

“The Crisis in the Middle East”

(Luke 13:31-35)

Dr. Richard S. Koole
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I. Introduction

A. The Koole family

1. John Koole, Junior
2. “Joe Koole”

B. Let’s meet “Herod Junior”

1. Herod lived in the shadow of his old man
2. Son of the one they called Herod “the Great”
3. Some would say his father was crazy
 - a. The old man killed most of his brothers
 - b. Suffered from extreme paranoia
4. Junior survived and was called Herod Antipas
5. When the old man died his three sons divided up Israel
6. Herod Antipas got “the Galilee”
 - a. Home of a charismatic prophet...named Jesus

C. Herod pondered what to do with this “Jesus character”

1. Fascinated by the things Jesus said and did
 - a. He wanted to see one of his incredible miracles
2. His dad had tried to kill Jesus when he was born
 - a. All those Magi coming to crown Jesus the new **“King of the Jews”**

- b. His father's jealous rage
 - 1. "Wait a minute...that's my title!"
- c. If he was willing to kill his own sons to protect his rule...
 - 1. Wouldn't think twice about murdering this new baby
- d. People still talked about his father's brutal murder of the babies
 - 1. Mothers still wept over it

D. Now Jesus was Herod Antipas' problem

- 1. Herod was fascinated by Jesus and kept trying to meet him
 - a. But for some reason, Jesus would have no part of it
- 2. Maybe it was because Herod had killed Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist
 - a. Herod felt like he got tricked into that one
- 3. So far Jesus was just a nuisance and a curiosity

E. But as Jesus moved toward Jerusalem, things were starting to get out of hand

- 1. The crowds had grown to massive size
 - a. This was a riot waiting to happen
 - b. One thing had become clear:

Jesus had to die!

- 2. Herod was responsible for maintaining the peace
 - a. If he failed, Rome would have his head
- 3. Actually, "Jesus had to die" for a much bigger reason
 - a. To cover the cost of your sins
- 4. Let's pick up the story in Luke 13

II. Text...Luke 13:31-35

A. The Death Threat (v. 31)

(31) At that time some Pharisees came to Jesus and said to him, "Leave this place and go somewhere else. Herod wants to kill you."

1. *"At that time"*
 - a. Moving toward Jerusalem
 - b. Several months prior to his crucifixion
2. Why did some of the Pharisees warn Jesus?
 - a. Some may have become followers of Jesus
 1. Feared Herod would have him killed
 2. Had already murdered John the Baptist
3. Which Herod?
 - a. It's not **Herod the Great** (Matthew 2:13-18)
 1. Called "Great" because of his building projects
 - a. Masada
 - b. Caesarea
 - c. The Temple in Jerusalem
 2. But the Jews hated him
 3. Cruel and paranoid
 - a. The murder of the babies
 - b. When Herod the Great died
 1. His will said that his sons would reign in his place
 2. Three surviving sons

- 3. Had murdered the rest of them
- 4. Plus his wife, mother-in-law and many others
- c. Divided the kingdom into three pieces

1. Archelaus

- a. To rule Judea, Samaria (north) and Idumea
- b. Capitol city was Jerusalem

2. Philip

- a. Ruled the northeast above Galilee up to the southern part of modern Lebanon
- b. Capitol city was Caesarea

3. Herod Antipas

- a. The Herod out to kill Jesus

c. Herod Antipas

- 1. The Tetrarch (governor) of Galilee
- 2. Also given Perea, east of the Jordan River
 - a. Likely where Jesus was when this occurred
 - b. On his way from Galilee to Jerusalem
 - c. Speaking in towns of Perea
 - d. They were Jewish
- 3. Herod's capitol was Tiberius, a city he built
 - a. Beautiful place
 - 1. Resorts there now
 - b. On the shore of the Sea of Galilee
 - c. But, built it over a Jewish cemetery

- d. The Jews hated him for that and other acts involving idols

B. The Disdain (vs. 32-33)

(32) Jesus replied, “Go tell that fox, ‘I will drive out demons and heal people today and tomorrow, and on the third day I will reach my goal.’”

1. “That fox” (v. 32)
 - a. Our view of “a fox”
 1. Cunning
 2. A beautiful woman
 - b. To the Jews, it was a term of contempt and disdain
 - c. An impotent nuisance and a pest
 - d. Jesus called him a “loser”
 - e. Jesus had publicly slammed Herod
2. And Jesus said Herod couldn’t stop him
 - a. Jewish colloquialism
 1. *“I’m going to do what I’ve been doing today, tomorrow and until I’m done”*
 - b. Implies that it will be accomplished soon
 - c. For Jesus, it would be on the cross.... “It is finished”
3. And he’s not going to die in Perea (v. 33)

(33) In any case, I must keep going today and tomorrow and the next day—for surely no prophet can die outside Jerusalem!

- a. Sarcasm
- b. Everybody knows the prophets all die in Jerusalem
- c. Where they’re killed by their own people

- d. Because they didn't like the message from God they delivered
- 4. Plus...Jerusalem was where the sacrifices were to be made
 - a. Where the lambs were sacrificed for the sins of the people

C. The Desire of God (v. 34)

(34) O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

- 1. Israel's refusal to listen to God's warnings
- 2. God's longing to gather them
 - a. Jesus weeping over Jerusalem
- 3. Jerusalem stood for all of Israel's unwillingness

D. The Desolation (v. 35)

(35) Look, your house is left to you desolate. I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

- 1. Speaking to the Jews
- 2. *"Your house is left to you"*
 - a. You're on your own now...cut off from God
 - b. Like a branch broken off an olive tree
 - c. Away from its source of nourishment
- 3. The branches of Romans 11
 - a. Israel is a branch that has been broken off the vine
 - b. Because of their rejection of Jesus
 - c. The church has been grafted onto the tree
 - d. Someday Israel will be grafted back in
 - e. **Welcome to the Middle East of 2011**

4. Jews at the Wailing Wall
5. Muslims on the other side....Mosque and Dome of the Rock
6. The Old Testament is filled with God's covenants to restore the Jews
7. So is the New Testament
 - a. Romans 11:25-27

(25) I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. (26) And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. (27) And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins."

- b. Talking about a physical....and spiritual restoration
8. Key to understanding politics in the Middle East in Luke 13:35

(35) ... I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

9. When will they see him again?
 - a. Not until they acknowledge something
10. Until they say.... "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord"
 - a. Until they acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah
 - b. That didn't happen when Jesus first came
 - c. And it's certainly not happening in Israel today
 - d. The question "when" will it happen
11. The two miracles
 - a. Getting the Jews back into the land
 1. A two-thousand-year struggle
 2. The modern "Exodus"

3. Building a nation
4. Surviving against all odds
5. Iran's pledge to annihilate Israel
- b. Accepting Jesus as their Messiah and Savior
 1. This will be the greatest miracle
 2. Will fulfill God's promises/covenant with Israel
12. 2000 years and waiting
13. But the time is coming (Jeremiah 31:31)

(31) "The time is coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah."

III. Summary

A. Understanding Israel...Iraq...and Iran

1. Daily News
 - a. Take over of the British Embassy in Iran
 - b. Downed surveillance drone over Iran
 - c. Israel's threat to bomb Iran's nuclear facilities
 - d. Iran's nuclear weapons nearing completion
 - e. The Arab Spring in Egypt and Syria
 - f. The rise of the Islamic Brotherhood
 - g. Islam's demographic takeover of Europe
 - h. Our 10 year war in Iraq and Afghanistan
 - i. The talk of the Twelfth Imam
 1. Who will lead the attack on Israel

2. All spelled out in this remarkable book
 - a. All those nations mentioned in detail
 1. Only the names have changed
 - a. **Babylon = Iraq**
 - b. **Persia = Iran**
 - c. **Israel = Israel**
 - b. All will be players in the final scenes on earth
 - c. Their role when Christ was born.....Magi from Iran or Iraq
 1. In two weeks
3. God is setting the stage for the return of Christ
 - a. *“You will not see me again until...”*
 - b. The second coming
4. So many prophecies
 - a. Daniel and Revelation
 - b. Don’t forget Zechariah
 - c. One of the last prophets of the Old Testament
5. All of this in preparation for the return of Jesus
 - a. Getting Israel ready
6. In 520 B.C. the prophet **Zechariah** told us how it will happen
 - a. Nostradamus junkies
 - b. Let me read you the words of a real prophet

B. Zechariah 12

1. The Siege of Israel (vs. 1-3)

(1) This is the word of the Lord concerning Israel. The Lord, who stretches out the heavens, who lays the foundation of the earth, and who forms the spirit of man within him, declares:

(2) “I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that sends all the surrounding peoples reeling. Judah will be besieged as well as Jerusalem. (3) On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered against her, I will make Jerusalem an immovable rock for all the nations. All who try to move it will injure themselves.”

2. The Shielding of Israel (vs. 4-9)

(4) “On that day I will strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness,” declares the Lord. “I will keep a watchful eye over the house of Judah, but I will blind all the horses of the nations. (5) Then the leaders of Judah will say in their hearts, ‘The people of Jerusalem are strong, because the Lord Almighty is their God.’ “

(6) “On that day I will make the leaders of Judah like a firepot in a woodpile, like a flaming torch among sheaves. They will consume right and left all the surrounding peoples, but Jerusalem will remain intact in her place.”

(7) “The Lord will save the dwellings of Judah first, so that the honor of the house of David and of Jerusalem’s inhabitants may not be greater than that of Judah. (8) On that day the Lord will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of the Lord going before them. (9) On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem.”

3. The Salvation of Israel (12:10 - 13:9)

a. The shocking realization

(10) And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son. (11) On that day the weeping in Jerusalem will be great, like the weeping of Hadad Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. (12) The land will mourn, each clan by itself, with their wives by themselves:

the clan of the house of David and their wives, the clan of the house of Nathan and their wives, (13) the clan of the house of Levi and their wives, the clan of Shimei and their wives, (14) and all the rest of the clans and their wives.”

b. “What have we done?!?”

c. But...Jesus had to die!

1. Peter on the day the church was born (Acts 2:22-24)

*(22) Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.
 (23) This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.*

2. But God wasn't done...

(24) But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

d. Back to Zechariah...the restoration of Israel (13:8-9)

(8) "In the whole land," declares the Lord, "two-thirds will be struck down and perish; yet one-third will be left in it. (9) This third I will bring into the fire; I will refine them like silver and test them like gold. They will call on my name and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The Lord is our God.'"

Sing to the King who is coming to reign. Glory to Jesus the Lamb that was slain.

Life and salvation His empire shall bring. And joy to the nations, when Jesus is King.

For his returning we watch and we pray. We will be ready the dawn of that day.

We'll join in singing with all the redeemed, Because Satan is vanquished and Jesus is King!