

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Jesus Set His Face. . .

(Jerry Fite)

**L**uke, the inspired historian, writes, “*And it came to pass, when the days were well-nigh come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem.*” (Luke 9:51). Jesus does not actually enter Jerusalem until Luke 19. Reading Luke 9, you would think Jesus’ entrance would be right around the corner. But some nine months occur after Luke’s description of Jesus’ thinking until He goes to Jerusalem. Luke’s 9:51 statement introduces Luke’s emphasis upon the portion of Jesus’ ministry known as the Perean ministry. Leaving Galilee, he would broaden his travels to the areas near Tyre, and Sidon unto Caesarea Philippi, and even travel east of the Jordan River. Much teaching, and less miracles characterize Luke’s account of this portion of Jesus’ earthly ministry.

What can we learn from Jesus setting his face toward Jerusalem, and the context for this interesting insight into Jesus’ attitude?

Jesus “setting his face” manifests his laser-like focus and

determination for something that would occur months later. Nothing was to detour Him of his entering Jerusalem to fulfill his ministry. Like a leaf set permanently in cement, going to Jerusalem was not leaving Jesus’ mind.

Why was Jesus looking ahead so much for Jerusalem? Luke tells us that the days “*were well-nigh come that he should be received up.*” Being “*received up*” has reference to Jesus’ ascension, not His death. Obviously Jesus would first have to die which He did in Jerusalem, but Luke, writing years after the event, focuses upon what would occur near Bethany (Luke 24:50-51). This fact certainly fits with Jesus thinking beyond the cross: “*...who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God*” (Hebrews 12:2).

While Jesus is focused upon the important events connected with Jerusalem, look at what occupies the thinking of His disciples: who among them is the greatest (Luke 9:46)? If you are

not in our immediate company, we forbid your work of casting out demons (Luke 9:49); and let us call on God to bring fire down on the head of the evil Samaritans (Luke 9:52-54). Self-importance and selfish divisiveness in the hearts of His disciples was met with Jesus’ instruction, but he kept focused upon the important mission ahead of him, saving man from their sins.

Jesus setting his face toward an important event helps us in our mission upon the earth. Heaven is the Christian’s single hope and goal (Ephesians 4:4, Colossians 1:5). Encouraged by Jesus, we should look beyond the cross with all its difficulties, and never lose sight of the crown of life (Revelation 2:10). Instructed by Jesus, we should never let the noise of life detour us from the important goal of Heaven. Engaging the people around us, while dealing constructively with the promoted philosophies of man, we must continue to set our face toward Heaven. No painful persecution or persuading philosophy will detour us. Like Jesus, our faces are set!