

Luke 13:31-35

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

³¹ At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." ³² He said to them, "Go and tell that fox for me,^[a] 'Listen, I am casting out demons and performing cures today and tomorrow, and on the third day I finish my work. ³³ Yet today, tomorrow, and the next day I must be on my way, because it is impossible for a prophet to be killed outside of Jerusalem.' ³⁴ Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! **How often have I desired to gather your children together** as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! ³⁵ See, your house is left to you.^[b] And I tell you, you will not see me until the time comes when^[c] you say, 'Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.' "

Once upon a time on a road far away, there was a man on a journey. He was headed to a city named Jerusalem as part of his plan.

No one knows how many times he went to the city of Jerusalem, but he sure had a thing for that town and their people. Evidently Jerusalem's affection wasn't returned much. This time he talked like his journey was ending because Jerusalem had a reputation for killing prophets.

This man was a prophet.

To others, the man's home was a mystery, but he was laser focused no matter where he was. You see he called his home a kingdom. A kingdom that he experienced all the time. A kingdom where no person was made King but God.

A lot of people thought he was talking about the kind of kingdom they were familiar with. Big walls, a military, a temple in the center and of course a King to run the kingdom. Jerusalem was part of Judea, and the King of Judea was Herod.

On his way, many things happened making the man's journey next to impossible. Nevertheless, he had a confidence and compassion that made others want to follow him. What they seemed

to be following was what he said and did on the journey itself. Every encounter, every conversation opened something inside of them that helped them breathe better.

This man they called Rabbi knew nothing could possibly interfere with his purpose.

Whenever the teacher faced danger, some wanted him to run and hide. Even his closest followers wanted him to lead them in battle and fight back. But he preferred to deliver words to his enemies like no one else ever did. They were the best come backs ever!

Whenever he and his followers encountered severe obstacles, it was like his peace and confidence were the bigger weapons.

The man always kept on going. Sometimes he was interrupted by people who needed help, they were sick, sad or suffering. He would stop and heal them, comfort them, and never missed a chance to teach them. It was like Love was his king and he served his king well.

Some people on his journey were learning his ways. They learned how he talked to others and how he loved others, even how to heal others. He said if they would just tap into that kingdom he called home, they could do hard stuff. The man called it a Kingdom with a beginningless start and a forever end. A kingdom he said that was already here and yet separate from the world. Not separate from the earth but distinct from the world's kingdoms.

Some laughed at him and others didn't understand him, so they didn't like him. One man even hated him. His name was Herod.

Herod had built what the man called a kingdom of the world. It's not like the kingdom ruled by Love. You can experience the best of the kingdom of the world only when in power and control. The kingdom ruled this way can be intoxicating. That means you can never take enough in. Whatever you invest in that kingdom you want to protect, because others want to take it.

Prophets warned the people of the devastating effects of kingdoms like these. The place was dangerous for prophets with a message of liberation from the kingdom of the world.

The Kingdom the man spoke of does not need to be defended. The man said we could hide our most important things in it because it is safe. I'm going to tell you something that drove the kingdom of the world crazy. The man said we all have a key to the kingdom. It's our heart and spirit. They fit like lock and key!

When I listen to the deepest part of my heart it's like I'm entering this kingdom, and the King of love joins me. Once we broke bread and I came to my senses. I wanted to love just like the man did on the journey.

The man was teaching about the kingdom of love and life and many wanted to follow him. They realized that Herod's kingdom was built with fake walls. They were left without food for their soul and fulfillment for their aching desire to belong.

To be honest nobody really wanted to live in this kingdom of the world, but it was the only one they thought existed. It's inhabitants lived under its rule and thought it was the only way to be safe.

Herod thought the man was trying to take over his kingdom and take his people and power and he became angry. So angry, some of the man's allies warned him Herod was waiting in the town of Jerusalem for him.

"You should not go there!", The men told him.

The man knew the kingdom ruled by Love could withstand any kind of hate and did not back down.

So, here's what he said to those warning him, and here is what he is saying to us today.

How often I've wanted to gather you close to me. When I saw you powerless under the rule of a tyrant. When you were hungry and anxiously awaiting your next meal. How I wanted you to hear my heart as it silently beats with the sensations of compassion.

I've seen you when you felt abandoned. Lost in a fury of uncertainty. Waiting for someone to guide you. I was there. Hoping you would learn the language of the kingdom of heaven, but the kingdom of the world was always shouting.

The kingdom of heaven is one that resonates for those who will stop, listen and come to home to their hearts. That's what I was doing when I would go away for a time. I was remembering where my life and voice came from.

The voices of the kingdom of the world are always louder and can cause headaches more than heartaches.

It causes us to want to be on the run. When we run, what are we running from?

We're not running from a tyrant. We are running from our true selves. Scattering like chicks, away from the part of us that is deeply connected to the eternal knowing. Love. Love can flourish where worry, anxiety and hate cannot.

That's another reason why I take time away. When I walk and talk to my divine parent, the earth sings with color and surprises. It settles my mind back into being seated in heavenly places.

I got you now right? You began to experience the divine snuggle. Those in Jerusalem who I longed to experience this often killed the messenger, but hey you're not off the hook either.

Every generation goes about its own way. Spirit longs to draw people unto itself like a hen gathers it's chicks. I guess it could be said you scramble like baby chicks who are frightened by the dominance of the kingdom of your world.

Stop scrambling. Stop resisting. Feel the pinions of the hen's feathers reaching far and wide to gently nudge you inward. As you gently slide under the down, you begin to touch the soft feathers of your siblings as they too are being collected. The wings manage to cover everyone willing to be comforted. Feel the beating heart of God. A cacophony of beating hearts slowly syncs with its Mother.

Amen