger! They needed to move under the protection of Christ's wings, but they would not, so their house would be forsaken.

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Look at the rest of **verse 35**...

**Luke 13:35b And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"**

Even though the Jews rejected Jesus, in the future they will say these words, which quote **Psalm 118:26**.

This is a good example of something we should understand reading the Bible...

When the New Testament quotes the Old Testament we tend to think the author is quoting the verse because of what it is saying, regardless of the context. But if this was true then the New Testament author would be violating one of the most important rule of Bible interpretation: context, context, and context.

The truth is that it's actually the opposite of what we tend to think: the New Testament author chose the Old Testament verse **BECAUSE** of its context. The part of the verse that is quoted is only the tip of the iceberg and the context further illustrates the point the New Testament author is making.

And **verse 35**, which quotes **Psalm 118:26**, is a good example of this. Go ahead and mark your spot in **Luke 13** and turn to **Psalm 118**. I would like you to try to be able to look at **Luke 13** and **Psalm 118** at the same time.

**Psalm 118:22 The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.**

We recognize this verse, don't we? It is quoted in multiple places in the New Testament and applied to Jesus.

**Psalm 118:23 This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. 24 This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. 25 Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord.**

The phrase “**Save us**” in Hebrew is “Hosanna.”

When did the Jews yell this to Jesus?

At the triumphal entry!

They quoted verses 25 and 26...

**John 12:12 The next day the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. 13 So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying out, “Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!”**

This is a quote of **Psalm 118:25** and **26**.

Now here's what's interesting...

Back in **Luke 13:35** Jesus said...

**Luke 13:35 You will not see me until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’”**

This is what they said at the triumphal entry. So, was the triumphal entry the fulfillment of Jesus saying they would say, “**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**”?

No, it wasn't, because even though they were worshiping Jesus at the triumphal entry, within a few days they would call out for his crucifixion.

That's why right after the triumphal entry, Jesus turned around and did what?

He wept over the city because He knew what was ahead for them...

**Luke 19:41 When he drew near and saw the city, HE WEPT OVER IT, 42 saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.**

Isn't this the same heart we saw from Christ in **Luke 13**? Both times, sorrow over the coming judgment: the Romans destroying Jerusalem in 70AD.

**Luke 19:43 For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side 44 and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”**

In other words, the Jews didn't know when their Messiah was coming.

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They said the words of **Luke 13** at Jesus's triumphal entry, but they would not have their complete fulfillment until the second coming. That's when the Jews will truly embrace Jesus as their Messiah. Listen to Paul describe it...

**Romans 11:25** Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. **26** And in this way **ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED**, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; **27** “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

At Jesus’s Second Coming, the Jewish people will welcome Him as the Messiah saying, “**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!**”

Briefly look back at Lesson one...

**Jesus repeated people’s names when they failed but would recover.**

This is exactly what we see with the Jews. They rejected Christ during his first coming, but they will embrace him at his second coming.

Listen to the way Zechariah describes it...

**Zechariah 12:10** [Jesus says], “I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.

When Jesus returns the Jews will recognize him as the Messiah they pierced, and they will mourn. They will grieve over having crucified him.

Although we have been talking about the Jews recognizing Jesus is the Messiah, the truth is that every single person who has ever lived will come to this realization. Listen to these verses:

- **Isaiah 45:23** [God says], “To me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance.”
- **Romans 14:11** “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”
- **Philippians 2:10** At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.

How can it be that every knee will bow to Christ when we know many have rejected him?

The answer is there are two ways people bow the knee to Christ: willingly and unwillingly....and this brings us to lesson three...

**Lesson three: We choose how we bow our knee to Christ.**

There are two other times in the gospels that names are repeated. I would like to use these two instances to illustrate the two groups whose knees will bow to Christ.

First, think about when Jesus was on the cross...

**Matthew 27:46** About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” that is, “**MY GOD, MY GOD, why have you forsaken me?**”

Jesus was willing to die on a cross and experience the wrath of His Father in our place. He was willing to be **forsaken** from God so that we could be reconciled to Him.

For those of us who have repented and put our faith in Christ, when we see Him, we will willingly bow our knee in worship and gratitude. We will rejoice at Christ's coming because it will mean seeing the Savior who gave us eternal life and delivered us from the punishment we deserve.

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The other instance in the gospels of a name repeated occurs in **Matthew 7...**

**Matthew 7:22 On that day many will say to me, 'LORD, LORD, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'**

These people who didn't repent will be filled with remorse and regret, and they will still bow their knee to Christ, but they will be forced to do so out of submission.

Every person will bow their knee to Christ, and they choose how they do so: willingly in this life or unwillingly in the next life.

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Let me conclude with this...

Jesus compared Himself to a hen. Given the number of animals available, this is a surprising choice. We see other animals in Scripture:

- **Exodus 19:4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.'**
- Or – most famously – **the lion of the tribe of Judah**

Compared to either of those, a mother hen does not inspire much confidence.

A mother hen will stand between her chicks and any danger, but with no fangs or claws, what can she use to protect her young?

It seems like only her own body. If foxes want to harm her young, they would have to kill her first.

In this sense, a hen is a beautiful picture of Christ. He was willing to sacrifice His body to protect us from the danger of God's wrath.

Jesus said, **"How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings."**

I picture a hen stretching out her wings to cover her chicks, and it makes me think of Christ stretching out his arms on the cross to cover us from the punishment our sins deserve.

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Christ wants to protect you.

You will bow your knee to Him. You must decide whether you will do so willingly in this life and then rejoice at His coming, or be forced to do so in the next life, and then weep and mourn that you rejected him.

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I will be up front after service, and if you have any questions about anything I've shared or I can pray for you in any way I would consider it a privilege to speak with you.

Let's pray.