

**I. All Have Fallen Short (Lk. 13:1-9)**

- A. On that very Occasion (vs. 1) - The context of this section of teaching (vs 2-9) is the discourse from the whole of chapter 12. Here is a short summary of our previous chapter....
- a. Pressure of persecution and fame was stirring up fear. Ultimately, this fear was related to a diminished life or the fear of death. (Lk. 12:1-5; Heb. 12:14-15)
  - b. Jesus teaches us to meditate upon the love and care of God over our lives to keep us from worry and the greed that manifests when we are controlled by the fear of death. (Lk. 12:6-34; Ps. 147)
  - c. Jesus implores us to set the priority of building our lives in Him, especially as we see the day of His return approaching. We are to be on guard against the spirit of slumber and drunkenness that will cover the earth on that day. (Lk. 12:35-48)
  - d. Jesus tells us that through His work on the cross we will have access and the impartation of His fiery zealous love for Him and for His righteousness and that fiery love will be in conflict with the darkness of the culture around us. (Lk. 12:49-53)
  - e. Jesus tells the crowd that they all have been given ample revelation and wisdom for the response that is needed in order to overcome fear and sin in the generation in which they live. If they do not repent (respond rightly) to that wisdom, they will reap the negative consequences of a life of folly. (Lk. 12:54-59)
- B. Galileans whom Pilate Killed (vs 1) - At that very place and moment that Jesus talked about reaping the consequences of the way we live our lives (wisdom or folly) and the surety of the righteous judgment of God, some reported a recent incident in which Pilate ordered the murder of a group of Galilean worshipers.

*We don't have a record in secular history about the specific incident mentioned here. There is a similar incident recorded before the ministry of Jesus. Pilate wanted to build an aqueduct from the Pools of Solomon to the city of Jerusalem. To pay for it, he demanded money from the temple treasury, money that had been dedicated to God — and this outraged the priests and the people. When the Jews sent a delegation to beg for their money back, Pilate sent into the crowd soldiers*

*dressed as common people, and at a certain signal they took out daggers and attacked the people asking for the money. - Guzik*

- C. Do you Suppose they Were Worse Sinners (vs. 2) - If we're honest with ourselves, we all suppose that there are worse sinners than ourselves who deserve judgment. The common thought of humanity is that there are good people and bad people. Good people deserve good things to happen to them and bad people deserve bad things to happen. Any of the Jews in Jesus' day believed that a tragedy or accident was the direct result of some personal sin. They concluded that the Galileans who had perished must have been great sinners. They based this view on a faulty theory of divine retribution, namely, that any divine judgment is the direct result of sin (John 9:1-3; Job 4:7; 8:20; 22:4-5).
- D. The Eighteen killed by the Tower (vs 4) - Jesus mentioned two disasters that were well known in His day. One was an evil done by the hand of man, Pilate, and the other was seemingly a natural disaster. A tower fell over in Jerusalem and killed eighteen people. But Jesus' point was not that the Galileans in question were innocent; His point was that they were simply not *more* guilty than the others. All were and are guilty in light of God's righteousness. In analyzing the issue, Jesus turned His focus from the question "why did this happen?" and turned it to the question, "what does this mean to me?" (Rom. 2:1; 3:23; 1 John 1:8-10)
1. By noting the ancient Greek grammar, we see that Jesus here mentioned two kinds of repentance, and both are essential. The verb tense in Luke 13:3 (unless you repent) described a continuing repentance. Luke 13:5 (unless you repent) described a once-and-for-all repentance. We all may die at any time, so repentance and walking in wisdom concerning lifestyle in God is top priority. Those who died in both of these instances did not think they would die soon, but they did, and we can suppose that most of them were not ready. (Lk. 12:35-36)
- E. Parable of the Fig Tree with No Fruit (vs. 6-9) - The parable is simple, true repentance and a lifestyle that God is looking for and calling us to which produces fruit. I believe that we can be very confident that the fruit spoken of here is the fruit of the Spirit which according to Romans 13 is the producing of God's love in us for Him and for one another. He is incredibly patient and kind as He intentionally works to develop fruit on this tree that He planted. (Is. 5:1-7; Gal. 6:22-23)

## II. Loosed from the Bondage of Sin (Lk. 13:10-17)

- A. Teaching in the Synagogue on the Sabbath (vs. 10) - As has become common in Luke's Gospel, the author will now tie a miracle to the message in order to show us that the possibility of change coming through repentance was reliant upon, and available through, His power and involvement. (Lk. 5:8, 12-14 making the unclean clean, Lk. 5:17-26 loosing the bonds of religious paralyzation, Lk. 8:22-25, 26-33 bringing peace to the torment of the storm of demonic torment)
- The clear theme that Jesus is teaching on in the previous chapter and in this chapter is the call to repent from wrong understanding and foolish living, so that we can live in the abundance of the life He wants to give us. Specifically, in the arena of overcoming areas of bondage to darkness and sin. The grammar of this verse strongly indicates that this was the exact message He was teaching on in the synagogue when He calls out this woman who is bound by Satan.
- B. Woman bound by a Spirit Eighteen years (vs. 11) - Many translations rightly say “and behold” there was a woman bound eighteen years. The use of the Greek word translated “behold” is meant to draw our attention to the fact that this woman is highlighted in context to the theme that Jesus is currently teaching on. This woman represents the current condition of the people of God, and He is seeking to set them free. (Lk. 4:18-19, 12:49-50)
- Eighteen years - The number eighteen is significant here as it is mentioned twice in the story and is specifically highlighted by Jesus to the religious leaders. In Hebrew, each letter has a numerical value. The number 10 is the letter Yud. The number 8 is the letter Het. Het-Yud spells the word Chai (חי), usually pronounced like the English word “hi” or “high,” which is a word and symbol that means “life.” In fact, a common Jewish toast “L’Chaim!,” which means, “To Life!” is often said at celebrations in anticipation of all the good things to come. Therefore, Jews today and back in biblical days associate the number 18 to abundant life and blessing. At weddings, bar mitzvahs, and when making honorary donations, Jews often give gifts of money in multiples of 18, symbolically giving the recipient the gift of “life”.

- Demonic Crippling - The scripture makes it clear that this woman's condition was caused by some kind of demonic or satanic influence. Scholars are quick to point out that Jesus does not “cast out” or “command” this demonic influence, and this is significant especially in Luke's gospel as Luke is the most concerned with specific details. What we are to understand is that there is a distinction and even varying levels between demonic possession and demonic oppression or influence. I believe that we are to apply the universal demonic oppression and dominion that Satan holds over humanity to this woman's condition. (John 14:30; 2 Cor. 4:4 Eph. 2:2, 6:12; 1 John 5:19; Rev. 12:9)
  
- C. Sabbath Day for Hope and Freedom (vs. 14-17) - Jesus laid His hands on her and not only was she immediately physically healed, but her heart and mind also came alive as she began to glorify and praise God. True to form, the religious leader of the synagogue placed a higher value on the outward observance of the Sabbath day than valuing the life for which it was made. Jesus rebukes the leader and tells him that this daughter of Abraham (promise of an inheritance of blessing and abundant life by faith) should be set free on the day set apart for rest and enjoyment of the life God has given us. (Mk 2:27)

### III. Influence of the Kingdom (Lk. 13:18-21)

- A. Parable of the Mustard Seed (vs. 18-19) - The kingdom of God that John the Baptist and Jesus announced as being at hand is the kingdom of Messiah, the rule of the Son of David, which the Old Testament predicted. It would begin with Messiah's appearance and include Messiah's reign on earth for 1,000 years (the Millennium, Rev. 20:4-6). The messianic kingdom is similar to a mustard seed, in that it had a small beginning in the initial ministry and work of Jesus, but it would grow to be a very large entity. It will eventually encompass the whole earth and the entire human race forever. (Ps. 2; Dan. 2:44)
  
- B. Parable of the Leaven (vs. 20-21) - I believe the second parable stresses the hidden nature or internal nature of kingdom transformation. The messianic kingdom will imperceptibly, but powerfully, spread through humanity. Though not stated, the Holy Spirit is God's agent in working, imperceptibly, to cause the messianic kingdom to grow. Yeast works from the inside: it cannot change the dough while it is outside. The power to change comes from what was put inside the dough not from the outside. The dough does not change itself.

**IV. Lord, are there only a few who are being Saved? (Lk. 13:22-30)**

- A. In the church today I believe there is a great need to clarify when the scriptures are speaking about legal position versus living condition. In our culture, we mostly use the word “saved” to speak of our legal position in God we obtain through faith in the person and work of Jesus on the cross. Our living condition in God obtained through a lifestyle of intimacy with God and obedience is often called “discipleship”. This distinction is clear enough in Christian conversation. However, when it comes to biblical interpretation, this distinction becomes blurry for many. For example, it is my opinion that the entirety of the sermon on the mount is concerned with our living condition or discipleship (as well as all of Luke 12-13 up to this point).
- B. Is it only a few who are saved? (vs. 23)- The question that this individual poses is clearly concerned with a legal position, in my opinion. The question is concerned with how many people are going to be saved. Jesus tells Him that many are seeking salvation but there is only one door or one way. Jesus is clearly alluding to Himself as the door and clearly says that in other passages. Many will seek to be saved, but only those who seek salvation through the person and work of Jesus will obtain salvation.
- Proceeding on His way to Jerusalem (vs 22) - Luke starts this section off by letting us know that the scene is one where Jesus is intentionally working His way towards Jerusalem, so He can accomplish the sacrificial work which He came to fulfill. This work will be available to all, but only those who choose to enter through that specific door will be saved.
- C. We ate and drank in your presence (vs. 26-27) -In speaking of those who are excluded from God’s presence, Jesus said they would protest that they knew something of Jesus and had heard something of His teaching. Jesus warned that it wasn’t enough to know something of Jesus and have some association with Him. Rather, it's those who actually acknowledge who He is and acknowledge the work He has done on their behalf. He also says those who actually know Him will have their lives affected, that they will not be practitioners of evil but of righteousness.
- D. Many will come from all Nations (vs. 29) - Jesus told His astonished audience that there would be many from all over the world, from many nations, together with God in His kingdom. This was a shock to the many Jewish people of His day that had been taught that salvation was only for the Jews, and not for the Gentiles.

**V. Jesus sets His Face towards the Cross (Lk. 13:31-35)**

- A. Pharisees approached “Go away Herod wants to Kill You!” (vs 31) - We know that not all the Pharisees opposed Jesus, and it is unclear the motive of this particular group of Pharisees. It's my opinion that they had a hidden motive, that they wanted to appear to want to save His life but they really just wanted Him to leave the region and not go into Jerusalem and disrupt things there, as He was doing all over. Whatever their motive, they used the very pressure that Jesus just taught all His disciples to resist. They used the fear of death to tempt Him to turn away from the leadership of His Father. His response is absolute and immediate.
- B. On the Third Day I reach my Goal (vs. 32) - All of humanity was born to live and live abundantly. However, there is one person in all of human history who was born specifically so that He might die, and die for everyone. It was for this substitutionary death that He had set His face towards Jerusalem and no temptation would dissuade Him. Why? Because His heart yearned to accomplish the defeat of Satan and death that keeps all humanity under bondage. His burning heart of love and passion for His beloved ones was only days away now from accomplishing the goal. (Is. 59:1-17)
- C. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem How often I Longed to Gather You (vs. 34) - All pictures of a stoic, angry God who cannot wait to punish the disobedience of His people falls away as we see the truth as we behold the weeping man. The pronouncement upon a stiff-necked and perpetually despondent and disobedient people is, “How long I have longed to gather you under my wing”, not, “How long I have wanted to destroy you”. (Lk. 19:31)
- D. You Would not Have it (vs. 34) - The picture is of a God who continually chooses and longs for them but they do not choose or want Him. So what does He do? He goes to the depths of love to win their hearts with His love that abandons all for their sake.
- E. You will not see Me until the time comes when you say “Blessed is He who Comes in the Name of the Lord (vs. 35) -