

Luke 13:31 to End. Christ Replies to Herod's Threatening.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus responds to Herod's threats by revealing his knowledge of his own death and resurrection, and by offering himself as a loving and protective God who desires to guard his people from harm.

Scripture: Luke 13:33

Topics: "Christ's Protection", "God's Sovereignty"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer delves into the Savior's abhorrence of Herod's character, calling him 'a fox' for his mistreatment of John the Baptist. Despite threats, Jesus knew the time and place of His death, prophesying His completion as an atoning priest through sacrifice. He expressed deep lamentations over Jerusalem, desiring to gather its people like a hen protects her chicks. Comparing Himself to an eagle and a hen, Jesus assures protection for His people from surrounding dangers, urging them to seek refuge under His wings.

Transcript

The Savior showed his abhorrence of Herod's character by the name which he gave him, "a fox." The manner in which Herod had treated John the Baptist, rendered him deserving of the name of fox. He had once listened to his preaching, and shown him respect; but had afterwards imprisoned and basely murdered him. The different natures that God has bestowed upon the animals are intended to represent the various characters of men. The children of Satan resemble wolves, bears, and foxes, and all manner of voracious birds and loathsome reptiles; while the children of God are like the gentle sheep and the harmless dove.

But the threats of Herod did not alarm the Lord. Though the Pharisees said, "Herod will kill you," yet He who knew all things, knew the tyrant would not kill him. And why not? Because that hour was not the time, nor that spot the place of his death. The Savior knew when He should die. He prophesied that He should live a few days, that is, a short time longer, and on the third day be perfected, or rendered complete. In this mysterious language, He alluded to his death--by death He was perfected, or rendered complete as an atoning priest. In death He offered that sacrifice which atoned for the sins of his people, and with that sacrifice He appeared in the presence of God for us. Jesus knew where He would die. He said, "It cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." He did not mean to say, that no prophet had perished

elsewhere, but that most prophets had been slain in that wicked city. Did the prospect of his death, with all its attendant horrors, excite angry feelings in his bosom? Instead of expressing anger, He burst forth into the most tender lamentations over the city of his murderers. How touching are the words--"How often would I have gathered your children together, as a hen does gather her brood under her wings, and you would not!"

In the Old Testament the Lord compared himself to an eagle, bearing her eaglets on her wings to a place of safety. But in this place He compares himself to a hen seeking to guard her little ones beneath her wings, from the birds of prey hovering in the air. How suitable are both these comparisons! When Israel was in Egypt, God delivered him from his enemies with the strength of an eagle, by carrying him into Canaan. But when Israel was in the promised land, He promised to guard him with the fond care of a hen, from the enemies that threatened to devour him. When we are in trouble, God is like an eagle in delivering us; and when we have been delivered, He is like a hen in keeping us from evil. How many blessings we possess at the present moment! But there are many dangers on every side. If we take shelter beneath the wings of our God, no evil shall overtake us. But if we refuse to come to Him who calls us, then we shall fall a prey to our enemies. Satan and all his angels are like birds of prey hovering in the air, longing to devour us. But Jesus will preserve his people from their malice. We live in a world full of trouble and temptation, but there is a refuge for us. Here is a prayer for a soul that feels its own helplessness, and dreads the power of its enemies--"Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me; for my soul trusts in you; yes, in the shadow of your wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast." (Ps. 57:1.)

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