

LUKE I Opposition from the Darkness Text: Luke 13:31–35

An Unholy Alliance is Forming

Introduction:

1. Luke 13 closes with a mysterious passage that reveals the tension building behind the scenes against Jesus...
 2. An unholy alliance is forming in the halls of power...
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I. THE POWER & PARANOIA OF HEROD (v.31)

A. HIS POWER – We know who this Herod is > Herod Antipas

1. **His father was Herod the Great,**
 - a) who was half Jewish, half Edomite, the descendent of Esau
 - b) It was Herod who built up the temple—but not for God’s glory— but his own glory
 - c) Herod built palaces, aquaducts, and even a monument to Himself—the Herodium
 - d) The Herodium was His own castle, pleasure palace, hot springs and eventual tomb
2. **Herod the Great was a paranoid megalomaniac**
 - a) he had his own wife murdered. (thinking she was plotting behind his back)
 - b) Then he killed his sons from his first wife. (fearing their revenge for their mother)
 - c) He killed his own brother-in-law (thinking he was plotting against him)
 - d) Anyone perceived a threat would mysteriously disappear or come to untimely death
 - e) When he heard of the newborn king of the Jews, he ordered all the male children in Bethlehem and it’s surrounding regions, 2 years old and under, killed with the sword.
3. **When Herod the Great was dying—he knew no-one would shed a tear...**
 - a) He made sure to plan a magnificent funeral with full Military Honors
 - b) A Royal Procession... and since he knew no one would be sad...
 - c) he ordered the prominent men of Jerusalem be arrested and killed...
 - d) so tears would be shed the day he died. [thankfully cooler heads prevailed]
4. **His remaining sons were vested with power after Herod died—which had to be approved by Caesar Augustus in Rome (Luke 3:1–3)**

[The rule of Herod Antipas lasted the entire earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth]

B. HIS PARANOIA

1. **Herod Antipas was paranoid about keeping and maintaining his own power**
 - a) We know from the Jewish Historian Josephus that Herod Antipas feared the growing influence of John the Baptizer... the Cousin of Jesus...
 - b) *“Now when many many others came in crowds about him, for they were greatly moved by hearing his words, Herod who feared, lest the great influence John had over the people might put it into his power and inclination to raise a rebellion, for they seemed ready to do anything he should advise.” (Josephus)¹*

¹ Josephus, Antiquities, Book 18, ch 5, 2

2. **John was a prophet of God—calling for the people to REPENT**
 - a) in order to prepare the way for Jesus.
 - b) But his preaching was making enemies in high places...
 3. **Herod's 1st wife was the daughter of an Arabian King of the Nabateans...**
 - a) But He divorced her to marry his brother Philip's wife / who left him for Antipas...
 - b) But the whole sorted affair angered the King of the Nabateans which then led to war!
 - c) Herod Antipas was barely saved from total defeat—only when Rome stepped in!
 - d) His decadence almost cost him everything...
 4. **John's Preaching is bringing up things Herod would rather forget...**
 - a) things his second wife Herodias would rather silence...
 - b) Jesus knows exactly who Herod Antipas is > **(Matthew 14:1–12)**
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II. THE COURAGE & COMPASSION OF CHRIST (v.32-34)

A. HIS COURAGE (v.32-33)

1. **Jesus was warned—but He is not afraid...**

His life is not in the hands of Herod—but in the hands of God!
2. **No Worldly Leader Can Stop the Plans of God!**
 - a) Their Efforts to Stop the Plans of God are Only Going to Fulfill the Plans of God!
 - b) Jesus is not avoiding Death—He is heading directly to the city where it will happen.
3. **Herod will finally see Him face to face in Jerusalem when Jesus is on trial**
 - a) But Herod is not interested in Justice... **(Luke 23:6–12)**
4. **Even on Trial—Jesus would not even dignify this man with a response...**

He said Nothing to this Man—*Nothing!*

When Jesus has nothing to say to a man, that man is done, his position is hopeless.²

B. HIS COMPASSION (v.34)

1. **Its not just courage—but Compassion—compelling Him toward Jerusalem**

Jesus wept for Jerusalem—even w/ full knowledge of it's sins!
2. **The City that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her!**
 - a) He wanted to Take Them Into His Arms—LOVE and CARE for them...
 - b) To PROTECT them and KEEP them SAFE from the Enemy
 - c) To HELP them and FEED them w/ the Water of Life and Bread of Life
 - d) To BLESS Them and Bring Them JOY and HAPPINESS!

EX: Years ago in 1989, there was a devastating wildfire in Yellowstone National Park.

National Geographic reported on the fire with a series of stories and photographs.

An Eagle had been found dead, with it's wings outspread, but charred from the heat of the fire.

When they lifted up the dead eagle, the baby chicks underneath were alive. It was a mother eagle who had covered her baby chicks with her wings and protected them, even at the cost of her own life.

3. **This is a heartfelt picture of His love! **(Deuteronomy 32:10–11)****

² Leon Morris, Tyndale NT Commentary, Luke p. 245.

III. THE DECISION & DESOLATION OF JERUSALEM (v.34-35)

A. AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE WAS STARTING TO TAKE FORM...

1. **As evil as Herod Antipas was—It Wasn't Herod that had Jesus killed...**
 - a) The Romans played their part to protect their power...
2. **But the Barbaric Irony—is that it was the Religious Scholars...**
 - a) the Theologians, the PhD's of the Law, the scribes & Pharisees
 - b) The lawyers of the Law, the religious rulers of Jerusalem
 - c) The HIGH PRIEST! —The PUPPET H.P. Condemned the TRUE High Priest!
3. **The Religious–Power Complex of Jerusalem was NOT going to let JESUS leave Jerusalem alive.**

B. JERUSALEM JERUSALEM, THE ONE WHO KILLS THE PROPHETS...

1. *“Why would great cities, blessed by music and art, be also the breeding ground of crime? Why would Jerusalem, crowned by the temple, be the slaughterhouse for prophets?”³*
2. **Because They Wanted ALL the Blessings OF GOD—but WITHOUT GOD... They Didn't Want the TRUTH—They Wanted POWER**
3. **Jesus came to Save Them—but He was NOT the Messiah They Wanted**
John 5:39-40 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

C. THE DESOLATION (v.35)

1. **Desolation means left empty—deserted—without God**
 - a) Like God warned Disobedient Jerusalem in days of Jeremiah (**Jer. 12:7; 22:5**)
 - b) They beat Jeremiah and threw him down to the bottom of a pit in the mud
2. **Jesus pleaded with them in tears...He wept for them (Luke 19:41–44)**
“He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Pet. 3:9) who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Tim. 2:4.)
—>but He could not protect them from their own rebellious Hearts.
3. **Jerusalem wanted ALL the blessings OF GOD—but WITHOUT GOD**
 - a) So Rather than Staying under God's hand of protection and wings of love, they are now left Desolate—Empty, Naked and Exposed
 - b) That is eventually what sin and rejection of God's way of salvation does.
4. **God sent prophets and teachers who they killed and tortured...**
Then He sent His son—but they will not let Jesus leave Jerusalem alive.
5. **And even while being Crucified—IN JERUSALEM—He prayed:**
‘Father forgive them, they know not what they do’

³ George Arthur Buttrick, Interpreters Bible, Vol. 8, p.249

CONCLUSION:

1. OUR CHOICES HAVE CONSEQUENCES...

And We Have ALL Been Given a Choice...

- (1) **Herod** had a choice: He didn't want TRUTH—He chose POWER.
- (2) **Jesus** Had a Choice: He Chose a Crown of Thorns and a Cross
rather than a worldly Throne and crown
- (3) **Jerusalem** had a Choice: They Wanted all the blessing of God—but without God

2. YOU AND I HAVE A CHOICE... *Our Decisions Determine Our Destiny*

***C.S. Lewis said, "There are only two kinds of people in the end:
Those who say to God "Thy will be done, and those to
whom God says, in the end, "Thy will be done."***

Without Christ we are left empty, desolate and alone...

***We Can Find Refuge From God—Only In God
under the wings of His love & grace***

(Revelation 3:10–11)