

Luke Lesson 13

Luke Chapter 13

Distributed by: KJV Bible Studies

Email: mailKjvBibleStudies@gmail.com

Website: www.KjvBibleStudies.net

Memory verses for this week: *Prov 27:17 Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.*

Introduction: We continue our study of the book of Luke this week as we continue in chapter 13. In chapter 12, we studied about how we should be always waiting and looking for the Lord's return. We studied about the parable of the Steward and his servants. This week we begin with the call to repentance.

I. A Call to National and Individual Repentance

Luke 13:1 There were present at that season some that told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

Luke 13:2 And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they suffered such things?

Luke 13:3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

The first five verses contain a solemn warning based on two events which had taken place recently in Palestine. Pilate had put some Galileans to death and mingled their blood with their sacrifices. It may have been that those that reported this to Jesus were Galilaeans and very concerned about this. They probably thought that God saw some great wickedness in them, a wickedness greater than the normal person. Many of them were slain, and they perceived that this was the reason God allowed this to happen.

Jesus warns all of his hearers that the judgment of God is hanging over all unrepentant men. Only if we have been cleansed by the blood of Christ will we not face the judgment which will cause all there to perish. We need to warn others of the judgment that faces the lost man or woman. Today we have so little concern about the things of God.

Luke 13:4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

Luke 13:5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

There was violence involved in the first 3 verses in the record of the Galileans being slain, but this incident in verse 4 was an accident. The tower fell and killed people. Jesus says that those 18 who died were not sinners above all men.

Perhaps this tower was not properly built, and it fell due to poor construction. Whatever the reason, it did fall and kill those beneath it. Jesus warns them that these were no worse men than others who may not have repented of their sins. The call to repentance is not heard much in our day. But it is still needful and a requirement of God to come unto him. Repent means a change of mind; it is not just a change of viewpoint. Repentance is a change of mind which results in a complete change of attitude. When a man or woman is in rebellion towards God, and they come to Christ with faith and repentance, he or she determines to no longer walk in the way from which they came but to walk in the newness of life that Jesus gives us in our new birth.

We will not desire to walk in the old paths, but now desire to do things God's way. With this total change, we have what makes up true repentance. We are sorry for where we have come and what we have done, and we walk away determined to do things right from this day forth.

In Acts 17:30 we are told that God commands men everywhere to repent.

Acts 17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

Luke 13:6 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

Luke 13:7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

Luke 13:8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:

Luke 13:9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

This is the parable of the fig tree. It depicts how Israel failed to honor God with their lives and how patient God had been with them. The fig tree planted in the vineyard typifies the Jewish nation in the land of Palestine. Of course the dresser of the fig tree depicts the Lord. For 3 years Jesus had ministered to Israel, but there were very few who heard him and truly turned to Him for salvation. The fig tree was spared at this time but in the middle of the fourth year of our Lord's ministry the Jews rose up against Him and the Romans led Him to Calvary and crucified him. There was no national repentance, and as a result the fig tree was cut down, and the Jews were scattered throughout the world.

Matthew Henry made these comments about the fig tree:

1. The advantages which this fig-tree had. It was *planted in a vineyard*, in better soil, and where it had more care taken of it and more pains taken with it, than other

fig-trees had, that commonly grew, not in *vineyards* (Those are for vines), but by the *way-side*, Mt. 21:19. This fig-tree belonged to a *certain man*, that owned it, and was at expense upon it. Note, The church of God is *his vineyard*, distinguished from the common, and fenced about, Isa. 5:1, 2. We are *fig-trees planted* in this vineyard by our baptism; we have a place and a name in the visible church, and this is our privilege and happiness. It is a distinguishing favour: he has not *dealt so with other nations*.

2. The owner's expectation from it: *He came, and sought fruit thereon*, and he had reason to expect it. He did not *send*, but came himself, intimating his desire to find fruit. Christ came into this world, *came to his own*, to the Jews, seeking fruit. Note, The God of heaven requires and expects *fruit* from those that have a place in his vineyard. He has *his eye* upon those that *enjoy* the gospel, to see whether they *live up* to it; he seeks evidences of their getting good by the means of grace they enjoy. *Leaves* will not serve, crying, *Lord, Lord*; *blossoms* will not serve, beginning well and promising fair; there must be *fruit*. Our thoughts, words, and actions must be according to the gospel, light and love.

3. The disappointment of his expectation: *He found none*, none at all, not one fig. Note, It is sad to think how many enjoy the privileges of the gospel, and yet do nothing at all to the honour of God, nor to answer the end of his entrusting them with those privileges; and it is a disappointment to him and a grief to the Spirit of his grace. i

II. The Woman Loosed from her Infirmity

Luke 13:10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath.

Luke 13:11 And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself.

Luke 13:12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

Luke 13:13 And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

Jesus was often found teaching in the synagogues. While he is teaching, this certain woman who had an infirmity came to him. Jesus knew how long she had been suffering (18 years) and she was so sick she could not even lift up herself. Jesus realized she was helpless in her condition, and showed compassion on her and healed her of her sickness.

It says after he laid his hands on her, she immediately was made straight and glorified the Lord. If you are here today and don't know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, he has compassion on you. And if you will but come and place your faith in Him, you can be forever healed of your lost condition. Just as this woman was made whole at His touch, the sinner is made whole when he or she turns to

iHenry, Matthew, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Bible*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers) 1997.

Christ for salvation. This woman knew who had healed her, and it says in verse 13 that she glorified God.

Luke 13:14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

Luke 13:15 The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

You would have thought that everyone would have rejoiced that was present that this woman was healed of this infirmity of 18 years. Perhaps some were happy, but the ruler of the synagogue was filled with indignation. To him, it was profane to interrupt a sacred service. Rather than speak directly to Jesus, he turns to the people and says "There are six days in which men ought to work; in them therefore come and be healed, but not on the Sabbath day."

Jesus speaks direct to him and calls him a hypocrite. He asks "Doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?" Of course they did. We need to be careful to not get so wrapped up in our religious services that we forget that our reason for life is to serve others. Jesus was always about doing good, Sabbath Day included.

Luke 13:16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

Luke 13:17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

Jesus declares that this woman was a daughter of Abraham. All descendants of Israel came from Abraham in whom God richly blessed. We that know Jesus as Lord and Savior are children of Abraham also.

Gal 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Jesus traces the woman's infirmity back to Satan. Sickness never comes to us directly from God who is pure and without corruption. But God allows things to come into our lives for various reasons. Sickness is always related either

directly or indirectly to sin. That isn't to say that a sickness comes because we commit a certain sin in our life, but sin is the cause of infirmity. If Adam and Eve had never sinned and fallen from their holy state in which they were created, there would have been no sickness. Satan had bound this woman for 18 years. When Jesus answered them, it says they were all ashamed. Then they rejoiced at what God had done for the woman.

III. The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Luke 13:18 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

Luke 13:19 It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

Jesus likens the kingdom of God unto a mustard seed. It is small but it grows and becomes a large plant. The kingdom of God here speaks of all Christendom. (That is all professed Christians.) Note that the mustard plant became a tree which is contrary to a normal mustard plant. The fowls of the air lodging in the tree are false teachers who have perverted the truth.

IV. Parable of the Leaven

Luke 13:20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

Luke 13:21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

As we have mentioned several times, leaven always speak of evil or sin. We find that the woman hid the leaven in the meal. The woman speaks of the Papacy, and generally, to all corrupters of God's Word.

Luke 13:22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

Luke 13:23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

Luke 13:24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

As Jesus went through the cities and villages, he was constantly teaching the people. One asks about how many would there be that were saved. Jesus did not tell us that we can be saved by our efforts, but he warns that there is only one way to be saved, and that is through Jesus Christ. When we are given the open door unto salvation, we need to take it. Once that door is closed, there will be no entrance.

Luke 13:25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

Luke 13:26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

Luke 13:27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

Here is the warning about the door being opened and then shut. He says to these “I know you not.” Those who don’t come to Christ for salvation will not find a way of entering into heaven. Having eaten or drank in Christ’s presence will not be enough. One must repent and believe.

Luke 13:28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out.

Luke 13:29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

Luke 13:30 And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

Jesus promises that one day we will know those men of the Old Testament when we come before God one day. He says you will see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets. Jesus was speaking to those who heard His words (and to us) and told how they would see the fathers of Israel and the prophets they held in their hands and professed to cherish. While knowing them, they failed to recognize the Redeemer who God sent to deliver them. Because of this they would be shout out in the darkness. Israel was the first but now shall be last.

J. Vernon McGee said this:

Why this question was asked is difficult to discern. Perhaps it was sincere. The charisma of Christ drew the multitudes, but they soon discovered that it cost to follow Him. There were those coming and going all the time. As He approached Jerusalem this last time it was noticeable. There came a day when it was written, “And they all forsook him, and fled” (Mark 14:50). He made it abundantly clear that it would *cost* to follow Him. That we in our sophisticated and soft affluency think otherwise is heresy!

Since this was a speculative question, Jesus did not answer it directly. He is saying to this man, “Make sure *you* are saved.” In the rest of this brief discourse, the Lord made it clear that many will be saved who are not sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. ii

iiJ. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible commentary [computer file], electronic ed., Logos Library System*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson) 1997, c1981 by J. Vernon McGee.

Luke 13:31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.

Luke 13:32 And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

The Pharisees pretended to be interested in saving the life of Jesus, but they did not understand that no one could take it from Him. He willingly laid down his life on the cross that we might have salvation.

V. Jesus' Lament over Jerusalem

Luke 13:33 Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

Luke 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

Luke 13:35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Jesus so desired that the nation of Israel turn to Him. He uses the illustration of how a hen takes care of her baby chicks when a storm is approaching. He tells them that Jerusalem had been set aside and is no longer in the place of a favored people. Then he tells them that their house will be left desolate and that all who will come in his name will be blessed.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.