

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon December 15, 2019
Luke 13: 31 – 35 – “Under the Shadow of the Almighty”

18 Then He said, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? 19 It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches." 20 And again He said, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? 21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."

22 And He went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. 23 Then one said to Him, "Lord, are there few who are saved?" And He said to them, 24 "Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. 25 When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open for us,' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from,' 26 then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' 27 But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.' 28 There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. 29 They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. 30 And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last."

31 On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You." 32 And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.' 33 Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. 34 "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! 35 See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

1 Now it happened, as He went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath, that they watched Him closely. 2 And behold, there was a certain man before Him who had dropsy. 3 And Jesus, answering, spoke to the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" 4 But they kept silent. And He took him and healed him, and let him go. 5 Then He answered them, saying, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" 6 And they could not answer Him regarding these things.

I. Introduction

- a. So, as Jesus is drawing near to Jerusalem, Luke brings forth the response of Herod. This is not the same King Herod who reigned during the time of Jesus' birth, who slaughtered so many innocent little boys. Rather, this is Herod the tetrarch whom we've encountered already in Luke 3, Luke Luke 8 and Luke 9. In the later chapters of the book of Acts, we will be introduced to Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great.
- b. Today's sermon: Luke 13: 31 – 35 – “Under the Shadow of the Almighty”

- i. Jesus warned of Herod's murderous intent v31
 - ii. Jesus responds He must go to Jerusalem v32,33
 - iii. Jesus laments over Jerusalem v34,35
 - iv. Questions to know, love and obey God
- II. Jesus warned of Herod's murderous intent v31
 - a. On that very day some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You."
 - b. "On that very day" – Luke wants us to put this conversation into the prior context we saw in v22-30
 - i. Jesus has been preaching through the villages and cities of Israel on His way to Jerusalem to die on the cross, warning the people of Israel that they have turned away from God and created a false system of worship based upon legalism, hypocrisy and self-righteousness, ignoring the law of love, and abandoning the poor, oppressed and needy. He has warned them of God's coming wrath upon that wicked generation. And, finally, someone in the crowd seems to have awakened to this reality, asking "Are there few who are saved?". Jesus goes on to teach them to immediately seek to enter the "narrow gate" in order to be saved from the coming wrath and destruction of Israel, which most of Israel will experience. And, He tells them that many Gentiles will be saved as many in Israel are lost. This teaching has stirred up the people, and word has reached Herod.
 - ii. Bock "Josephus pictures Herod Antipas as a man who liked his region to be as peaceful as possible....Herod undoubtedly wishes to remove any source of agitation."¹
 - c. "some Pharisees came, saying to Him, "Get out and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You."
 - i. Why do these Pharisees report this information to Jesus? Are they lying in the hopes to frighten and shut down Jesus' ministry? Are they sympathetic with Christ and trying to help Him after learning of Herod's murderous intent? Are they in league with Herod serving as his appointed messengers? We really do not know for sure. The use of the descriptor "Pharisees" certainly brings in skepticism regarding their motives, and yet we really do not know.
 - ii. Bock "While this looks like a friendly attempt to help Jesus (Fitzmyer 1985: 1030), it might be an expedient way to get Jesus out of the

¹ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1246). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

region without resorting to violence (Marshall 1978: 570–71). There is not enough detail to decide this issue.”²

iii. One thing is certain: Herod Antipas has already beheaded John, and his father was a mass murderer of little baby boys. This is no empty threat. It would certainly bring fear to those who had not heeded Jesus’ prior teaching: (12:4,5)

1. “And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!”

iv. Note how fear of death is used to by the enemies of Jesus as a tool to lead Him away from His mission.

III. Jesus responds He must go to Jerusalem v32,33

a. 32 And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.'
33 Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem.

b. “Go and tell that fox” – The feminine form of this Greek word for “fox” is used, so Jesus is calling this man Herod, a vixen. This could very well be a reference to how the wife of Herod Antipas controls him and encourages him into wicked behavior to please her own evil desires.

i. Matthew 14:3-8 “For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. 4 Because John had said to him, "It is not lawful for you to have her." 5 And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet. 6 But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod. 7 Therefore he promised with an oath to give her whatever she might ask. 8 So she, having been prompted by her mother, said, "Give me John the Baptist's head here on a platter.””

ii. About the use of the word “fox”, Bock says, “He calls the king a fox. The signification of ἀλώπηξ (*alōpēx*) is debated: it can refer to (1) a person of no significance, (2) a deceiver, a person of cunning, or (3) a destroyer.”³ – All of these meanings would fit with Herod and Herodias. While they believe they are important, they will die and discover Jesus is the Head over all. Deception and cunning mark

² Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1246). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

³ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1247). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Herod's approach to trying to kill John, wanting to kill John without inciting the people, shows his cunning. His beheading of John certainly shows their destructiveness. But, ultimately, though the reign of this fox/vixen pair seems powerful as they hold the threat of death, they are nothing compared to the One Who will conquer death.

- c. 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.' Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following.
 - i. Jesus describes His power. While the vixen and fox think they have power, they really do not. Jesus will go on to demonstrate this.
 - ii. McDurmon "Jesus makes it clear He has a goal to reach and He will not stop giving divine witness of His message until He reaches that goal. He will continue healing and casting out demons—proving the Kingdom of God has come (Luke 11:20)—until He is finished. Until then, He will remain undaunted by threats from either the Pharisees or Herod."⁴
 - 1. Jesus will press on no matter what.
 - iii. "today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must journey today, tomorrow, and the day following" – this may be an allusion to His crucifixion and resurrection, but in its denotation, Jesus is describing a series of events He must complete no matter what.
 - 1. Perfected = to make perfect, to make complete. To bring to the pre-determined goal. To accomplish or fulfil prophecy.
 - 2. The threats of these little people will not deter God. His Word must be accomplished.
- d. "for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem."
 - i. Here Jesus again predicts His death in Jerusalem, and He makes it clear He will be murdered like the OT prophets were murdered by prior wicked generations.
 - ii. This serves as another indictment against apostate Israel, and these Pharisees would not have missed this accusation against them. They are like the wicked generations of old.
 - iii. In addition, Jesus describes Himself as a prophet. He has been sent by God to declare His judgment ahead of time. The fact that they will go on to murder Jesus shows here that they will not repent at His preaching.

⁴ McDurmon, J. (2011). [*Jesus v. Jerusalem: A Commentary on Luke 9:51–20:26, Jesus' Lawsuit Against Israel*](#) (p. 68). Powder Springs, GA: American Vision.

- iv. Furthermore, Jesus is here declaring that He will die when and where has been determined by God, not according to the threats of vixens or foxes.
- IV. Jesus laments over Jerusalem v34,35
- a. 34 "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! 35 See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! "
 - b. Note Jesus' compassion: the double vocative "Jerusalem, Jerusalem" shows His compassionate heart. It emphasizes His desire to show mercy and provide protection and covering for His people.
 - i. Bock "He has long had a desire to care for it and protect it. The tone is sorrowful as well as prophetic, as the double vocative shows"⁵
 - c. The people of Jerusalem are devoted to resisting God. They are described as murdering those God sends to her to warn her. Instead of gratefully heeding His patient warning, they spurn Him and kill His messengers, finally rejecting and murdering God's Own Son.
 - i. Bock "Jerusalem is described in graphic terms as the city where the prophets are slain and God's messengers are stoned, a point that explains why Jesus must suffer in Jerusalem. ... Jerusalem, as the nation's religious center, reflects the nation's response, which historically has not responded well to God, even though he longed to care for it."⁶
 - d. "How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings"
 - i. Next, note how much Jesus wants them to understand His compassion. He goes on to use the metaphor of a hen gathering her little chicks to protect them as a picture of how He so often wanted to gather Jerusalem's children together.
 - ii. Bock "Jesus, as prophet, speaks of repeatedly longing to gather the nation as a hen would gather her brood under her wing. In fact, the image of God as a bird is common in the OT and in Judaism... Gentile converts to Judaism were said to come under the wings of the Shekinah ... In this image, Jesus reveals God's heart. God's constant desire is to intimately care for, nurture, and protect his people. The allusion to repeated attempts to gather the nation may

⁵ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51-24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1248). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁶ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51-24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1249). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

allude to the prophets' work in the past, as well as to the work of this messenger now. There is a pattern to the people's behavior, which the parables also pick up"⁷

- iii. Psalm 91:1-6 "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. 2 I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." 3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler And from the perilous pestilence. 4 He shall cover you with His feathers, And under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. 5 You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, Nor of the arrow that flies by day, 6 Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday."
- e. "but you were not willing" – They had persistently hardened their hearts against God.
- f. The result of rejecting God will be desolation.
 - i. "See! Your house is left to you desolate; and assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "
 - ii. Bock "The upcoming rejection requires that the prophet Jesus declare that Israel is in peril. The language of the empty, desolate house recalls Jer. 12:7 and 22:5 ... The OT declared the possibility of exile for the nation if it did not respond to God's call about exercising justice ...As such, Jesus' use of οἶκος (*oikos*) does not allude to the temple. Jesus is more emphatic than Jeremiah's statement of the potential rejection of the nation. He states that a time of abandonment has come. Rather than being gathered under God's wings, their house is left empty and exposed. The now-empty house is the nation. The tree is being cut down (Luke 13:6–9)."⁸
- g. Jesus adds a timeframe to this rejection, using Psalm 118.
 - i. "assuredly, I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' ""
 - 1. The coming triumphal entry is not genuine. They do not really recognize Jesus as God's messenger at that time.
 - ii. Bock "Jesus adds a note about the duration of this judgment: they will not see God's messenger until they recognize "the one who comes in the name of the Lord" ...The original psalm alluded to the priests' blessing of those who came to worship in the temple, in all

⁷ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1249). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

⁸ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1250). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

likelihood pilgrims led in procession by the king. Jesus says that until the nation acknowledges him as blessed by God it will be judged.”⁹

- iii. This reference is likely pointing ahead to the time when Israel comes to Christ.
 1. Bock “It is debated whether Luke by this remark holds out hope for Israel’s future. Luke 21:24 and the speech of Acts 3 show that Jesus and the church continued to extend hope to Israel. They believed that God would restore the nation in the end. In fact, the NT suggests that such a response will precede Christ’s return, thus Luke’s later reference to the current period as “the time of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24; see also Rom. 11:11–32 [esp. 11:12, 14, 25–27, 31–32] and probably Rev. 7:1–8). The triumphal entry of Luke 19 cannot be the fulfillment of this remark, since a note of rejection is present in 19:41–44.”¹⁰

V. Questions to know, love and obey God

⁹ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1250). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

¹⁰ Bock, D. L. (1996). [Luke: 9:51–24:53](#) (Vol. 2, p. 1251). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.