

THE HARDEST PART

Curiouser and Curiouser



SERMON NOTES
MARCH 16, 2025

*The Second Sunday in Lent
Scripture: Luke 13:31-35*

LUKE 13:31-35(THE MESSAGE)

³¹Just then some Pharisees came up and said, "Run for your life! Herod's on the hunt. He's out to kill you!"

³²⁻³⁵Jesus said, "Tell that fox that I've no time for him right now. Today and tomorrow I'm busy clearing out the demons and healing the sick; the third day I'm wrapping things up. Besides, it's not proper for a prophet to come to a bad end outside Jerusalem.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killer of prophets, abuser of the messengers of God! How often I've longed to gather your children, gather your children like a hen, Her brood is safe under her wings— but you refused and turned away! And now it's too late: You won't see me again until the day you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of God.'"

God's relentless love and desire for relationship with us is offered in Jesus and accepted through the gifts of repentance and pardon for sin!

I. "A PUZZLING ENCOUNTER..."

- A. Jesus is in the middle of his Galilean public ministry traveling from town to village, teaching about the Kingdom of God and healing.
- B. On this occasion, some Pharisees (a sect within Judaism, teachers of the Law and a moderating voice in the Jewish Council) come to warn Jesus about King Herod's threats against him.
- C. The Pharisees are often misjudged by Christians as being generally in opposition to Jesus, but many Pharisees were open to Jesus' teaching and became followers.
- D. Herod Antipas (son of Herod the Great who had massacred the infants in Bethlehem), the Tetrarch of the region of Galilee, who had beheaded John the Baptist, is perplexed by the reports of Jesus (9:7-9). His curiosity now ominously turns deadly.
- E. Luke here foreshadows Herod's participation in Jesus' death in Jerusalem, even though Herod is the ruler of the region of Galilee and not Judea.
- F. Jesus' response to the Pharisee's warning poignantly informs all that neither Herod, nor any force (including the Pharisees), will deter him from his faithfulness to God's redemptive purposes. This purpose will be fulfilled in Jerusalem.

II. "FROM WARNING TO LAMENT..."

- A. Jesus' words, "Tell that fox that I've no time for him right now. Today and tomorrow I'm busy clearing out the demons and healing the sick; the third day I'm wrapping things up. Besides, it's not proper for a prophet to come to a bad end outside Jerusalem (vv.32-35)", express that he is leaving Galilee for Judea soon, and foreshadows his Passion and death.
- B. Jesus journeys to Jerusalem, not to escape death, but to die there...a prophet obedient to God's direction. Jerusalem becomes the tipping point between the words of warning, and words of lament.

- C. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killer of prophets, abuser of the messengers of God!" Jesus alludes to the killing of God's messengers, the prophets (including Uriah, Zechariah, those killed by Manasseh, and some traditions include Isaiah), in Jerusalem by Israel throughout their history, and sees himself in that number!
- D. Jesus' lament over Jerusalem lyrically captures God's relentless love for God's people using the maternal image of a hen protecting her brood (Deut 32:11; Ruth 2:12; Ps 17:8; 36:7; 91:4; Isa 31:5) ... "How often I've longed to gather your children, gather your children like a hen, her brood safe under her wings..."

What images might help us glimpse God's relentless love for us?

When have you experienced God's relentless love?

III. "TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES!"

- A. Jesus' lament continues but now recounts the disobedience and refusal of God's people to accept God's relentless love, "...but you refused and turned away!"
- B. The lament becomes an urgent expression of Jesus' impending passion and death in Jerusalem and gives insight into Jesus' understanding and commitment to God's purpose for him. "And now it's too late: you won't see me again until the day you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of God.'"
- C. The allusion to the processional psalm, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of God" was sung by pilgrims entering the holy city of Jerusalem and will be sung as Jesus soon triumphantly enters the city. But will Jerusalem really welcome the one who comes in the Lord's name?
- D. Even as Jesus will enter the holy city, the judgment against Jerusalem is confirmed as he will not be accepted, and he will suffer the fate of the prophets before him.
- E. Luke's telling of Jesus' words invites his hearers to embrace and accept God's gracious activity by repenting, and accepting the forgiveness Jesus offers....it is not too late!!!

How have we rejected and killed God's prophets for us?

How are you resisting and refusing to accept Jesus' offer of God's forgiveness and salvation?

Accept the love of Christ, repent of your sins, receive God's pardon, and receive the gift of salvation... it's not too late.