

Second Sunday in Lent
Year C - RCL

Skaneateles, New York
January 27-28, 2004

Mark Vitalis Hoffman
Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg



Sir Charles Lock Eastlake 1793-1865
Christ Lamenting over Jerusalem

<http://www.fate.org.uk/serdict/ViewWork?groupid=99999961&workid=4074&searchid=5932>

Luke 13

- 1-5 Repent or Perish
- 6-9 Barren Fig Tree
- 10-17 Healing a Crippled Woman
- 18-19 Mustard Seed
- 20-21 Yeast
- 22- 30 Narrow Door: ³⁰ *Indeed, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last.*"

Note the context. (Verses 1-9 are next week's lesson)

Themes highlighted here appear to be repentance, reversal, judgment.

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 He said to them,

"Go and tell that fox for me,
'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.'

Any questions / observations?

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 He said to them,
"Go and tell that fox for me,
'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.'

1) Why are the Pharisees seemingly helpful?

2) FOX: We have been accustomed to taking this as a reference to Herod's slyness, craftiness, cleverness. I do not think this is correct. The OT usually contrasts a fox with a lion to point out the difference between inferiority and greatness.

Lamentations 5:1-22 Remember, O LORD, what has befallen us; look, and see our disgrace! ² Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers, our homes to aliens. ³ We have become orphans, fatherless; our mothers are like widows. ⁴ We must pay for the water we drink; the wood we get must be bought. ⁵ With a yoke on our necks we are hard driven; we are weary, we are given no rest. ⁶ We have made a pact with Egypt and Assyria, to get enough bread. ⁷ Our ancestors sinned; they are no more, and we bear their iniquities. ⁸ Slaves rule over us; there is no one to deliver us from their hand. ⁹ We get our bread at the peril of our lives, because of the sword in the wilderness. ¹⁰ Our skin is black as an oven from the scorching heat of famine. ¹¹ Women are raped in Zion, virgins in the towns of Judah. ¹² Princes are hung up by their hands; no respect is shown to the elders. ¹³ Young men are compelled to grind, and boys stagger under loads of wood. ¹⁴ The old men have left the city gate, the young men their music. ¹⁵ The joy of our hearts has ceased; our dancing has been turned to mourning. ¹⁶ The crown has fallen from our head; woe to us, for we have sinned! ¹⁷ Because of this our hearts are sick, because of these things our eyes have grown dim: ¹⁸ because of Mount Zion, which lies desolate: jackals [=foxes] prowl over it. ¹⁹ But you, O LORD, reign forever; your throne endures to all generations. ²⁰ Why have you forgotten us completely? Why have you forsaken us these many days? ²¹ Restore us to yourself, O LORD, that we may be restored; renew our days as of old -- ²² unless you have utterly rejected us, and are angry with us beyond measure.

Read this passage, Lamentations 5. Note that it is a lament over Jerusalem (like Jesus'). The word translated as "jackals" in the NRSV in the Greek version of the OT is the same word for "fox" that we find in Luke.

What seems to be the point for Jesus is that he is being highly critical of Herod for his mismanagement of Jerusalem/Israel. He is offering a severe insult and pointing out the inequities of Herod's rulership and that he is basically pillaging Jerusalem.

How is Jesus responding to Herod?
What's with the days business?

It appears that the "days" references need to be taken metaphorically. Jesus is biding his time and doing the work necessary for the present time. The time is coming when matters will come to a head.

Luke 13:31-35

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.
And I tell you, you will not see me until the time
comes when you say,
'Blessed is the one who comes in the name
of the Lord.'"

Luke 13:31-35

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.
And I tell you, you will not see me until the time
comes when you say,
'Blessed is the one who comes in the name
of the Lord.'"

The image of Jesus as a mother "hen" is quite remarkable.
Jerusalem's unwillingness to be gathered results in the astonishing statement in
v35a. "Your house is left to you." Okay, have it your way. It's in your hands now
Does God give up on Jerusalem?
V35b is fulfilled in Luke 19.38f (and note who is being critical of Jesus here!).

Comments