

§152. Woes on the Impenitent Cities(Luke 10:13–16)

Introduction

1. This an imprecation or curse by Jesus. It had two purpose:
 - (a) To warn the cities visited by the seventy not to follow the lead of these three Galilean cities;
 - (b) To serve notice on the three cities that the Messiah's ministry to them had terminated.

Exposition

10:13 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

1. Korazim. The exact location of this town is uncertain, and this verse is the only indication that Jesus visited it.
2. Bethsaida: The miracle of the feeding of the five thousand was located near Bethsaida (9:10–17).
3. Tyre and Sidon. These well-known cities represented the pagan world. The point was not that pagan cities would be excused but rather that the cities of Galilee would experience an even greater condemnation.
4. Sitting in sackcloth and ashes. This was an ancient form of expressing mourning and repentance. 23 Sackcloth was a rough cloth made from goat's hair, and the ashes were either placed on the head (Matt 6:16) or sat on (Job 2:8; Jonah 3:6).
5. Application of the principle of Gen 6:3. 'My Spirit shall not strive with man forever'
6. It serves as a warning to the cities into which Jesus sent His forerunners.

10:14 But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you.

1. Gentile nations will be punished, but Jewish cities who got opportunity to hear the gospel will received much more punishment.
2. What about those who have not heard? The question should be what about those who heard!

10:15 And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades.

1. Mentioned 16 times in the gospels. BB Bruce says Capernaum was Jesus' base for his Galilean ministry (Mat 4:13. And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali.
2. The city was located at an important crossroads used by traders and the Roman army, so a message proclaimed in Capernaum was likely to go far.
3. Jesus had performed many miracles there, but many people of Capernaum did not understand Jesus' miracles or believe his teaching.
4. Capernaum. This was one of the first towns in which Jesus worked a miracle (Luke 4:23. He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.' ").
5. Capernaum as His headquarters, Jesus had elevated that city to the heavens; it had unwittingly assumed the function of Heaven in Jesus' life, for it had become His earthly home. What a tremendous honor had been bestowed on it, yet how insensitive it had been to that honor.
6. The price for rejecting Jesus who had lived among them and done so many miracles there was to be a fearsome eternal punishment, to be meted out even before the day of judgment, for Hades precedes Hell.

7. Capernaum was laid waste so thoroughly that archaeologists today are uncertain of its exact site. Today the site of ancient Capernaum is desolate—a stunning picture of Jesus' words here.

10:16 He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me.”

1. Those called of God have a delegated authority from Him. They must respect it, and those to whom they are called should likewise respect it.
2. The disciples represent Jesus; the messenger cannot be separated from the One who stands at the center of the message.
3. Ryle says that there is probably no stronger language than this in the New Testament about the dignity of a faithful minister's office and the guilt incurred by those who refuse to hear his message.

Application

1. **Heavy:** KoG is not a trivial matter. Curses against these cities indicated how serious the Lord takes care of the mission of the seventy. Same is true today also.
2. **Honor:** The honor which our Lord Jesus Christ gives to his ministers is encouraging. So long as they do their work faithfully, they are worthy of honor and respect for their Master's sake.
3. **Harsh:** Luke made clear that the harshness of judgment is based to a great extent upon whether or not one has been given the opportunity to repent.