

The Good News About Jesus as Luke Wrote It

Chapter 13.1-35

HoneyBee base version for oral translation

September 2023 Draft¹

Background

- The Roman governor, Pilate, committed many violent acts.
- Many vineyards included both vines and fruit trees.
- The first three years, fruit from a young tree was dedicated to charity. An owner could eat from his own trees the fourth year.
- Jewish teachers taught that God could suspend judgment if sinners repented.
- Visiting teachers were commonly asked to speak in synagogues on the Sabbath.
- Although the law limited human activity on the Sabbath, it never limited God's activity.
- Mustard was the smallest seed that many farmers knew.
- 'Mustard plants can grow [to] an average mature height of between 6 and 20 feet and a 20-foot spread.' (homeguides.sfgates.com)
- Many Jews believed that nearly all Israelites would be saved in the end because (they believed) God loved Jews and hated other nations.
- There is no record of a prophet killed at Jerusalem.

History

- The Romans had violently suppressed Jewish revolts against their government, crucifying many Jews.
- Pilate was constructing an aqueduct to improve Jerusalem's water supply, and raised a structure called a tower on the city wall above the pool of Siloam. It collapsed and killed people.
- Jesus' ministry may have lasted three or four years.

Themes

- Repent or perish.
- God remains free to work on the Sabbath.
- The kingdom of God grows silently and steadily.
- Jerusalem would soon kill God's prophets.

Jesus teaches that it is urgent to repent²

¹ Some people who were listening to Jesus at that time told him about some *other* people from Galilee district *who had gone to Jerusalem*. Pilate, *the Roman governor, had ordered soldiers* to kill them *while they were offering sacrifices in the Temple there*. ² Jesus replied to them,

“Do not think that this happened to those people from Galilee because they were more sinful than all the other people from Galilee! ³ No, they were not. But I warn you that, unless you all

¹ Licensed for use under Creative Commons. Text in *italics* is implied from historical or cultural context. Superscripted ^(pl) means plural, ^(sg) singular, ^(inc) inclusive, ^(exc) exclusive pronoun.

² OR Repent or God will cut you down [like a tree that does not bear fruit.]

repent from your own sins, *you will also die.*³ ⁴ Remember the 18 people who died when the tower at Siloam outside Jerusalem fell *from the city wall and* crushed them. Do not think that this happened to them because they were more sinful than all the other people living in Jerusalem?⁴ ⁵ No, they were not. But I warn you^(pl) that unless you all repent from your own sins, God will also cause everyone living in Jerusalem⁵ to die.⁶

⁶ Then Jesus told to them this parable *about people who do not repent:*

“A man planted a fig tree⁷ in his vineyard.⁸ Each year he came looking for its figs, but there were no figs. ⁷ So, he said to the gardener, ‘Look at this tree! I have been looking for figs on this tree every year for the past three years, but there have been no figs. Cut it down, so that it does not waste good soil.’⁸ But the gardener replied to the owner, ‘Sir, leave it here for another year. I will dig around it and put manure in the soil. ⁹ Perhaps it will bear fruit next year. If it does not, then you^(sg) can *tell me to* cut it down.’¹⁰

Jesus heals a demonized woman on the Sabbath¹¹

¹⁰ One Sabbath day, when Jesus was teaching people in a synagogue, ¹¹ a woman came in. She had an evil spirit that had crippled her for 18 years. She was always bent over and could not stand up straight. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called to her to come near to him. He said to her, “Woman, I am freeing you^(sg) from your illness!” ¹³ He laid his hands on her, and she immediately stood up straight. She then began praising God!

¹⁴ But the synagogue leader became angry, because Jesus had healed the woman on a Sabbath day. He kept explaining to the people, “Our Jewish laws allow you to work six days every week, but not on the Sabbath day. So, if you are sick, then come during the six workdays to be healed! Do not come for healing on the Sabbath!” ¹⁵ But the Lord Jesus replied to him,

“You religious leaders are hypocrites! Every Sabbath each one among you does some work. He unties his ox¹² or donkey from its stall, and leads it to where it can drink water. ¹⁶ This woman is descended from Abraham, *so she is more important than your animals!* But Satan has kept her crippled for 18 years, *just as you^(pl) keep your animals in their stalls.* So, since you untie your

³ OR you will die in the same manner. OR God will send the Romans to come kill you, too. OR God will cause you also to die eternally. See Luke 13:5. (Jesus gives two parallel examples of people dying. Your translation about Jesus’ warning/conclusion should sound very similar for both examples.)

⁴ OR who lived in Jerusalem.

⁵ Jerusalem was the important city that represented the entire Jewish nation. Jesus was warning all the Jews to repent from their bad ways and turn to God before he sent Rome to carry out his punishment on the whole nation.

⁶ OR to die in the same manner. See Luke 13:3.

⁷ OR a fig fruit tree. OR a tree that had fruit called ‘figs’. (Fig fruit trees were common in Israel land. Many times in the Bible God uses fig trees to represent the people in Israel. So, if you do not have fig trees in your area, it would be best for you to borrow the word ‘fig’ and indicate that it is a fruit (tree).)

⁸ OR on his farmland. OR in his garden.

⁹ OR waste space. OR take up space and give nothing back to us.

¹⁰ OR If it bears fruit next year, well and good, but if not, you can cut it down.

¹¹ OR Jesus explains why it is right for him to heal people on the Sabbath.

¹² OR You all untie your ox.

animals on Sabbath days, certainly it is right for me to set this woman free from Satan on a Sabbath day!”

¹⁷ After Jesus said this, all the people there who opposed him knew that he had shamed them. But all the other people there were happy about all the wonderful things that he was doing.

God’s Kingdom is like a tree seed and like yeast¹³

¹⁸ Then Jesus said, “I shall tell you how the people who obey me will increase in number. I shall compare this to a garden. ¹⁹ After you plant¹⁴ a tiny mustard seed, it grows silently until it becomes like a tree. Birds who fly in the sky can *then* build nests in its branches.”

²⁰ Jesus also said, “I shall tell you *how the people who obey me will increase in number*. I shall compare this to making bread. ²¹ If you put a little yeast in enough flour to make bread, and mix it *with water*, then the yeast leavens all the bread dough.”¹⁵

How to enter God’s Kingdom¹⁶

²² Jesus continued traveling, along with his disciples, through various towns and villages on his way to Jerusalem. As they went, he was teaching the people. ²³ Someone asked him, “Lord, will you bring only a few people¹⁷ into your future kingdom?”¹⁸ Then Jesus said to them all,

²⁴ To enter my kingdom, you must obey me now. This is like entering a big house through its narrow door,¹⁹ after its big door is locked. Many people will try to enter by some other way, but they will not be able to get in.

²⁵ *My kingdom will be like a big house. At nighttime, the house owner locks its narrow door. If you are late, then you will stand outside and begin knocking. You will shout, ‘Sir, open the door for us!’ But he will reply, ‘No, I will not open it, because I do not know who you are or where you are from!’* ²⁶ Then you will say, ‘Sir, you know who we are, because we^(exc) ate meals with you^(sg), and you taught people in our town’s streets!’ ²⁷ But he will reply to you, ‘No, I do not know you, and I do not know *who you are or where you are from*. You are criminals! Get/go away from here!’“

²⁸ You hypocrites will see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets with me in my future kingdom, but you will weep and gnash/grind your teeth *with pain and sorrow* because *my angels*²⁰ will throw you out. ²⁹ There will be people in my future kingdom who come from lands to the north, east, south, and west. These will enjoy a great feast *with me*. ³⁰ Think about this: Some people whom you despise now will be very important then, and some people whom you honor now will not be important then.”

¹³ OR Jesus compares God’s Kingdom to a tree seed and to yeast.

¹⁴ OR After a farmer plants.

¹⁵ OR makes all the bread dough swell up.”

¹⁶ OR Jesus urges people to believe in him while they still have time.

¹⁷ Articular present participle ‘those being saved’ = ‘the saved’ in Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15.

¹⁸ OR give everlasting life to only a few people? OR save only a few people?

¹⁹ OR the small door. (During Jesus’ time, people who lived in large houses locked their big door before nighttime, and had a narrow/small door that stayed open a while longer. When that was shut, no one could enter.)

²⁰ OR my Father. OR God.

Jesus talks about his death and his return²¹

³¹ At that very time, some Pharisees, *whom King Herod Antipas sent*, came and said to Jesus, “You must leave this region, because the ruler, King Herod Antipas, wants to kill you^(sg)!” ³² Jesus replied to them,

“Herod Antipas is *like a sneaky, destructive little fox*. Go tell him²² that I will first finish my work. Today and tomorrow I will continue expelling demons and healing diseases. On the third day, I shall finish my work *and leave for Jerusalem*.³³ But I must continue my trip to Jerusalem during the coming three days, because no one wants to kill me, a prophet, in any other city than Jerusalem.’ “

³⁴ As Jesus turned his face toward Jerusalem, his disciples heard him say *with tears*,

“O *people in Jerusalem!* You have begun killing prophets whom God sends to you, by throwing big stones at them. Many times, I wanted to gather you together to protect you *from God’s punishment*, just as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings *when there is danger*. But you^(pl) did not want me to do so.^{23 35} So listen to this: I will *soon* abandon your nation²⁴ *to be destroyed by Roman armies*. After that, you will not see me *again* until the time when *I return* and you say *about me*, ‘God approves/blesses this man who comes with the Lord’s authority!’“

²¹ OR Jesus announces that he will soon die and leave the world before he returns.

²² OR Go tell Herod, that sneaky fox/coyote/wild dog, OR Go tell Herod, that sneaky, destructive man, (Jesus is comparing Herod to a fox (a type of small wild dog) who is able to move quickly and quietly to kill small animals or to steal food. If you have a type of wild dog or cat that your people consider to be sneaky, clever and destructive, you may use that in place of a fox. Or, in your translation, leave out the comparison/metaphor and just translate that Herod is sneaky, clever, destructive.)

²³ OR you^(pl) did not want to repent and let me protect/save you from God’s punishment.

²⁴ OR this city. OR your temple. See Psalm 118:26. (Jesus literally said ‘your house’ which likely refers to Jerusalem or to the entire nation. The temple in Jerusalem was called the Lord’s house. That week they will sing Ps 118:26, but it will be too little too late.)