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Luke 13

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Luke 13.

Topics.

- Are Galileans and those Siloam worse sinners than others?
- The parable of the fruitless fig tree.
- Jesus heals a woman who had a disabling spirit for eighteen years.
- The Kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed.
- The Kingdom of God is like a woman with leaven.
- Strive to enter through the narrow door.
- Weeping and gnashing of teeth.
- The last will be first, and the first will be last.
- Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets.

The previous chapter: in the previous chapter Jesus warns the crowds to beware of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and not to fear those who kill the body but have no power over their eternal life. He tells the crowds not to be anxious about their life, but sell their possessions, give to the needy and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from a wedding feast and finishes by rebuking them for not knowing the time they were in.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

LUKE 13:1-5

Are Galileans and those Siloam worse Sinners than Others?

- **Luke 13:1-5:** There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²And he answered them, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

At this time Jesus is going through towns and villages teaching and healing as he travels toward Jerusalem. He has been ministering three years and is about to be crucified. (Luke 13:22). Pilate had killed some Galileans and to the Jews horror had mixed their blood with the Roman sacrifices and a tower had fallen and killed eighteen people. Jesus knowing that some people were probably thinking that to be killed in such a horrific way and for the others to be killed by something so unexpected they must have been great sinners so he tells them that this kind of thinking is misguided, everyone is a sinner before God and everyone must repent before God.

This is very comforting to those who are suffering or experiencing a crisis or deep sorrow. What Jesus said shows that whatever hardship a person is suffering it is not because they are greater sinners than any of us.

The parable of the fruitless Fig Tree.

- **Luke 13:6-9:** And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' ⁸And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. ⁹Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.' "

The literal meaning of the fig tree: the literal meaning of this parable is obvious, if any fruit tree is taking good nutrients from the ground and not producing the fruit it should be chopped down rather than robbing the nutrients out of the ground that could be feeding other fruit trees.

The fig tree and Israel: the fig tree is a symbol of Israel especially the religious leaders of Jesus generation (the chief priests Pharisees, scribes and elders). The New Testament period was the season for Israel to blossom and produce abundant fruit their Messiah, the Christ Israel's King, and Saviour had arrived. Israel's leaders should have recognised the season they were in but instead Israel, (the chief priests, Pharisees, scribes and elders) were a barren tree so Jesus condemned them.

The fig tree and the individual: by extension the fig tree can refer to an individual believer, if those who belong to Jesus do not bear fruit give them grace and a space of time to grow, but if they remain indifferent to the will of God, show no growth and no fruit then cast them out because they are using the valuable time of Christs servants that could be better spent on those who are seeking to grow in the Lord.

NOTE: bearing fruit means living a life that brings a good testimony to God and to the name of Christ contrasted to living to gratify self, ego and pride.

LUKE 13:10-17

Jesus Heals a Woman who had a disabling Spirit for Eighteen Years.

- **Luke 13:10-17:** Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹And there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit (spirit of infirmity in KJV) for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. ¹²When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability." (Loosed from thine infirmity in KJV) ¹³And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God. ¹⁴But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." ¹⁵Then the Lord answered him "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? ¹⁶And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" ¹⁷As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

This poor woman had a back problem which caused her to be bent over and unable to stand up straight. Luke calls this back problem a disabling spirit meaning a spirit disabled her from bending over. This is because Jesus generation believed sicknesses, they did not understand including blindness and deafness were caused by unclean spirits or evil gods called demons dwelling inside the sick person. For further information on unclean spirits and demons see the titles:

- Demons.
- Unclean Spirits (Old and New Testament).

Both titles are in Satan and his Family (ON WEBSITE MENU).

NOTICE: the woman never asks Jesus to heal her, her faith was not involved in her healing because it was initiated by Jesus who happened to see her in the crowd and called her over to tell her she was healed from her disability. Jesus touched the woman and she was healed, the woman never claimed, demanded or even asked to be healed, this healing was an act of compassion. This miraculous healing shows how hard and legalistic the heart of the Pharisees was. They would do whatever was needed to save an animal on the Sabbath Day, but were outraged because Jesus had set a woman free from a crippling disorder. This shows that people can have enormous religious knowledge which the Pharisees did, but have absolutely no idea of what is important to the heart of God.

LUKE 13:18-19

The Kingdom of God is like a Grain of Mustard Seed.

- **Luke 13:18-19:** He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? ¹⁹It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches."

The mustard seed grows into a thick stemmed plant which under good conditions will often grow higher than a man can reach the branches of the larger plants were a favourite place for smaller birds to nest. The garden in the parable is a symbol of Israel and is a picture of Jesus sowing the word of God, amongst the Jews (the twelve apostles). The Kingdom of God began as a very small Jewish group, but eventually Gentiles became adopted into the commonwealth of Israel so the Kingdom has now grown into a tree that is so big it has become a shelter for people of all races, languages and nations throughout the world in this age and in especially in the age to come (v29).

3

LUKE 13:20-21

The Kingdom of God is like a Woman with Leaven.

- **Luke 13:20-21:** And again he said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour (meal in KJV) until it was all leavened."

Flour: (aleuron) (Meal in KJV) means to grind, it is a product that when mixed in with another ingredient causes it to expand beyond what it originally was. The following verses show that Leaven is often used as a symbol of sin. Jesus tells his disciples:

- Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, Sadducees and Herod (Matt 16:6, 11) (Mark 8:15) (Luke 12:1).

Paul told the Corinthians that:

- A little leaven leavens the whole lump therefore clean out the old leaven of malice and evil and replace it with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth (1 Cor. 5:6-8).

To the Galatians Paul said:

- A little leaven leavens the whole lump (Gal 5:7-9).

And in the book of Revelation there is a woman whose name is:

- Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations and she is pictured drinking the blood of those who belong to Christ (Rev. 17:5-6).

Leaven, in these verses symbolises malice, hypocrisy, false doctrine and anything that draw those who belong to Christ back under the law. Therefore, the woman hiding the three measures of flour is a symbol of every religious leader who distorts the Good News of the Gospel of Christ until it is totally corrupted from what it was originally. We know this because those who belong to Christ are told to not to hide their light, but to let it shine it for all the world to see.

LUKE 13:22-30

Strive to enter through the Narrow Door.

- **Luke 13:22-30:** He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. ²³And someone said to him, "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" And he said to them, ²⁴"Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, open to us,' then he will answer you, 'I do not know where you come from.' ²⁶Then you (those who were seeking to enter but were unable too) will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you (Jesus) taught in our streets.' ²⁷But he (Jesus) will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!' ²⁸In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. ²⁹And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

The narrow door in this context not only refers to Christ but doing what is right contrasted to being workers of wickedness (v27) the parable literally applies to the people of Israel. We know this because they say they ate and drank in Jesus presence and he taught in their streets and Jesus tells them even though they will see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all their prophets they themselves will be cast out, but the principal is not limited to Israel only. By extension it can apply to anyone who seeks the Lord, has heard the Gospel, fellowshiped with other believers and eaten the Lord's Supper.

Not everyone will enter the Kingdom: Jesus words, "Many will seek to enter and will not be able" (v24), refers to those who Jesus calls workers of evil. Even though this group were seeking to enter the Kingdom and thought they deserved to be accepted Jesus says, "I don't know you" (v25). Workers of evil carries the idea of those who like the religious leaders of Jesus generation, appear righteous on the outside but are serving Christ for their own selfish gain, they are full of hypocrisy on the inside, they are pretend servants of Christ who put on a display of godliness to appear righteous to others but live adulterous and sinful lifestyles without any sense of repentance. They are those who use their ministry for their own glory (i.e., to make themselves famous, important or rich) and who show no mercy or compassion toward the needy and the poor.

The title, "Workers of evil" can also embrace those who believe they are saved because they have been born into a religious organisation, they attend a religious meeting every week, keep all the church traditions, ceremonial rites and even partake of the communion bread and wine, they are (in their eyes at least) good people, but they are trusting in what they do to be saved rather than in Christ, because they are self-righteous.

Weeping and gnashing of teeth: Jesus words:

- Once the master of the house has risen and shut the door (v25).

Refers to the resurrection, once Jesus returns it will be too late for those who are not ready, they will not be able to negotiate or talk their way into the Kingdom. This is why there will be great sorrow, (weeping and gnashing of teeth) they believed they were righteous and deserved to be given entry only to find to their horror that they are cast out.

The last will be first, and the first will be last: The Jews were the first to be chosen by God, the Gentiles came into His Kingdom much later, thus those who are last refers to the Gentiles while those who are first refers to the Jews. Jesus is telling his listeners that some of the Gentiles will be first and some of the Jews will be last to enter the Kingdom of Christ.

The future Kingdom: people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at Christ's table in the Kingdom of God means people from all languages, races and nations make up the Kingdom of God it is not limited to the people of Israel only. But it literally applies to that glorious day when Christ returns as King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God. The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Herod Seeks to Kill Jesus.

- **Luke 13:31-33:** At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." ³²And he said to them "Go and tell that fox 'Behold, I cast out demons (daimon) (Devils in KJV) and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course. ³³Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.'

Herod: is a compound of the word heroes and was name of four Jewish kings, notice not all Pharisees were against Jesus this group came to warn him of Herod's desire to kill him. Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem knowing when he gets there he will be mocked, cruelly tortured and crucified, but rather than hide he tells the Pharisees that he will continue until the end of that day and tomorrow and the following day (the third day) healing people and then he will be finished. This is because he will be in Jerusalem where they are waiting to kill him.

LUKE 13:34-35

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the City that Kills the Prophets.

- **Luke 13:34-35:** O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! ³⁵Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

How tragic is this, Christ would have loved to see God's Holy city Jerusalem (the only city on earth that God has put His Name on) flourishing and rejoicing in the glory of God, but instead it is full of prideful, self-serving hypocritical religious leaders and priests who are planning how they can have him killed. The following verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that Jerusalem is a unique city amongst all cities before God.

(1 Kings. 11:36) (2 Kings. 21:7) (Ps. 135:21) (Jer. 3:17) (Ezek. 1 5:5)
(Joel 3:16-17) (Matt. 5:35) (Heb. 12:22) (Rev. 3:12) (Rev. 21:2)

Jesus words:

- Behold, your house is forsaken (v35).

Was fulfilled in 70 A.D, when the city was destroyed by the Romans.

NOTICE: Jesus says, "You will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'" Giving us clear evidence from Jesus himself that he will return and that the Jews will declare him as the Christ.

The Old Testament prophet Zechariah wrote:

- On the day the LORD seeks to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem He will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great and all the families that are left will mourn (Zech. 12:9-14).

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
