

## **Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ Repentance and The Parable of a Barren Fig Tree**

Last time...Jesus warned His disciples about what they/we are to be doing in His absence until He returns to earth

Watchfulness by

- waiting servants
- wise stewards

A stern warning for the unprepared/unbelieving: judgment of God

Note: Upon Christ on the Cross fell the judgment of God for whosoever will believe

The Holy Spirit keeps us “in Christ”

Jesus also reconciled Messianic Scriptures for His disciples

1 Messiah, 2 Comings to earth separated by a considerable period of time

1. Suffering Servant of God
2. Conquering King of God

This time...His ministry continues in Perea, down by the Jordan River where John the Baptist baptized

The judgment of God seems to be on the mind of the Jewish listeners of Jesus' teaching

We will be in Luke 13

v1 the Galilaeans...Pilate:

With the judgment of God for those who do not believe (do, obey...watch)  
“heavy in the air”, some of the listeners ask Jesus about a historical event,  
not recorded Scripture

Galilaeans, who lived in the jurisdiction of Herod Antipas,  
were killed by Pilate, the Roman prefect/governor of Judea,  
on Temple Mount as they gathered to offer their sacrifices  
at one of the Feasts of the Lord

The Roman Empire had a Zero Tolerance policy regarding insurrection

The Jews were natural-born insurrectionists

Especially Zealots, super patriots, who were concentrated in Galilee and worked tirelessly (political insurrection, political Messiahs) against the Roman occupation

ultimate example: Masada

In this case and in typical brutal fashion, Pilate responded to this career and life-limiting insurrection by sending ruthless Roman soldiers stationed in Antonio Fortress to put a bloody end to the uprising, right there on Temple Mount, holy to the Jews

(perhaps resulting in a divide between Herod Antipas and Pilate...  
“healed” by the arrest of Jesus, Luke 23:12)

[ graphic ]

With this horrifying incident in mind, some of the Jewish listeners down by the Jordan River ask Jesus if that was the judgment of God

v2-3 Suppose...sinners above...except ye repent...perish:  
Jesus corrects their thinking

Do you think those Galilaeans were worse sinners than all other Galilaeans because that happened to them?

Do you think, therefore, that what Pilate did to them was the judgment of God?

Q: Who would think like that?

A: Job’s friends

Bad things happen to bad people e.g. Job

Job needed to repent in their theology...but not so

God’s testimony of Job:

“perfect and upright”

“none like him in all the earth”

To this day, a very prevalent...and erroneous...thought/theology

No!

The judgment of God (to perish, 2<sup>nd</sup> death, eternal death) is upon ALL those who do not repent of their sin...no exceptions!

Ps 14:2-3

men: Jew and Gentile

Ezk 18:4

the soul that sins shall die

Ezk 18:30-32

choose death (do not repent) or choose life (repent)

Repentance: hearing the testimony of God, a change of mind producing a perceptible change of behavior/action

No change of mind is to choose death – choose man’s ways

Change of mind and choose life – reject man’s ways and choose

God’s ways

To live and not perish (2<sup>nd</sup> death) and not face the judgment of God,  
one MUST repent...

Acknowledge one's sins and sinfulness before a holy God  
Call on the name of the Lord for mercy  
Turn one's life around to follow the Lord...  
change of thinking producing a change of behavior/action

Jesus is saying,  
Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand!  
Do not look at others and wonder about the judgment of God on them,  
look at your life and repent!  
Do not think like Job's friends...they were the ones who needed to repent,  
not blameless Job!

Jesus must be very serious about the issues of sin and repentance because...

v4-5 tower of Siloam fell:

Jesus must be very serious about the issues of sin and repentance because...  
He repeats the message  
Another incident unrecorded in Scripture

The Pool of Siloam (John 9) is in the City of David, the SE portion of Jerusalem  
where the valleys meet

[ graphic ]

Apparently there was also a tower there, and it fell, killing 18 people

Was that the judgment of God upon those 18?  
Were those 18 worse sinners than others who did not die when that tower  
fell?

No, Job's friends!

All unrepentant sinners will perish (2<sup>nd</sup> death) when the judgment of God falls

Matt 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in heaven is  
perfect

James 2:10 whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one  
*point*, he is guilty of all

Ex 32:7-8

Ex 32:33

Ex 33:3, 12-14

Ex 34:6-7

difference: God's grace  
gracious, merciful, forgiving...not clearing the guilty

Who is forgiven and who is not?

Forgiven: those who believe and repent...  
justified, declared innocent

Not forgiven: those who do not believe or repent...  
remain in their guilt

Salvation from the 2<sup>nd</sup> death, the wages of sin, has always been about  
Grace

Grace comes at a price to the just and jealous God

Ex 34:25, 27

**My** sacrifice = Passover

God made a covenant with Israel: Feasts (Appts)

The Messiah...the mystery of Christ

Is 53:10-11 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, *and* shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

(Messiah's 1<sup>st</sup> Coming as Suffering Servant)

John 1:29 Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the World (testimony of God the Father)

John 3:16 (testimony of God the Son)

1 Cor 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us (testimony of God the Holy Spirit)

Acts 5:31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins

Heb 5:5-9

To obey is to believe, required for repentance

Heb 7:19

Hope: expectation, confidence

Our better hope is a Person

1 Tim 1:1 the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope

God cannot lie so our better hope is a...certainty!

Heb 7:24-27

unchangeable

holy, separate from sinners

once

offered up...Himself

Heb 9:11 – 10:14

9:12 by His own blood

once

obtained eternal redemption

9:15 mediator of a new testament (Jer 31:31-33)

by the means of death

redemption of the transgressions

the called receive the promise of eternal inheritance

9:22 without the shedding of blood is no remission

(pardon, forgiveness)

9:24 Christ appeared in the presence of God for us

9:26 once

put away sin (and wages, death) by the sacrifice of Himself

9:27 men once to die, after this the judgment (of God)

Life for those who repent, believe

Death for those who do not

9:28 once

offered to bear the sins of...many –

those who repent, believe

10:4 impossible for the blood of animals to take away

man's sins

10:7 to do Thy will, O God (Father)...Is 53:10-11

10:10 we are sanctified – set apart, made holy  
through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ  
once

10:12 one sacrifice for sins  
forever

10:14 by one offering  
perfected forever them that are sanctified –  
those who repent, believe

Gal 3:11 that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is*  
evident: for, The just shall live by faith

Gal 3:24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto  
Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

1 Peter 1:18-21 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed  
with corruptible things, *as* silver and gold, from your vain  
conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But  
with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without  
blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained  
before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in  
these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God,  
that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that  
your faith and hope might be in God.

Hear the testimony of God, repent, and be saved from the judgment of God  
for your sin...nature and actions

Note: One must believe to repent, seen in behavior/actions!

Rom 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God,  
that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy,  
acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.  
And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed  
by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is*  
that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God

There are no shades of gray on the sin issue

- all men are sinners (Rom 3:10, 23)
- the only acceptable solution is God's (1 Cor 2:2)

As repentance is expected of a sinner by God, so is fruitfulness from a fig tree

v6-9 fig tree...sought fruit...none...cut it down:

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

Owner of a vineyard

The owner's vinedresser/pruner and cultivator

A fig tree

The owner of the vineyard comes to the fig tree looking for...fruit

It is the only reason to have a fig tree

This fig tree is...fruitless/barren

The time required for a fig tree to bear fruit is 3 years

It has thus far been  $3 + 3 = 6$  years

Now is the time to be fruitful...and it still is not, even after 3 years

Fruitless is worthless

It is taking up valuable and limited space, depleting the soil for no return

So the owner of the vineyard says to...cut it down

But the vinedresser/pruner of the vineyard intercedes and asks his Lord for

- one more year
- another chance for the fig tree to bear fruit
- mercy and longsuffering from the owner

He will cultivate it

He will fertilize it

If the fig tree bears fruit, PTL!

If not, Ok...no more chances, no more mercy or longsuffering by the owner  
(those things are not unlimited)

Matt 3:8      Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance

Fruit is perceptible evidence of

- change of mind
- change of behavior

Fruit is seen...and is both expected and pleasing to the owner of the vineyard

Jesus had been 3 years trying to get Israel to bear fruit...repentance...  
and the results are meager

Matt 15:21-24 I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel

Is 5:1-7      the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel

John 1:11      He came unto His own and His own received Him not

God would be just to chop down the tree and burn it, yet  
His grace gives the tree additional opportunities to bear fruit and  
His sovereignty uses the tree's barrenness to accomplish His purposes...

the salvation of the Gentiles (Rom 11:11)  
by grace thru faith

### **Application**

We are fig trees;  
are we, upon examination by the Owner of the vineyard, fruitful?

No fruit worthy of repentance?  
The guilt of sin remains and the judgment of God is not satisfied

Yes, believe and our lives are perceptible evidence of repentance?  
Redemption of transgressions  
The promise of eternal inheritance  
Better Hope  
The remission/pardon/forgiveness of sin (and death)

### **Invitation**