

# Luke 13a: HG Bishop Youssef

His Grace Bishop Youssef ~ فسوي ابن الالة فاين تاطع • LUKE 13: 1 - 21 ~ Bible Study

## Outline

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- 6-9: The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree
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- 18-19: The Parable of the Mustard Seed
- 20-21: The Parable of the Leaven
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## Repent or Perish

1:12

<sup>1</sup> There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all *other* Galileans, because they suffered such things? <sup>3</sup> I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. <sup>4</sup> Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all *other* men who dwelt in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

- Who were these Galileans?
  - According to St Cyril, these were followers of Judas the Galilean, who is mentioned in Acts 5:37
    - Acts 5 is when the high priest and council came together to imprison the apostles and Gamaliel stood up and reminded them of many who rose up before the apostles and perished... if this is from God, let them be lest you stand against God. If it is from men, then it will come to nothing.
    - One example he gives is "Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed." (Acts 5:37)
    - Judas the Galilean taught that no one should be called "master" or "lord" and they refused to call Caesar, Roman Emperor, "Lord"
    - So Pilate was enraged, sent a band of soldiers, and punished them by slaying them when they came up for Passover... so as they were coming to offer the

Passover Lambs, he killed them and mixed their blood with the blood of the Passover Lambs.

- Why did they tell Him about this?
  - They wanted the Lord to condemn Pilate as cruel and vicious, so they could report Him to Pilate and get rid of Him
  - Or maybe He would approve what Pilate did and this would be a good opportunity to criticize Him and bring Him in contempt with the people
  - Or to know His thoughts about those who were slain... were they wicked or not? Would He pass judgment on them or not? Would He consider their death as the right punishment or not?
- The Lord knew their tricks... He neither approved nor condemned Pilate. He acknowledged their sins, but without condemning them but rather by saying they are not considered greater sinners just because they were taken like that
  - The Lord answered the indirect question indirectly
  - He turned the question of "why did this happen" to be "what does this mean to me"
    - Why did God allow this person to die in this way?
    - Why did God allow this pandemic?
    - This isn't the right question! But rather... What does this mean to me?
- What does this mean to me?
  - Unless you repent, you will perish
  - I can die at any moment... so I need to be ready.
- The Lord Spoke about Two Things
  - An evil done by a ruler
  - A natural disaster
- Why do bad things happen to good people?
  - We usually think that people are either good or bad, and God will allow good things to good people and bad things to bad people... and we always ask "why do bad things happen to good people"
  - The Lord answers that question...
  - They were not more guilty than others. All of us are sinners and guilty. Unless we repent, we will perish.
  - When you see such tragedies, it will be an opportunity for you to examine yourself, continually change yourself, respond with humble repentance for my own sins.
- In the Greek, two words are used for "repent"
  - In verse 5 - once you stop a sin you don't go back to it
  - In verse 3 - a continuing repentance or a life of repentance

## The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

14:46

<sup>6</sup> He also spoke this parable: "A certain *man* had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. <sup>7</sup> Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' <sup>8</sup> But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. <sup>9</sup> And if it bears fruit, *well*. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'

- The point of this parable is to show the long-suffering of God for the sake of our repentance
- God wants us to bear fruit in our life
  - The fruit shows what kind of a person you are
  - The fig tree was fruitless
  - The fig tree symbolizes Israel... God's chosen people who considered themselves the elect, but bore no fruits
- 3 Years
  - Some say it represents the three major eras in Jewish history: Patriarchs, Judges, Kings... God was longsuffering with them for all those periods and waited on them the entire OT
  - Some say it represents the Law and the Prophets, with the third year being the Messiah
  - Some say it represents the three years of Ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ
- The Certain Man represents God the Father; the keeper of the vineyard represents God the Son
  - Dig around and fertilize it represents the sacraments - Baptism, Confirmation, Repentance and Eucharist

## A Spirit of Infirmary

23:30

<sup>10</sup> Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. <sup>11</sup> And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up. <sup>12</sup> But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity." <sup>13</sup> And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

- This story is only mentioned in the Gospel of St Luke
- St John Chrysostom says that Christ was teaching in the synagogues peacefully (i.e. He was not against the Law, but came to fulfill the Law)... He was still permitted to teach in the synagogues
- The woman
  - She used to go every Sabbath to the Synagogue
  - She had faith, which is a prerequisite for healing
  - She didn't come with any expectation or request, but rather she came to the synagogue to be taught... spiritual benefit. And the Lord did not just give her the teaching, but also healed her. ("But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." (Matthew 6:33))
- Power of God
  - The woman did not have any strength to be healed, she was possessed by a demon who had control over her and her will
  - The Lord will manifest His power and break the bondage and give deliverance from Satan's hand, but it requires the desire, first, of the sinner to repent

- Even if you doesn't have the strength or the will to repent, if you have the desire to repent, the Lord will give strength

<sup>14</sup> But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.”

<sup>15</sup> The Lord then answered him and said, “Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead *it* away to water it? <sup>16</sup> So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?” <sup>17</sup> And when He said these things, all His adversaries were put to shame; and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him.

- He was afraid to confront the Lord Jesus Christ, so he looked at the assembly instead. He tried to rebuke the Lord indirectly
- The Lord did not respond to him in gentleness and confronted him because he rebuked the assembly... the woman did not even come to be healed!
- The Lord gives many reasons to show mercy on this woman and heal her
  - Woman is made in the image of God
  - Daughter of Abraham
  - Woman of faith
  - Afflicted and bound by Satan... every day is a good day to oppose Satan!
  - She was afflicted for 18 years... long enough to suffer greatly
- The Lord wanted to heal the people and give them a healthy relationship with God
- The healing of the woman was a proof that the Kingdom of God is here and upon us

## The Parable of the Mustard Seed

<sup>18</sup> Then He said, “What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? <sup>19</sup> It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and put in his garden; and it grew and became a large tree, and the birds of the air nested in its branches.”

- These parables are about how the Kingdom of God will expand to the rest of the whole world
- Just like a small mustard seed grew into a large tree, so also the Kingdom of God will grow and expand to include the whole world (from all nations and all countries) in the Church
- The Kingdom of God started as Jesus and a few followers... and it seems unlikely and improbable that it would spread across the whole world

## The Parable of the Leaven

<sup>20</sup> And again He said, “To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? <sup>21</sup> It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.”

- A little bit of leaven can cause an amount of dough to expand in size... in the same way.

- The teaching of the Gospel of Salvation causes the Kingdom to expand and become much greater in size
- Three measures of meal:
  - Number three is a symbol of completeness
  - St Cyril of Alexandria: Body, Soul and Spirit
    - The believers
  - St Ambrose: The leaven is the Lord Christ, the woman is the Church, and we are the flour
    - Christ leavens us by giving us His qualities. He took our human nature, but by the power of His divinity He works in us - not to change our appearance, but our inward nature.
  - Others say the Law, Prophets, Gospel
    - Christ was hidden in the Law and Prophets and manifested in the Gospel

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