Hello everyone,  
  
           In each of these emails, we take one of the week’s lectionary readings and try to break it open as the Bread of Life so that it might speak to us more clearly. This week I’ve chosen Luke 13:31-35. I hope you read it; it’s short but not that easy.  
  
            In the passage, we see the storm gathering around Jesus as he continues his inexorable journey towards Jerusalem. And we read hints of what is going to happen to him. It is at Jerusalem that the fate of Jesus will ultimately be sealed.  
            Then it’s at this point in the text that there is an outburst of emotion from Jesus regarding the waywardness of God’s people, and we see the human side of Jesus full on. It seems to me that there is an innate tendency amongst all God’s creatures to protect their young. It’s woven into the DNA of all creation, not least among human beings. And its not surprising because here Jesus shows that same protective instinct towards Jerusalem and its people, “How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings.” And then, “And you were not willing.”  
             Jesus here feels the pain of rejection, and then he concludes that the outcome of this will be desolation.  
              The emotion and the pathos is emphasised in the repetition, Jerusalem, Jerusalem. Similarly Jesus says, “Martha, Martha,” in Luke 10:41, and “Simon, Simon,” in Luke 22:31.   
               Now to me he might well say,”Graham, Graham,” or to you,”?,?” or to us, “Bents Green, Bents Green,” as he yearns to call us into the protective arms of his embrace, while at the same time calling us to follow him in the Way.  
                 The question is, Am I, are you, are we willing?  
  
       Our theme hymn,”Break thou the Bread of Life” has these words in verse 1:-  
             Beyond the sacred page, I seek thee Lord   
             My spirit longs for thee, O Living Word.  
      Just as Jesus longs to gather us, his children, close to him, may we also long to be close to him, so that we may be nourished by him, the Bread of Life, as we follow the road of discipleship and all that means.  
  
                God bless,  
                        Graham

*Produced by Graham Wassell on behalf of the Bents Green Holy Habits Planning Group (Debs Barnett, Glenn Evans, Martyn Read, Graham Wassell, Daphne and John Wilkins).  You can find more information on the Circuit Holy Habits Programme on the Sheffield Methodist Circuit website and also the Sheffield Methodist Circuit Facebook page.*