

THE GALILEAN & JERUSALEM MINISTRY OF JESUS

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The public ministry of Jesus is clearly divided into two parts - the **Galilean ministry** and the **Jerusalem ministry**. In the Galilean period we see Jesus healing every kind of disease and exercising dominion over demons on a massive scale. Thousands came to Him as He proclaimed the *power* of the Kingdom of God by His works, and the *ways* of the Kingdom of God by His teachings.

Then after about two and a half years, this glorious ministry changed suddenly. Jesus explained to His followers that this unique season of ministry was coming to an end, and He must now go through a period of suffering and humiliation which was to be followed by resurrection and a different kind of glory.

"From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." (Matt. 16.21-23)

When He announced this new phase of ministry, His followers - especially Peter - did not accept it. They could not believe that He would abandon His astonishing ministry of power to enter a season of humiliation. However, Jesus explained that His season of suffering was necessary and rebuked Peter for trying to talk Him out of it. He let him know that the suggestion to avoid suffering was satanically inspired (Matt. 16.23). His willingness to suffer and to be seemingly oppressed (far from being a capitulation to the oppressor) was a means to a greater overthrow of Satan's kingdom than the power ministry of Galilee.

Not only did Jesus predict His own sufferings in Jerusalem, He went even further and explained that ALL of His followers must be willing to go through similar sufferings. *"Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If ANYONE desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to*

save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it." (Matt. 16.25)

Today the gospel of the Kingdom of God goes out in great power throughout the world but at the same time countless believers are going through seasons of humiliation and suffering. In Africa, many Christians live in near famine conditions, Iranian Christians deal with extreme persecution, European Christians are marginalized and ridiculed, Ukrainian Christians are facing lives overturned by the insanity of ferocious war and believers worldwide are dealing with the sadness of bereavement from losses to the pestilence of Covid and other trials.

The Cross of Calvary is the unique experience of Jesus, for only His Cross paid for the sins of the world. However, each of His followers will go through processes - their own personal cross- when God's plan runs contrary to their own preferences.

The two kinds of ministry that Jesus walked in - the Galilean and the Jerusalem Ministry - are reproduced in a smaller way in the lives of His followers. Jesus anointed His followers with *"ability from on high"* to reproduce His Galilean ministry of power, but He also anointed them to participate in His Jerusalem ministry - to know Him in *in the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings*. (Philippians 3.10) *"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household! (Matt. 10:24-25)*. Jesus empowered His followers to face suffering in the course of following and obeying Him.

There is no value in suffering for the sake of suffering. That is religious nonsense. However, as we obey and follow the Lord, we will have suffering. The Holy Spirit uses these sufferings to refine our souls, reveal and remove the flesh and complete His transforming work. These sufferings do not add to the salvation of our spirits but they are part of the salvation of our souls (mind, intellect, will and

emotions.) The changes that suffering produces within us (when responded to in faith and patience) transform our attitudes, personalities and behaviors to MANIFEST more fully Christ's character and nature.

"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing (James 1.2-3)

"And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us. (Rom.3-5)

As disciples, we learn not to resent the sufferings God's permits, because He is using them to refine, polish and further transform us. In fact, we rejoice in them, knowing that through these things His life is IN US will MANIFEST THROUGH US in a far greater way.

That is why Paul could say *"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed IN US. (Romans 8.18)*

He was not ashamed of his sufferings, but boasted in them and prayed that He would come into a greater knowledge of His Lord through them.

"Therefore, most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12.9,10)

That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death. (Philippians 3.10)

Furthermore, Peter recognized the sufferings of our personal cross are actually an intrinsic part of our calling *"For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps." (1 Peter 2.21)*

Suffering is never an end in itself - it is a consequence of living as redeemed people in a broken, unredeemed world. The sufferings of the believer are temporary - not permanent - and are always followed by an increase in His resurrection life and a time of greater comfort.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.. (2 Corinthians 4.17)

"But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you." (1 Peter 5.10)

In emphasizing and recovering the power of Jesus' Galilean ministry we should never forget that Jesus' ministry is also the ministry of the Cross. As we follow His example we go through suffering unto greater increase of His resurrection life in our souls and even in our mortal bodies.

A complete gospel requires that we embrace and proclaim the two aspects of Jesus' ministry - the Galilean ministry of POWER and the Jerusalem ministry of SUFFERING AND RESURRECTION.