

Stuff Happens

“Be Ready”

I. SCRIPTURE

Luke 13:1-5 – “There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And YAHUSHA [Jesus] answered and said to them, ‘**Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish’.**”

II. THE BACKGROUND

These red letter words: the words of YAHUSHA [Jesus] in today’s scripture, were spoken to His disciples at an event described by Luke in the previous chapter where “an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another...” (Luke 12:1). To me, that describes an event that was pretty chaotic, at least before YAHUSHA [Jesus] began to speak. Just before, He had departed the house of a Pharisee who had invited Him for lunch, at which time and place He had rebuked them – these Pharisees and the lawyers who were there. He had said such things to them as “**woe to you experts in the law, because you have taken away the key to knowledge. You yourselves have not entered, and you have hindered those who were entering**” (Luke 11:52) and “**woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them**” (Luke 11:46). They had already told him that He was insulting them (Luke 11:45), and so He continues to do so. Then, after insulting them, He leaves the house. And “when YAHUSHA [Jesus] went outside, the Pharisees and the teachers of the law began to oppose him fiercely and besiege Him with questions, waiting to catch Him in something He might say” (Luke 11:53-54).

Outside, YAHUSHA [Jesus] covers a lot of territory in talking with the crowd... before those present at that season had told Him about the recent catastrophes that had happened. The spiritual territory that He covered was:

1. Beware of the Hypocrisy of the Church Leaders (Luke 12:1-3),
2. Fear YAHUAH [God] rather than People, He Who has the power to cast into Hell after the Body is killed (Luke 12:4-7),
3. Confess YAHUSHA [Jesus] before Men and Women (Luke 12:8-12). Then,
4. The Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-34),
5. Don't Worry about Material Things; Build Treasure in Heaven,
6. The Faithful Servant and The Evil Servant, and that
7. YAHUSHA [Jesus] Brings Division: two (2) to three (3) of five (5) divided against the other side. This is then followed by
8. Discerning the Season and
9. Making Peace with Your Adversary.

Now, some approached YAHUSHA [Jesus] and asked Him, "did you hear the news?" If it were today, they probably would have asked Him something like, "Did you hear that..."

Date	Country	City	Killed	Injured	Description
2020.01.20	Nigeria	Abebe	4	2	A church leader is among four innocents slain by militant Muslims.
2020.01.19	Nigeria	Michika	1	0	A Christian pastor is abducted and beheaded in captivity by Islamic radicals.
2020.01.17	Nigeria	Gora-Gan	2	3	Two Catholic girls are gunned down by militant Muslims.
2020.01.13	Nigeria	Borno	1	0	A Christian man is executed by a child member of the Islamic State.
2020.01.06	Cameroon	Hitere	2	2	Boko Haram raid a Christian village, killing two men and kidnapping two children.
2020.01.06	Cameroon	Moudokou	3	1	Boko Haram burn a church and kill three residents.
2019.12.25	CAR	Batangafo	2	0	Two pastors are shot in the head by Seleka Jihadists following a Christmas service.
2019.12.25	Nigeria	Borno	11	0	Eleven Christians are beheaded on video.
2019.12.06	Kenya	Kotulo	9	0	Nine Christian bus passengers are murdered after refusing to recite the Shahada.
2019.11.19	Turkey	Diyarbakir	1	0	A Christian evangelist is stabbed to death on the street.
2019.11.17	Egypt	Nassiriya	0	3	A family is stabbed after being told that they cannot sit outside their house because they are Christian.
2019.11.11	Syria	Deir Ezzor	2	1	A Catholic priest and his father are shot to death in cold blood by the Islamic State outside a church.
2019.11.11	Syria	Qamishli	7	70	Bombs set off near a café and a church leave seven dead.
2019.09.03	Pakistan	North Cantonment	1	0	Police torture a man to death after urinating on him for being Christian.
2019.08.28	Pakistan	Lahore	1	0	Police torture a gardner to death in an obvious case of discrimination against Christians.
2019.08.21	Pakistan	Lahore	2	0	Two Christian brothers are stabbed to death by three Muslim extremists.
2019.07.14	Pakistan	Essa Nagri	1	0	A 10-year-old Christian boy is tortured and murdered by his Muslim employer.
2019.07.10	Pakistan	Faisalabad	1	0	A young Christian nurse is killed for refusing to convert to Islam. "

(These news events types have been faithfully recorded daily since 9/11/01.)

To which news, if it were today, YAHUSHA [Jesus] might have responded, “do you suppose that these [Christians] were worse sinners than all other [Christians] because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. Or those [2,996] on whom the [twin towers] in [New York] fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men [and women] who dwelt in [New York]? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish’.”

III. WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE?

Today, in our body – locally and in our affiliated worldwide church body – we have in our family, in our immediate family and our extended Christian family – those who are perishing and suffering because of auto accidents, because of cancer, because of strokes and heart attacks, because of pneumonia and because of other medical issues and “complications” of issues, and because of any number of other accidents and sickness.

(In growing up, kids love to ask the repetitive question: “but why?”)

How many questions can you think of that begin with “Why”? Here are just a few: Why is the time of day when traffic moves the *slowest* called “rush hour”? Why do we *park* our car in our “driveway”? Why is the sky blue? Why does our hair turn gray when we get older? Why is freight moved by a *boat* called “Cargo”? Why are some things *pretty ugly*? And our final question: “Why do *bad* things happen to *good* people?” In today’s scripture, YAHUSHA [Jesus] asked a different question: “do you suppose that these Christian brothers and sisters who are dying or suffering are worse sinners than all other [Christians] because they suffer such things?”

The Bible teaches that obedience to the Bible’s teaching brings blessings, but disobedience brings a curse. Do you remember what Job’s so-call friends thought about why Job suffered? Their belief was that Job was suffering because he must have done something wrong. At the time of YAHUSHA [Jesus], Jews and Greeks alike believed that if you suffered, it was because you deserved it. I’ll guess that there are people sitting here today who believe that bad things happen to us when YAHUAH [God] is angry. So, YAHUSHA [Jesus] knew then as He knows today that people often believe that tragic events are the result of some great sin. Or at least, they want to know “Why?” these things happen. For example, how many here today wonder why tragedy is happening to the people

and animals in Australia due to the fires? Does YAHUAH [God] cause bad things to happen to good people, animals and nature? Are natural disasters like earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions or terrorist attacks or suicide bombers His punishment? When horrible things happen, we continue to ask: “but why?” Why does all this senselessness continue?

There are many among us who just cannot live without answers; even a simple answer is better than no answer. But you’ll notice that YAHUSHA [Jesus] does not directly answer their questions: why the innocent Jews were slaughtered? Why innocent by-standers were crushed by a falling tower? Why terrorists continue to kill people? Yet, there is a significant take-away in His response, and it is that these type of things will happen to all of us, despite our level of sinfulness, whether we the good, the bad, or the ugly sinner. So, what YAHUSHA [Jesus] is wanting to emphasize to us is that we... should not be standing around, wringing our hands and shaking our heads, and asking “why?” But why? Because this accomplishes nothing! Because evil and suffering are a result of the sins of our mothers and fathers, going back way back; because evil and suffering are a result of the sin of our original mortal mother Eve and our original mortal father Adam. So, bad things *will* continue to happen to good people! And about the condition of our present world, despite what is happening to us and our friends and family... YAHUAH [God] Himself tells us that we are to “**lift up our eyes to the heavens, and look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, the earth will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner; but My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will not be abolished**” (Isaiah 51:6).

And, because “... all have sinned and fall short of the glory of YAH [God], being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in MASHIACH YAHUSHA [Christ Jesus], whom YAHUAH [God] set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance YAH [God] had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in YAHUSHA [Jesus]” (Romans 3:23-26)... because of the salvation that YAHUSHA [Jesus] knew that we can gain through Himself, answers all of our “why?” questions now as He did back then with... “**unless you repent you will all likewise perish**”.

IV. **“UNLESS YOU REPENT YOU WILL ALL LIKEWISE PERISH”**

From the time of lunch in the Pharisees house, until YAHUSHA [Jesus] admonishes us to **“repent”**, He gives us a pretty good picture of what that means that we should do. Here is the list the best that I can put it together in order:

A. TO THE CHURCH LEADERS AND THE SPIRITUAL “KNOW-IT-ALL’S”

Church leadership includes each and every one here today who has accepted YAHUSHA [Jesus], and are committed to being His disciple, not just the preachers and the teachers. You, now are a leader – by example, by your love and by your exhortation (both of these hand-in-hand) — to those who are less experienced in their walk, their discipleship with YAHUSHA [Jesus].

1. Be Generous to the Poor (Luke 11:41)
2. Practice Justice and Love to YAHUAH [God], as you Tithe (Luke 11:42)
3. Don’t Love Position (Luke 11:43)
4. Don’t Live a Life of Dead Works, Being a Bad Moral Influencing to Others (Luke 11:44)
5. Help Carry Other People’s Burdens (Luke 11:46)
6. Don’t be Murderers, Killing Those Who are Sent to You by YAHUAH [God] (Luke 11:47-51)
7. Don’t be a Hinderance to Others Who Seek YAHUAH [God] (Luke 11:52)
8. Don’t be Hypocritical (Luke 12:1)

B. TO ALL

9. Fear YAHUAH [God]: don’t be afraid of people and physical death; be fearful of YAHUAH [God] Who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw you into hell. (Luke 12:5)

Related Bonus Promise for Fearing YAHUAH [God]: **“are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before YAHUAH [God]. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows”** (Luke 12:6-7).

10. Acknowledge YAHUSHA [Jesus]; don’t deny Him (Luke 12:8)

Related Bonus Promise for Acknowledging YAHUSHA [Jesus]: **“whoever confesses Me before men, him the Son of Man also will confess before**

the angels of YAHUAH [God]. But he who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.” (Luke 12:8)

11. Don't Not Deny the RUACH HA'KODESH [Holy Spirit] (Luke 12:10)

**Related Bonus Promise for Accepting the RUACH HA'KODESH [Holy Spirit]:
“when you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about what you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the RUACH HA'KODESH [Holy Spirit] will teach you at that time what you should say” (Luke 12:11-12).**

12. Be Rich Toward YAHUAH [God], Rather than Storing Up Things for Self (Luke 12:21)

13. Don't Worry about Your Life or Your Body (Luke 12:22)

14. Sell Your Possessions and Give to the Poor; Store Your Treasure in Heaven (Luke 12:32-33)

15. Be Dressed Ready for Service (Luke 12:35)

16. Keep Your Lamps Burning (like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet) (Luke 12:35)

17. Be a Faithful and Wise Manager over His Servants in His Household; Do Not Be a Bad Influence on Them or Abuse Them (Luke 12:42-48)

18. Be Able to Interpret the Present Times (Luke 12:54-56)

19. Reconcile with Your Adversaries Before Judgment Day (Luke 12:57-59)

Consider which is more likely to be your judgment day: your death or YAHUSHA's coming?

V. IS THERE AN SENSE OF URGENCY IN YOUR LIFE?

(Today's Scripture is followed by the Non-bearing Fig Tree, in Luke 13:6-9)

(Compare the Sense of Urgency for Christians in Many Other Places Worldwide to our own Sense of Urgency.)

(Compare the sense of urgency to “the days of Noah, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be: they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in

marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be [Matthew 24:38-39].)

VI. BENEDICTION (from 2 Peter 3)

I would like “that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of ADONAI [the Lord] and Savior, knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, ‘where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation’. For this they willfully forget: that by the word of YAHUAH [God] the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.”

“But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with YAHUAH [the Lord] one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. YAHUAH [the Lord] is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance”.

“But the day of YAHUAH [the Lord] will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of YAHUAH [God], because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

“Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless; and consider that the longsuffering of our YAHUAH [Lord] is salvation ... as also is according to the wisdom ... written to you, ... speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own

destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved brothers and sisters today, since you now know this message beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked... But instead, grow in the grace and knowledge of our ADONAI [Lord] and Savior YAHUSHA HA'MASHIACH [Jesus Christ]."

"To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen."

Credits:

1 "Islamic Terror on Christians", List of Islamic Terror Attacks on Christians, What Makes Islam So Different;
<https://www.thereligionofpeace.com/attacks/christian-attacks.aspx>

2 "Why?", Gaither Bailey, Presbyterian/Reformed, March 21, 2019;
<https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/why-gaither-bailey-sermon-on-tragedy-238607?ref=SermonSerps>