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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

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**“EXCEPT YE REPENT,**

**YE SHALL ALL LIKEWISE PERISH”**

**Luke 13:1-21**

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

Pontius Pilate was a ruthless ruler. Even before he confronts Jesus at the end of Luke’s Gospel, readers learn of the Roman governor’s violent nature. Apparently soldiers under Pilate had killed some Galilean worshipers who were offering sacrifices in the temple. This is telling of a terrible time when the Romans would swoop down on a large crowd and kill a large number of the people. Pilate represented the dreaded Roman government.

***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."***

Some people told Jesus that Pilate had killed some Galileans and mixed their blood with their sacrifices. Jesus has discerned what they are thinking. Perhaps they wanted to hear Jesus condemn Pilate for that; instead, Jesus used the opportunity to urge his listeners to repent. He knows these disciples, and these Hebrew followers have no respect for these Galilaeans. These Galilaens were not the strict Hebrews. Many would say they got what they deserved for their loose living. Jesus is quick to tell them that not only are the Galilaeans guilty of sin, but they are, too. It is hazardous to assume that the misfortunes of others show them to be worthy of punishment, and show oneself to be worthy of continued untroubled existence. Jesus reminds that all are deserving of a violent fate that can be avoided only by turning in repentance to a merciful God. They, as well as the Galilaeans, need to repent and be saved by grace. Just because a person has the outward appearance of being a Christian, does not free them from the obligation of repenting from their sins.

***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."***

Jesus is telling them to stop pointing fingers at others' sins and start looking at home at their own sins. When this tower fell, the Hebrews were quick to say these were people who had fallen away to Rome. We must be very careful to make sure all of the sin is out of our life, before we point fingers at someone else. In less than 40 years from the time Jesus made this statement, Jerusalem fell and literally thousands perished. Repentance is the inner resolve and determination to turn from sin and toward the Lord. The goal of repentance is to reverse, avoid, limit, or cancel divine judgment and the consequences of sin. Repentance was the common theme in the preaching of the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles.

***Jeremiah 18:8 “If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.”***

***Matthew 3:8 “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:”***

***Mark 1:15 “And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.”***

***Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”***

Repentance is necessary for salvation, but repentance alone does not save. It means to change one’s mind about sin in such a way as to result in a change of action. In this sense, it is similar to conversion, which involves both repentance and faith. Repentance begins with a change of thought concerning sin, often resulting in a sense of godly sorrow. In coming to Christ for salvation there is also a change in the will. Repentance is produced in the life by means of the Word of God (Romans 2:4), the chastisement of the Lord (Revelation 3:19), belief of the truth (John 3:5), and a new vision of God (Job 42:5, 6). Jesus taught that repentance could not be produced by miracles (Matthew 11: 20, 21), not even by someone rising from the dead (16:30, 31). In the Old Testament, Manasseh was carried into captivity before he acknowledged his sin and repented. On His trip through Jericho, Jesus encountered a man named Zaccheus. This man repented, although he had lived an evil life for many years. Both of these men found salvation, yet others whose lives have been less evil remain unsaved because they will not repent. Whenever God speaks to a Christian about a certain sin in his life, he should immediately repent and depend on God to give victory. That eighteen people were killed when a tower in Siloam fell on them is a sobering reminder that regardless of the circumstances, death can come when we least expect it on the righteous and the unrighteous. Unless we as believers repent of sin, we are subject to temporal judgment, including physical death. Unless the lost repent, they will perish eternally in hell.

***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."***

Jesus told a parable of a fig tree that bore no fruit. The owner ordered his worker to cut it down. But the worker asked that the owner let him fertilize the tree. If it still bore no fruit next year, then he would cut it. This short parable speaks of the Lord’s forbearance, but also of His eventual severity on those who are continually fruitless. Jesus is speaking here of Israel (fig tree). The man is symbolic of God, because the Israelites are His chosen people. This fig tree produced no fruit. The terrible thing is for 3 years Jesus brought them the salvation message. For 3 years He went away sorrowful because very little fruit was produced. In fact, God's beloved Israelites rejected Jesus. At the very last of Jesus' ministry, He turned away from the Jews and offered the gospel to the Gentiles. He had given up on them producing fruit (cut it down). In John we read about Jesus’ change of focus.

***John 11:54 “Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.”***

A fig tree’s well-being is dependent on its bearing fruit, and this parable follows Jesus’s exhortation that people repent of sin (13:1-5). If good fruit is absent from a person’s life, some kind of judgment is certain. Inner repentance leads to an external demonstration of righteousness. Without visible fruit, professions of repentance are as genuine as a barren fig tree pretending to be healthy. We see in this that these privileged Hebrews had forgotten that duties go along with privileges. This prophetic parable that Jesus gives here comes true because Jerusalem is devastated shortly after this. Jesus gave them a chance; they just didn't take it.

***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."***

We see, here, that Jesus was still allowed to preach in some of the synagogues. On this occasion, Jesus was teaching in a synagogue on the Sabbath when a woman came in who had been disabled by a spirit for over eighteen years. This was one probably in a rural area away from Jerusalem. Luke, more than any of the others, goes into detail about illness making us realize that he was truly a medical man. The disease mentioned here sounds like a very serious curvature of the spine. Sometimes this illness comes in a person's youth and gets worse and worse as they grow older. Her disability caused her to be bent over and unable to straighten up at all. For almost two decades, then, she saw nothing but the ground. But this day, Jesus set her free. She was instantly healed and began to glorify God when she accepted his invitation to come to him. Though she had a physical ailment, Luke tells us twice that it was not the real source of her problem. She had been “disabled by a spirit” and “bound” by “Satan”. Thus, she was under demonic attack. The evil spirit was the root, and her physical deformity was the fruit. But Jesus was able to see what no one else could and took care of the spiritual issue. This woman seems to have a lot of faith to receive this healing. She knew exactly what to do and whom to glorify when she received her healing. Take note that this was done on the sabbath and these self-righteous, religious people were more concerned with dotting every "i" of the law than they were with helping this poor soul. She immediately stood straight. This was not a prolonged healing, but a miracle. The perfect tense of the verb loosed stresses the completeness of the cure.

***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."***

Unfortunately, the leader of the synagogue was not happy. His indignation (bitter soul) is an example of the hypocrisy that Jesus condemns in Matthew.

***Matthew 23:13 “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.”***

He had an order of service, and Jesus deviated from it. The Sabbath was for worship alone, not for work. He thus told the crowd to come on the other six days of the week to get healed, but not on the Sabbath. But if the man had known what fury Jesus was about to unleash, he perhaps would’ve kept his mouth shut. This ruler is jealous of the miraculous ability of Jesus and looks for any little technicality he can trap Jesus with. He is controlled by the “letter of the Law” and not the “spirit of the Law.”

***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?"***

***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 always has an answer for them. He says to them you loose your animal on the sabbath, are you telling me that animals are more valuable to God than people are? Jesus makes His point well. But there remains in every generation the temptation for traditions and programs to take priority over the needs of people. Of course, they had no answer for Him. Hypocrites! The synagogue leader and his companions didn’t practice what they preached. Even on the Sabbath, they would untie their ox or donkey and lead it to water. Such care for an animal is expected and not the kind of work that God had prohibited by the Sabbath command. So, if an animal is worthy of such mercy, shouldn’t a daughter of Abraham a member of the covenant and its promises be untied from her bondage on the Sabbath day? With that stinging criticism from Jesus, all his adversaries in the synagogue were humiliated, and the crowd was rejoicing. He left these rulers of the church without anything to say. They knew what He said was right. The people believed Him even more, and they could see right through the shallowness of these rulers. The people rejoiced with this woman who had been stooped over for 18 years. They also rejoiced that they had found a way to worship that showed some hope for them. It is wonderful to know that the God you worship is powerful and can do mighty things to deliver His people. The ritual they had been practicing in the synagogue had left them cold, but this gospel Jesus preached was good news. In one instance, He said they were so foolish that they would strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. They had no reasoning for what they did, at all. Like so many churches today, their doctrine (policy) is more important to them than disciples (people).

***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."***

***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."***

Jesus offered two parables to describe God’s work in bringing his kingdom. The kingdom is like a small mustard seed that grows large so that birds can nest in its branches. While God’s kingdom work began small and with seemingly insignificant people (fishermen and tax collectors), it would grow significantly and accommodate all of its citizens. The kingdom is also like leaven, which a woman mixed throughout a large batch of flour. Over time, God’s kingdom would continue to expand and work its way throughout the world.” Jesus here is saying, how can I tell you in a way that you can understand what the kingdom of God is like? I will show you something you do understand, and you can compare it with that. We see, here, a tiny mustard seed growing into a tree big enough for birds to build a nest in. Jesus is the Tree of Life. His beginning in the earth was small. Very few people ever dreamed that He and a handful of disciples could grow into a mighty movement which would affect the whole world. Small beginnings do not mean small endings. The tree which Jesus started here has overspread the entire world. This second short parable here speaks of the secret move that takes place inside a person. When they received Jesus inside of them, even though they at first didn't show it outside, their faith began to grow until one day they were a very strong Christian. They became a complete Christian when Jesus became the central point of their life.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Who had Pilate killed and mingled their blood with the sacrifices?
2. What had these people assumed about these Galilaeans?
3. What was Jesus telling them to stop doing?
4. This parable about the fig tree was about whom?
5. What did He come looking for this 3 years?
6. In St. John 11:54 when Jesus stopped walking among the Jews, where did He go?
7. How many years did Jesus preach and they didn't hear Him?
8. How many years did He go to the fruit tree and there was no fruit?
9. Where did Jesus preach on this sabbath?
10. How long had this woman been stooped over?
11. What did Jesus say to her when He healed her?
12. What did she do immediately after she was healed?
13. What were these people more interested in doing than in healing this woman?
14. What did these rulers accuse Jesus of?
15. What does Jesus tell them they are more interested in than people?
16. Who does Jesus call her?
17. What did these rulers feel after Jesus straightened them out?
18. How did it affect the people?
19. What did Jesus liken the kingdom of God to (2 things).
20. What difference do you see in the two?