

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree



Luke 13:1-9

- Review Lessons Taught:
- In Matthew 13:10, Jesus began using parables to teach about the kingdom of heaven. His disciples noticed the change in His method of teaching, and asked Him the question, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”
- According to Mark 4:34, “Jesus did not say anything to them without using a parable and when He was alone with His disciples He would explain what He meant.”
- Purpose: to assist us in growing in our understanding by exploring these divine truths found in Christ’s teaching. To teach us what they mean and how they relate to our present and future life in Christ Jesus.
- Goal: to allow the Holy Spirit speak to our hearts and draw us closer to Jesus Christ.

1. What is a parable?

- It is a simple yet powerful story that Jesus used to illustrate a great truth. Jesus used parables to help His followers understand spiritual truths.
- The word “parable” is taken from the Greek word that literally means to cast or throw alongside.
- Parables were stories that were “cast or thrown” alongside a truth in order to illustrate a divine truth.

2. These are the parables that have been taught:

- The Parable of the Sower. (Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23)
- The Parable of the Wheat and The Weeds (Matthew 13:24-30)
- The Parable of the Mustard Seed. (Matthew 13:31-32)
- The Parable of the Leaven (Matthew 13:33, Luke 13:20-21)
- The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (Matthew 13:44)
- The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price” (Matthew 13:45-46)
- The Parable of the Dragnet
- The Parable of the Wineskins
- The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 19:12-26)

3. We learned that there are at least 39 Parables that is recorded in between the Gospel of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. There are no parables found in the Gospel of John.

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Luke 13:1-9

- Here in Luke 13:1-5, Jesus uses two subjects to illustrate two importance things to the nation of Israel and to every individual.
 1. The Truth about sin and suffering. (vs. 1-5)
 2. God's great call for all mankind to repent. (vs. 1-5)
- A. Subject #1: Jesus just received the report that Pilate had killed some of the Galileans who had come to Jerusalem to worship and mixed their blood with their sacrifices. (vs. 1)
 - Three things Jesus already knew about them:
 1. Jesus knew exactly what they were thinking and the reason it was brought up by them.
 2. Jesus knew their false assumption was not grounded in divine truth.
 3. Jesus knew their heart and goes directly to the heart of the matter.
 - The Galileans were natives or inhabitant of Galilee.
 - Much of Jesus' three years of ministry took place throughout Galilee. (Matthew 4:12-19, 23, 8:1-10, 13:54-58, 14:14, Mark 1:39, 6:1-6, 33 Luke 5:12, 9:1-11, John 6).
 - All of Jesus's disciples, with the exception of Judas Iscariot, were Galileans (Matthew 4:18-22, John 1:43-44, Acts 1:11, 2:7).
 - Most of the miracles that Jesus performed were in Galilee. Jesus performed His first miracle (turning water into wine) at a wedding in Cana Galilee (John 2:1-11).
 - At least nineteen of the parables of Jesus Christ were spoken in Galilee.

- What did the Jewish people believe were the reasons behind such gruesome acts toward some of the Galileans? (vs. 1)
 1. Pilate's actions were justified due to their terrible sins.
 2. These Galileans must have been the worse sinners than all the rest.
 3. Their assumption was this would never happen to those who are good, honest and respectable. Such a thing could only happen to bad people.
- There are Five reasons why Jesus was concerned with their false assumption.
 1. Their false assumption gave them false security.
 2. There was no sense of urgency to repent.
 3. There was no sense of awareness.
 4. There was no sense of concern.
 5. Their false assumption gave them a false sense of comfort to remain in a fallen state of being.
- Two things that were unacceptable to Jesus Christ. (vs. 2-3)
 1. Their illogical way of thinking was totally biased, senseless, and unreasonable.
 2. Their disregard to the truth was unacceptable which could lead to a failure to heed His warning to repent of their sins.

- B. Subject #2: Jesus referred to another tragic situation that occurred, "The collapse of a tower in Siloam that killed eighteen people in Jerusalem. (vs. 4-5)
 1. Notice Jesus address both subjects with similar questions. (vs. 2, 4)
 - (vs. 2) – "Do you suppose these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things?"
 - (vs. 4) – "Do you think that they were worse sinners than all the other men who dwell in Jerusalem?"
 2. Notice Jesus answers both subjects with the same stern warning. (verses 3, 5)
 - (vs. 3, 5) – "Repent or else you too will perish (spend eternity in hell)."

- For three years Jesus had been ministering to them. They had witnessed many miracles. Yet their way of thinking remained unchanged and their hearts hardened toward God.
- Jesus' message is clear to them. It doesn't matter the person, age, nationality, culture, situation, suffering, or status. Repent or perish.

C. What was Jesus' greatest concern for them?

1. It was spiritual (eternal) and not physical death (temporal judgement) or suffering alone. (John 16:33, 2 Corinthians 5:1-11, Revelation 20:11-15)
2. The greatest spiritual need for all mankind is to repent and not die in their sins. (vs. 3, 5, Matthew 18:11-14, 2 Peter 3:9)
3. God commands all mankind to repent and believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ. (Acts 17:30, Romans 10:9-10, 13)
 - a. The word "repent or repentance" means change of heart, mind and will, to turn away from sin and to turn to God. (Luke 5:32, 13:5, 15:7, 10, 24:47, Acts 26:20, 2 Peter 3:9)
 - b. Without "repentance" there is no new birth into the Kingdom of God. (Matthew 4:17, John 3:3, 2 Corinthians 5:17)
 - A person must hear the call to salvation, renounce one's sin and turn to God and receive by faith Jesus Christ into their hearts. (Romans 10:13-17)
 - A person must hear the gospel. It is the good news of Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Jesus Christ offers this wonderful gift of salvation and eternal life to all who believe in Him. (Romans 1:16, John 3:16, 2 Corinthians 5:14-15)
 - c. The Holy Spirit convicts a person of sin, prompting them to repent of their sins and turn to God by faith in Jesus Christ. (John 16:8, Acts 4:12, Roman 8:1)

D. Jesus makes (3) Three Things clear about their false assumption. (vs. 1-5)

1. Their false assumption led to placing false judgement against the Galileans due to their physical suffering. (John 9:1-41)

- You cannot determine whether a person is a believer (righteous) or unbeliever (unrighteous) based upon the suffering they experience in their lives. (Matthew 5:45)
- 2. Their false assumption focused solely upon the physical suffering of the Galileans.
 - Experiencing physical suffering and even death does not mean that a person is a great sinner or one who has sinned greatly.” (Romans 3:23)
- 3. Their false assumption was not grounded in divine truth. (vs. 3, 5)
 - All mankind is dealing with the consequences of sin due Adam’s disobedience in the Garden. (Genesis 3:1-9, Romans 5:12, Romans 7:14-25)
 - All are born sinners and all must repent of sin. (Psalm 51:5, Proverbs 28:13, Romans 3:23, 1 John 1:8-10)
 - All are sinners and need God’s saving grace through faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:8, 12-21, 10:9-10, 1 Corinthians 15:22, Ephesians 2:8-9)
 - All mankind is given the opportunity to receive new life through Jesus Christ and no person has to die in their sin. (Genesis 3:15, John 1:29, Romans 5:18-21, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:1-10, 4:22-24, Colossians 3:8-10)
- E. The only way to keep from dying in sin is to repent of your sins and receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. (John 3:16, 10:10, Romans 3:23, 6:23, Acts 2:38, 3:19 17:30, 2 Peter 3:9)
 - The Parable of the Fig Tree (Luke 13:6-9)
 - In this parable of the Fig Tree Jesus illustrates a divine truth to further simplify His message of repentance and fruit bearing.
 - There are (3) Three important areas we will examine in this parable.
 - The Privilege. (vs. 6)
 - The Purpose. (vs. 7)
 - The Patience. (vs. 8-9)

- (vs. 6) – “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.”

- What does each character represent in this parable?
 1. The “man or the vineyard owner” is God the Father.
 2. The “vinedresser or vineyard keeper” is Jesus Christ.
 3. The “vineyard” is symbolized in the Old and New Testament as (3) things:
 - God’s Glorious Kingdom.
 - Israel (Jewish Nation) God’s chosen people. (Isaiah 5:1-7, Matthew 21:33-41)
 - People (all humanity) in the world.
 4. The “fig tree” represents (3) three groups of people.
 - Israel (Jewish Nation). God’s chosen people.
 - The Church (Body of Christ, believers). The redeemed of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - The Gentiles (The Heathen Nation). The unrighteous in the world (called to repentance).

- The First Thing we must examine carefully is the “Privilege” in this parable.
 - Jesus states (3) three important things about the vineyard owner. (vs. 6)
 1. God owns everything. (Genesis 1:1, Psalm 24:1-2, 50:10, 100:1-5, Deuteronomy 10:12-14, Haggai 2:8, Isaiah 43:1-10)
 2. God planted the fig tree in His vineyard. (Psalm 1:1-6, Philippians 4:19, James 1:17, Numbers 6:24-26, Jeremiah 17:7-8, 2 Corinthians 9:8, Ephesians 1:3, Matthew 6:30-33)
 - The fig tree was planted in the best environment.
 - The vineyard soil was abundantly rich and filled with all the proper minerals, and nutrients needed for growth.
 - The fig tree was planted in the right season, and supplied with enough rain and sun to maintain healthy growth.

3. God came expecting fruit but found none. The fig tree was barren (fruitless).

- It appeared to have outward life, but it bore no fruit.
- It had every opportunity to grow and produce fruit.
- Jesus gives a clear picture of the state of each nation in this parable.

1) Israel (Jewish Nation). They were God's chosen people. (Genesis 17:1-8, 15-16, Deuteronomy 14:2, Exodus 19:5, Isaiah 43:1-7)

- God provided everything they needed to prosper and flourish. (Deuteronomy 8:4, 29, 29:5-6, Exodus 16:2-8, 13-15)
- God repeatedly spoke to them through His prophets to repent and turn back to Him and He would restore them before their enemies.
- God gave them many opportunities, but yet they continued to rebel and sin against Him.

2) The Church (Body of Christ, believers). The redeemed of the Lord.

- God chose you before the foundation of the world. (John 1:11-17, 6:40-41, 15:16, Galatians 3:26-29, 1 Peter 2:9, Ephesians 1:3-12, 2:4-16, Jeremiah 29:11, Titus 2:11-14, Romans 8:29-39, Psalm 8:1-9, 139:13-18)
- God has provided everything we need to prosper and flourish in His will.

a. The Son Jesus Christ (Grace). (John 1:1-4, 16-17, 8:31-36, 10:10, 14:6, Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 5:20-21, 8:37-39, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, Hebrews 4:15-16, Titus 2:11-15, Isaiah 9:6, 53:4-5, Hebrews 13:5)

b. The Holy Spirit. (John 14:12-17, 25-27, 16:7-8, 13-15, Acts 1:9, Romans 8:25-28, 1 Corinthians 10:13)

c. The Word. (Matthew 4:4, 15:7, John 17:17, Hebrews 4:12, 2 Timothy 2:15, 3:12-17, James 1:21-22, Psalm 33:4, 119:11, 105, 114, Isaiah 55:11, Romans 10:17, Proverbs 30:5, Joshua 1:8-9)

d. The Gospel (Good news). (John 3:16-17, Romans 1:16-17, 10:9-13, Acts 15:1-12, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 1 John 4:9-10, Luke 24:45-49, Matthew 24:14, Ephesians 1:13-14, 1 Thessalonians 1:2-8)

e. The Church (Body of Christ, believers). (Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27)

- God expects not just our profession of faith in Jesus Christ but also fruit in our lives. (John 15:1-8, 16, Matthew 7:15-20, Galatians 5:22-23, Hebrews 13:15, Ephesians 5:8-13, Philippians 1:9-11)

3) The Gentile Nations (heathen nations, unbelievers, unrepentant).

- Jesus Christ died so that all humanity can have the opportunity to receive eternal life. (John 3:16-18, 5:24, 6:40-47, 15:14, Romans 5:8, Acts 4:12)
- It's God's will be that none would perish, but that all come to repentance. (Romans 6:23, 2 Peter 3:9)
- God will give you rest through Jesus Christ. (Matthew 11:28-30)
- Jesus Christ is the only way to God. (John 6:44, 11:25-26, 14:6, 1 John 5:11-13)
- Jesus Christ will set you free from the bondage sin and death. (John 8:32-36, Romans 5:21, 8:1-2, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 1 John 4:19)