

The Fox Threatens, But the Hen Prevails

Luke 13:31-35 ▪ March 15, 2026 ▪ Ryan Wildauer

Foxes may _____, but they cannot stop God's _____. vv. 31-33

God _____ those who will come under Jesus' _____. vv. 34-35

Luke 13:31-35

³¹ At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you."

³² And he said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course.' ³³ Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.' ³⁴ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!

³⁵ Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'" (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: Why can it be difficult to trust that God has a definite plan for our lives? What are some things that tend to shake our confidence in His direction?

Read & Discuss: Luke 13:31-35

1. In verse 31 the Pharisees warn Jesus that Herod is wanting to kill him. What are some reasons Herod might have felt threatened by Jesus? What are some possible motivations the Pharisees might have had for bringing this warning to Jesus?
2. Jesus responds by calling Herod a “fox” (v. 32). What characteristics of a fox might help explain why Jesus used that description? Jesus says He will continue casting out demons and performing cures “today and tomorrow” (v. 32). What does this reveal about His priorities at that time? How do we distinguish between God-given priorities and urgent distractions in our own lives?
3. Jesus shows incredible confidence in God’s plan despite a death threat (v. 33). In our lives, what are some ways such confidence should manifest itself? Why do you think challenges, threats, or even just bad news can often cause us to doubt what we believe God has called us to do?
4. Jerusalem was meant to be the center of worship, yet it became known for rejecting God’s messengers (v. 34). What are some reasons a religious community might become resistant to God’s truth? How might we be susceptible to that same kind of spiritual blindness today?
5. Jesus begins verse 34 with the words “Jerusalem, Jerusalem.” What emotions do you hear in His voice? Jesus says He often desired to gather the people together like a hen gathers her chicks. What does this tell us about Jesus’ heart? Why do you think people sometimes resist or reject the help God sends them? What message of God are you struggling to believe?
6. Verse 34 ends with the words “and you were not willing.” What does this reveal about human responsibility in responding to God? Jesus says in verse 35, “Your house is forsaken.” What does this warning tell us about the consequences of rejecting what God offers?
7. Jesus concludes by saying they will not see Him until they say, “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” (v. 35), a quote from Psalm 118:26. Since this was a song used to welcome kings and pilgrims into the city, why might He choose these specific words in a moment of judgment? In what ways does this final statement offer a note of hope for the future?

Apply: What might it look like for you to take refuge under Jesus’ “wings” this week? What have you learned from this passage about Jesus that encourages or challenges you?

Pray: Praise God for the road Jesus walked so He could secure our salvation. Pray that we’ll have this same confidence to walk in the paths God has given us so we might best glorify Him.