

## April 17th – The Free Will of Man

*“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 13:34)*

I’m sure it comes as no surprise to you that Jesus was Jewish. His followers were Jewish. Their Scripture originated with the Jews. Their customs and religious practices were all Jewish. In fact, early in His ministry Jesus said, “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles...but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 10:5-6). We know that Jesus extended His mission to reach everyone – Jew or Gentile – but today’s verse demonstrates that Jesus yearned for the salvation of His own people.

Even though the Jews are the chosen people of God, the Lord never forced them to place their faith in Him. Throughout the ages, God has given the Jews chance after chance to come to Christ, and they have often refused it. Why is that? It’s something called the free will of man. Even though God is sovereign, He has still granted the Jews the capacity to receive Him or reject His grace. That same free will belongs to every other human being – each of us can either accept or reject Jesus Christ.

The Bible is very clear – God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim. 2:4). And yet, not everyone is saved. Jesus said that the majority of people are headed to hell (Matt. 7:13-14). Is God responsible for the fact that many people will suffer in hell? Absolutely not! Each man chooses what he will do with Christ and based upon that choice each man is responsible for his own eternal destiny. Have you exercised your free will by placing your faith in Jesus?