

Luke 13 notes

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All passages from the New American Standard Bible unless otherwise noted.

Luke 13:1–9: Yeshua addresses the sin-death connection via a parable of a fruitless fig tree

Luke 13:1–9	Matthew 21; Isaiah 5
<p>Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ² And Iesus said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? ³ I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴ Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? ⁵ I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”</p> <p>⁶ And He began telling this parable: “A man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any. ⁷ “And he said to the vineyard-keeper, ‘Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?’ ⁸ “And he answered and said to him, ‘Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; ⁹ and if it bears fruit next year, fine; but if not, cut it down.’”</p>	<p>Matt. 21:18–19: Now in the morning, when He was returning to the city, He became hungry. ¹⁹ Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only; and He *said to it, “No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you.” And at once the fig tree withered.</p> <p>Mark 11:12–14: On the next day, when they had left Bethany, He became hungry. ¹³ Seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ He said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!” And His disciples were listening.</p> <p><i>Isaiah 5</i>: Let me sing now for my well-beloved A song of my beloved concerning His vineyard. My well-beloved had a vineyard on a fertile hill. ² He dug it all around, removed its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. And He built a tower in the middle of it And also hewed out a wine vat in it; Then He expected it to produce good grapes, But it produced only worthless ones.</p> <p>³ “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge between Me and My vineyard. ⁴ What more was there to do for My vineyard that I have not done in it? Why, when I expected it to produce good grapes did it produce worthless ones? ⁵ So now let Me tell you what I am going to do to My vineyard: I will remove its hedge and it will be consumed; I will break down its wall and it will become trampled ground. ⁶ I will lay it waste; It will not be pruned or hoed, But briars and thorns will come up. I will also charge the clouds to rain no rain on it.”</p> <p>⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel And the men of Judah His delightful plant. Thus He looked for justice, but behold, bloodshed; For righteousness, but behold, a cry of distress.</p> <p>⁸ Woe to those who add house to house and join field to field, Until there is no more room, So that you have to live alone in the midst of the land! ⁹ In my ears the LORD of hosts has sworn, “Surely, many houses shall become desolate, Even great and fine ones, without occupants. ¹⁰ For 10 acres of vineyard will yield only one bath of wine, And a homer of seed will yield but an ephah of grain.” ¹¹ Woe to those who rise early in the morning that they may pursue strong drink, Who stay up late in the evening that wine may inflame them! ¹² Their banquets are accompanied by lyre and harp, by tambourine and flute, and by wine; But they do not pay attention to the deeds of the LORD, Nor do they consider the work of His hands.</p> <p>¹³ Therefore My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge; And their honorable men are famished, And their multitude is parched with thirst. ¹⁴ Therefore Sheol has enlarged its throat and opened its mouth without measure; And Jerusalem’s splendor, her multitude, her din of revelry and the jubilant within her, descend into it. ¹⁵ So the common man will be humbled and the man of importance abased, The eyes of the proud also will be abased. ¹⁶ But the LORD of hosts will be exalted in judgment, And the holy God will show Himself holy in righteousness. ¹⁷ Then the lambs will graze as in their pasture, And strangers will eat in the waste places of the wealthy.</p> <p>¹⁸ Woe to those who drag iniquity with the cords of falsehood, And sin as if with cart ropes; ¹⁹ Who say, “Let Him make speed, let Him hasten His work, that we may see it; And let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel draw near And come to pass, that we may know it!”</p> <p>²⁰ Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! ²¹ Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes And clever in their own sight! ²² Woe to those who are heroes in drinking wine And valiant men in mixing strong drink, ²³ Who justify the wicked for a bribe, And take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!</p> <p>²⁴ Therefore, as a tongue of fire consumes stubble And dry grass collapses into the flame, So their root will become like rot and their blossom blow away as dust; For they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts And despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. ²⁵ On this account the anger of the LORD has burned against His people, And He has stretched out His hand against them and struck them down. And the mountains quaked, and their corpses lay like refuse in the middle of the streets. For all this His anger is not spent, But His hand is still stretched out.</p> <p>²⁶ He will also lift up a standard to the distant nation, And will whistle for it from the ends of the earth; And behold, it will come with speed swiftly. ²⁷ No one in it is weary or stumbles, None slumbers or sleeps; Nor is the belt at its waist undone, Nor its sandal strap broken. ²⁸ Its arrows are sharp and all its bows are bent; The hoofs of its horses seem like flint and its chariot wheels like a whirlwind. ²⁹ Its roaring is like a lioness, and it roars like young lions; It growls as it seizes the prey And carries it off with no one to deliver it. ³⁰ And it will growl over it in that day like the roaring of the sea. If one looks to the land, behold, there is darkness and distress; Even the light is darkened by its clouds.</p>

Luke 13:1: “Now on the same occasion”

Yeshua had finished teachings, recorded in chapter 12, about becoming ready for the arrival of the Kingdom of God. That involves lifting one’s thoughts above the worries and pursuits of the world (How will I survive? How will I get more stuff?) toward God’s thoughts (What are His instructions? How can I put them into action right now? What is more important to me?).

It’s not enough to know that the timing of the arrival of the Kingdom of God is near. True followers also know how to make correct decisions and make peace in their dealings in the world (Luke 12:57–59).

Luke 13:1: “the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices”

An account of Pontius Pilate’s directing a bloody crackdown in the Temple isn’t recorded. However, there are various contemporary accounts of Pilate’s brutality:

- According to Jewish historian Flavius Iosephus, Pilate at night set up busts of Caesar Tiberius and standards with his face on them in Yerushalayim. Yehudim in the city were incensed by the images set up in the city and petitioned Pilate to remove them by prostrating themselves around his palace in Caesarea for five days. Pilate ordered soldiers to kill them, but he relented when the protesters offered their necks for the sake of that uncleanness in the city.¹
- In another account from Iosephus, Pilate tapped the Temple offerings to build an aqueduct stretching 50 miles to bring water to the Temple to support the influx of pilgrims three times a year. Thousands came to protest Pilate about that appropriation. Pilate had plain-clothed soldiers sneak in the crowd then all at once start beating protesters. A number died from the blows, and others perished by being trampled by the fleeing crowd.²
- A third account from Iosephus tells of Samaritans led by someone claiming he knew where relics from Moshe were buried on Mt. Gerazim and gathered many near the mountain. Pilate sent soldiers to stop them, killing a number of Samaritans who resisted and executing ring leaders later. Samaritans appealed to the consul of Syria, who replaced Pilate and sent him to Rome to answer to Tiberius.³
- Jewish historian and apologist Philo of Alexandria described Pilate as “a man of inflexible, stubborn and cruel disposition.” Pilate put up gold-covered shields in the palace of Herod in Yerushalayim with just the names of Caesar Tiberius and Pilate on them. Yehudim got incensed by this and had Herod’s sons approach Pilate to remove the shields. Pilate refused, and the people said they would appeal to Caesar. Pilate relented and moved the shields to Caesarea.⁴

“Mixed with their sacrifices” is understood from other Biblical and literary uses of *μίγνυμι mignumi* (G3396) to communicate, “Galileans whose blood Pilate spilled in the Temple along side their sacrifices.”⁵

Yeshua also mentioned of the death of 18 from the falling tower at the Pool of Shiloam (נִלְוֵי *shelach*, H7975a, cf. Neh. 3:15). There is no other historical account of that. Sages later considered such happenings in the Holy City to be unthinkable punishment from Heaven: “No building ever collapsed in Yerushalayim.”⁶

Are calamities upon the seemingly innocent judgment from Heaven?

Teachers of Israel in the first century attributed each situation of human suffering or death to some act of divine justice.⁷ It’s really no different today, as many believers and nonbelievers demand to know why the good die too soon or the evil or reckless survive.

The first-century teachers had plenty of Scripture to support there “eye-for-eye” view of divine justice:

- “Each one shall be put to death for his own sin.” (Deut. 24:16)
- The daughters of Zelophehad told Moshe and Eleazar that their father, who died in judgment of the Korah rebellion, “died of his own sin” (Num. 27:3).

The sages wrote:

Said R. Ammi, “Death comes about only through sin, and suffering only through transgression. Death comes about only through sin: ‘The soul that sins, it shall die; the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him’ [Eze. 18:20]. ‘And suffering only through transgression: ‘Then will I visit their

1 Josephus, Flavius. *Wars of the Jews*, 2.169–174; *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.55–59.

2 Josephus. *Antiquities of the Jews* 18.60–62; *Wars of the Jews* 2.175–177. On distances and purpose of the aqueduct: Daniel Lancaster. *Torah Club: Chronicles of the Messiah*. Vol. 4. Marshfield, Mo.: First Fruits of Zion, 2010. p. 857. Endnote No. 6 cites A. Mazar, “The Aqueducts of Jerusalem,” *Jerusalem Revealed: Archaeology in the Holy City*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976. pp. 79–84.

3 Josephus. *Antiquities of the Jews*, 18.85–89.

4 Philo of Alexandria. *Embassy to Gaius*, 299–305.

5 *New American Standard Bible Update Cross References and Translators’ Notes*. The Lockman Foundation, 1995.

6 *Avot d’Rabbi Natan* 16 (c. 700–900 CE), cited by Lancaster in endnote No. 11, p. 857.

7 Lancaster, p. 841.

transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes' [Psa. 89:33].”⁸

The apostles also wrote extensively about the connection between sin and death:

- Ya'akov wrote, “Sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death” (James 1:15).
- Yokhanan wrote:
“If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death. There is a **sin leading to death**; I do not say that he should make request for this. ¹⁷ All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not leading to death.” (1st John 5:16–17)
- Paul wrote:
“But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly. ³⁰ For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep. ³¹ But if we judged ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world” (1st Cor. 11:28–32)
“... the wages of sin is death ...” (Rom. 6:23)
“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and **death through sin**, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned — ¹³ for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.” (Rom. 5:12–13)

Yeshua seemed to also teach in His healing at the Pool of Bet-hesda (בֵּית חֶסְדָּא Beit Kheesda, House of Mercy) of the man who had been crippled for 38 years (John 5:2–14): “Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.” (John 5:14)

Yet in the *Luke 13* teaching, Yeshua revealed that God’s justice may not be as obvious as one perceives. He said, no, those Galileans who died in the Temple because of Pilate’s orders weren’t being punished for grievous sin, and no, God wasn’t punishing the victims of the tower of Shileach. Sometimes, seemingly senseless suffering happens because God wants to communicate an important message:

“As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, ‘Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?’ ³ Iesous answered, “*It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.* ⁴ We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.’” (John 9:1–5)

And the important thing Yeshua wanted those pondering the Galilean massacre and the Shleach tragedy to worry about was whether they had repented — started going in God’s direction — before they would “all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3, 5). Those listening to Him needed to be able to judge the current situation of the heart of the nation and judge what to do about it, as Yeshua taught in Luke 12 and in the parable of the fig tree planted in a vineyard.

Luke 13:6–9: Parable of the fig tree in the vineyard

In the Bible and rabbinical writings, living under one’s own fig tree and vineyard pointed to the reign of Shlomo and the Messianic era.⁹ The lesson of Yeshua’s parable — lived out by miracle in the days before His death and resurrection (Matt. 21:18–19; Mark 11:12–14) — was simple:

- Vineyard owner = God
- Vineyard = Israel
- Fig tree = Current generation in Israel
- Fruit = Repentance
- Vineyard manager = Yeshua
- Tending the vineyard = Revealing the Kingdom of God and calling for repentance
- Felling the fig tree = Judgment
- **The point:** Destruction was coming fast coming to people in Israel, and their only way out was to repent.

Isaiah 5 has a lengthy parable likening Israel to a vineyard God prepared, planted, tended and eventually “redeveloped.” In agriculture, when a tree or vine stops producing as much as it can because of disease, it is removed or cut back to accept a productive graft. Paul draws on this imagery in likening Israel to an olive tree in *Romans 11*. There are a number of echoes of the Babylonian exile, which Isaiah was tasked with warning about, in the destruction of Yerushalayim, which Yeshua was warning of:

- Houses would become desolate. The Houses of Israel and Yehuda became desolate in the Land after both.
- God’s people don’t pay attention to what He has done and is doing, and that ignorance barred them from knowing about their “saving grace.” The prophets write often about the people’s forgetting God’s actions in setting up, protecting and restoring Israel. Leaders and many people in the first century couldn’t see God at

8 Neusner, Jacob, ed., *The Babylonian Talmud: a Translation and Commentary*. 22 vols. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2005.

9 Lancaster, p. 843, citing 1st Kings 4:25 and Zech. 3:10.

work in the miracles and words of Yeshua.

- Continually seeking God’s messages and prophets while rejecting His real prophets was a recurring problem. In Yeshua’s time, leaders were continually asking for signs of Yeshua to see if God were at work, while ignoring or subverting Yeshua’s words and deeds showing just that.
- Part of that subversion of Yeshua’s mission included claiming that He was an agent of evil, a judgment call Yeshua called “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.”
- While rejection of God’s laws was a big problem of the exiles, hyperattention to detail in the first century to avoid the lawlessness of previous generations led to an obfuscation of the law as a testimony of the Father.

Luke 13:10–21

And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent double, and could not straighten up at all. ¹² When Iesous saw her, He called her over and said to her, “Woman, you are freed from your sickness.” ¹³ And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made erect again and began glorifying God.

¹⁴ But the synagogue official, indignant because Iesous had healed on the Sabbath, began saying to the crowd in response, “There are six days in which work should be done; so come during them and get healed, and not on the Sabbath day.”

¹⁵ But the Lord answered him and said, “You hypocrites, does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey

from the stall and lead him away to water him? ¹⁶ And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?” ¹⁷ As He said this, all His opponents were being humiliated; and the entire crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things being done by Him.

¹⁸ So He was saying, “What is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it? ¹⁹ “It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and THE BIRDS OF THE AIR NESTED IN ITS BRANCHES.”

²⁰ And again He said, “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹ It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened.”

Luke 13:11: A woman bowed over for 18 years

- Healing the oppressed in mind and body is the power of God.

“How blessed is he whose help is the God of Ya’acob, Whose hope is in the LORD his God, ⁶ Who made heaven and earth, The sea and all that is in them; Who keeps faith forever; ⁷ Who executes justice for the oppressed; Who gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets the prisoners free. ⁸ The LORD opens the eyes of the blind; The LORD raises up those who are bowed down; The LORD loves the righteous; ⁹ The LORD protects the strangers; He supports the fatherless and the widow, But He thwarts the way of the wicked.” (Psa. 146:5–9)

- *those who are bowed down* = **הַכְּפוּפִים** *ha-kefufim*, from **כָּפַף** *kafaf* (H3721), *bend, bend down, be bent, bowed*,¹⁰ used in Psa. 146:8 as *in distress, humiliation, etc.*¹¹

“The LORD sustains all who fall And raises up all who are bowed down [הַכְּפוּפִים]” (Psa.145:14)

- The works of the Messiah would follow the works of the LORD and demonstrate that power:

“The Spirit of the Lord GOD [יְהוָה] is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; ² To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, ³ To grant those who mourn in Tzion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.” (Isa. 61:1–3)

- Luke 4:18–19 records Yeshua reading verse 1 and the first part of verse 2 from *Isaiah* 61 while in the Natzeret synagogue on Shabbat.

- Yeshua had to remind His herald, Yokhanan, that His works testified to His identity as “the Expected One,” i.e., the Messiah (recorded in Matthew 11):

“Now when Iohan, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to Him, ‘Are You the Expected One, or shall we look for someone else?’ ⁴ Iesous answered and said to them, ‘Go and report to Iohan what you hear and see: ⁵ the BLIND RECEIVE SIGHT [Isa. 35:5] and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the POOR HAVE THE GOSPEL PREACHED TO THEM [Isa. 61:1]. ⁶ And blessed is he who does not take offense at Me.’ ” (Matt. 11:2–6)

- *take offense/be offended* = **σκανδαλισθη** *skandalisthe*

- Third person singular aorist passive subjunctive of **σκανδαλίζω** *skandalizo* (G4624), *to cause someone to sin or stumble*.
- From **σκάνδαλον** *skandalon* (G4625), *the movable stick or trigger (“trigger”) of a trap, trap-stick; a trap, snare*¹².

¹⁰ Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, eds. *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (BDB). Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906.

¹¹ BDB

¹² Joseph H. Thayer. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. 1889.

- ▶ σκάνδαλον translates לִשְׂכֹּחַ *mokhshol* (H4383) in the Septuagint version of Lev. 19:13–14, which is an “I am the LORD” command right before “the second-greatest commandment” in verse 18: “You shall not oppress your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of a hired man are not to remain with you all night until morning.¹⁴ ‘You shall not curse a deaf man, nor place a stumbling block [לִשְׂכֹּחַ] before the blind, but you shall revere your God; I am the LORD.’” (Lev 19:13–14)
- So, “deeply contented” are those who recognize the power of God at work in Yeshua and don’t set a trap for people’s trust in God by claiming the power of God isn’t at work.
 - This is a continual theme through the Scriptures, denying the obvious power of God at work and listening to His messengers, especially the greatest one in the Messiah.

Luke 13:14–17: Healing on Shabbat

- “untie his donkey” (v. 15): Tying of permanent types of knots were considered *melakhot* — *works* — and thus forbidden on Shabbat under rabbinic law (b.*Shabbat* 113a), but sages allowed for tying and untying for leashing animals and drawing water (m.*Shabbat* 5 and m.*Eruvin* 2:1–2).¹³
- Yeshua acknowledged that allowances for tying and untying knots was violations of Shabbat, but the principle of טוֹן *khesed* — mercy, compassion — was a weightier matter of the Torah.

Luke 13:18–19 (cp. Mark 4:31–32; Matt. 13:31–32): Kingdom of God starts as a mustard seed

- [T]he birds of the air nested in its branches (Luke 13:19) is a quote from the end of a three-part riddle [רִידָה] and parable [לִשְׂכֹּחַ] in *Ezekiel* 17 and from a connected vision given to Nebuchadnezzar right before God made him go crazy for a time (*Daniel* 4).
 - In Ezek. 17:1–20, the Word of the Lord compared Israel remaining in the land to a vine growing after a mighty eagle plucked top shoots and seeds from a cedar of Lebanon.
 - The Word warned Israel that seeking an alliance with Egypt against Babylon would lead to the withering of the vine.
 - Indeed, final kings of the southern kingdom of Israel, Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, cozied up to Mitsraim (Egypt) as Babylon tightened its grip. Zedekiah finally was deposed with the destruction of Yerushalayim. (2nd *Kings* 23–25).
 - The parable in *Ezekiel* 17 ends with God’s promise to take a cutting from the most vulnerable of the topmost sprigs of the cedar — a remnant of Israel that went into Babylon captivity — and restore Israel to a prominent and powerful position that birds of every kind — even the peoples “plucked” eagles of Babylon and Rome — would come to for shelter.

“Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘I will also take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and set it out; I will pluck from the topmost of its young twigs a tender one and I will plant it on a high and lofty mountain.²³ On the high mountain of Israel I will plant it, that it may bring forth boughs and bear fruit and become a stately cedar. And birds of every kind will nest under it; they will nest in the shade of its branches.²⁴ All the trees of the field will know that I am the LORD; I bring down the high tree, exalt the low tree, dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish. I am the LORD; I have spoken, and I will perform it.’” (*Ezek.* 17:22–24)

 - The Word reminded Israel that reliance on human power wouldn’t change the situation:

“And neither by great strength nor by many people can it be raised from its roots again.” (*Ezek.* 17:9)
- Yeshua’s point: Replacing the image of the tenderest of sprigs of a cedar with that of a mustard plant and an even tinier seed, Yeshua taught how something that seems like it is starting with no power — Yeshua, Yokhanan and the prophets before them were continually persecuted by those in power of Israel — would grow to become a sought-after refuge for all nations. The Kingdom of God takes root through the humility of people to trusting God’s work.

Luke 13:20–21 (cp. Matt. 12:33–34): Kingdom of God as leaven in dough

- Leaven is often a symbol of corruption in Scripture.
- Yet, leaven seems to be a symbol of the work of the Kingdom of God, parallel with the symbol of the mustard seed.
- As the second witness about the Kingdom of God, Yeshua likens the kingdom to a woman mixing leaven into three measures of flour (eight gallons).
 - sower of mustard seed/mixer of the leaven = Son of Man
 - mustard seed/leaven = proclamations and actions of Kingdom of God
 1. The kingdom of this world is overthrown.
 2. God wants all to return to heart-soul-strength love of God.
 3. No one can justify his behavior before God.

¹³ Lancaster, p. 858.

4. God is justifying the behavior of those who return to God by meting out the consequence for the rebellion of mankind upon the Son of Man, i.e. the Messiah.
5. God considers as “righteous” — correctly following God’s plan for the universe — those who act upon their trust in God’s solution for the rebellion and God’s path for living life.
 - field/flour = the world, starting with the Land of Israel
 - tree/leavened flour = result of the Kingdom actively spreading from one to another

Luke 13:22–30: ‘Narrow door’ to the Kingdom of God

Luke 13:22–30	Matt. 7:13–23	Matt. 25:1–13
<p>And He was passing through from one city and village to another, teaching, and proceeding on His way to Yerushalayim. ²³ And someone said to Him, “Lord, are there just a few who are being saved?”</p> <p>And He said to them, ²⁴ “Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵ Once the head of the house gets up and shuts the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock on the door, saying, ‘Lord, open up to us!’ then He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know where you are from.’ ²⁶ Then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets’; ²⁷ and He will say, ‘I tell you, I do not know where you are from; DEPART FROM ME, ALL YOU EVILDOERS.’ ²⁸ “In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but yourselves being thrown out. ²⁹ And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last.”</p>	<p>“Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. ¹⁴ For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it. ¹⁵ “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? ¹⁷ So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ So then, you will know them by their fruits. ²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. ²² Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’”</p>	<p>“Then the kingdom of heaven will be comparable to ten virgins, who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ² Five of them were foolish, and five were prudent. ³ For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, ⁴ but the prudent took oil in flasks along with their lamps. ⁵ “Now while the bridegroom was delaying, they all got drowsy and began to sleep. ⁶ But at midnight there was a shout, ‘Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.’ ⁷ Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ The foolish said to the prudent, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ ⁹ But the prudent answered, ‘No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.’ ¹⁰ “And while they were going away to make the purchase, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding feast; and the door was shut. ¹¹ Later the other virgins also came, saying, ‘Lord, lord, open up for us.’ ¹² “But he answered, “Truly I say to you, I do not know you.’ ¹³ Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.”</p>

- A number of interpretations have developed about the “oil” in the parable of the 10 virgins:
 - Spirit of God: One needs to receive more of God’s Spirit.
 - Torah: One needs to learn more about the *TaNakh* (Torah, Prophets and Writings) and follow God’s instructions.
- Before “binding” or “loosening” those interpretations, let’s compare the “enter through the narrow door” parable and in *Luke 13* with its parallel in *Matthew 7* — “enter through the narrow gate” and the parable of the 10 virgins:
 - The “many” and the five virgins without extra oil for their lamps seek to get into the Kingdom of God, aka “the wedding feast.”
 - Both groups appeal to the master of the gate, door and banquet as “Lord,” or one in authority.
 - Those barred from the door and the gate protest their exclusion by appealing to their relationship to the Lord.
 - They associated with the Messiah (“ate and drank in Your presence” in *Luke 11:36*)
 - They hosted His teaching (*ibid.*).
 - They used the power of God by way of Messiah’s authority (prophesying, exorcising and performing miracles in *Matt. 7:22*).
 - The Lord denies knowing the protestors, adding to those at the narrow door that they are “evildoers” (*Luke 13:27*) and to those at the narrow gate that they “practice lawlessness” (*Matt. 7:23*).
 - “I never knew you,” seen in *Matt. 7:23*, was a rabbinical expression for cutting ties with a disciple,

usually for seven to 30 days.¹⁴ Yeshua’s ban would come into full force on the Day of the LORD.

- Luke’s record in 13:27 of Yeshua’s quote from David in Psa. 6:8 — “Depart from me, all you evildoers” — follows the Masoretic Hebrew version, while Matthew’s record of that quote in 5:23 — “Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness” — follows the Septuagint (Greek) translation:

Psa. 6:1–10 (Masoretic)	Psa. 6:2–11 (Septuagint)
<p>O LORD, do not rebuke me in Your anger, Nor chasten me in Your wrath. ² Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am pining away; Heal me, O LORD, for my bones are dismayed. ³ And my soul is greatly dismayed; But You, O LORD — how long?</p> <p>⁴ Return, O LORD, rescue my soul; Save me because of Your lovingkindness. ⁵ For there is no mention of You in death; In Sheol who will give You thanks?</p> <p>⁶ I am weary with my sighing; Every night I make my bed swim, I dissolve my couch with my tears. ⁷ My eye has wasted away with grief; It has become old because of all my adversaries.</p> <p>⁸ Depart from me, all you who do iniquity, For the LORD has heard the voice of my weeping. ⁹ The LORD has heard my supplication, The LORD receives my prayer. ¹⁰ All my enemies will be ashamed and greatly dismayed; They shall turn back, they will suddenly be ashamed.</p>	<p>⁽¹⁾ O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger, nor discipline me in your wrath. ^{3 (2)} Have mercy on me, O Lord, because I am weak; heal me, O Lord, because my bones were troubled. ^{4 (3)} And my soul was troubled very much, and you, O Lord—how long?</p> <p>^{5 (4)} Turn, O Lord; rescue my soul; save me for the sake of your mercy, ^{6 (5)} because in death there is no one who makes mention of you, and in Hades who will acknowledge you?</p> <p>^{7 (6)} I was weary with my moaning; every night I will bathe my bed; with my tears I will drench my couch. ^{8 (7)} My eye was troubled due to anger; I grew old among all my enemies.</p> <p>^{9 (8)} Keep away from me, all you who practice lawlessness, because the Lord listened to the voice of my weeping. ^{10 (9)} The Lord listened to my petition; the Lord accepted my prayer. ^{11 (10)} May all my enemies be ashamed and be very much troubled; may they be turned back and, in a moment, be very much put to shame.</p>

- David appealed to God in weeping because of the oppression of his adversaries, namely Prince Sha’ul.
- Sha’ul carried God’s anointing as leader of Israel but had stopped being able to communicate with God. That’s ironic for one whose name comes from שאל *sha’al* (H 7592), “to ask, inquire.”
- Sha’ul’s jealousy of David blinded him to God’s power being displayed through David.
- Instead of repenting from a misuse of God’s anointing and recognizing God had anointed David to be his replacement, Sha’ul.
- Yeshua, as the messianic Son of David, carried the anointing of the ultimate leader of Israel, but a number of Israel’s leaders at the time were so jealous of Yeshua’s words and deeds that they rejected obvious signs of His anointing from Heaven.
- The parable of the 10 virgins is followed by the parable of the five, two and one τάλαντων *talanton* (G5007, “a balance for measuring,” i.e. weighed amount) of money given by a master of a house to his servants. The talents parable concludes with:

“For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. ³⁰ “Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matt. 25:29–30)
- *Matthew 25* finishes with the parable of the sheep and goats (Matt 25:31–46). The dividing line for entry into the :

“For [because] I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.” (Matt 25:35–36)

 - Those who barred from the kingdom claimed ignorance of the needs of the King.

“The King will answer and say to them, “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.” ’ ” (Matt. 25:40)
 - In other words, those barred from the kingdom didn’t recognize the name of the King in His disciples, thus the protestors didn’t really know the King.
- Knowing the Messiah on a deep level is the key to the parables of the narrow door and gate in *Luke 13* and *Matthew 7* and the “oil” needed to be “ready” for entry to the wedding feast in *Matthew 25*.
 - Receiving the Spirit of God and actively trusting in God’s words in the TaNaKh are part of knowing God, as seen in Yeshua’s final Passover teachings and prayer in John 14–17:

“If you love [ἀγάπη] *agape, unselfish love*] Me, you will keep My commandments. ¹⁶ “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; ¹⁷ that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it **does not see Him or know Him**, but **you know Him because He abides [lives] with you and will be in you.**” (John 14:15–17)

¹⁴ Lancaster, pp. 847, referencing b.*Moed Katan* 16a and b.*Erwin* 53a.

“If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.”¹¹ “These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”¹² “This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”¹³ “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”¹⁴ “You are My friends if you do what I command you.”¹⁵ “No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.” (John 15:10–15 NAS95)

“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who/which proceeds from the Father, He/It will testify about Me,²⁷ and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.” (John 15:26–27)

“Yeshua spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You,² even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life.’³ This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Yeshua the Messiah Whom You have sent.⁴ I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.⁵ Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.⁶ I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.⁷ Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You;⁸ for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them and truly understood that I came forth from You, and they believed that You sent Me.⁹ I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours;¹⁰ and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.¹¹ I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they may be one even as We are.” (John 17:1–11)

- Knowing the Father and Yeshua the Messiah involves actively trusting that Yeshua’s words are God’s words, and that God’s words in the TaNaKh are “made flesh” and “glorified” in Yeshua.
- Knowing Father and Son involves following the testimony of the Spirit about Yeshua.
- Knowing Father and Son involves discovering the complete joy of Yeshua in following God’s commands.
- Knowing Father and Son and listening to the Spirit involves remaining in the Name — the authority, reputation and goals of God — with the end result of being **ἕνα echad** — at one — with those who also trust in God.
- We who bear the name of God must also seek to be peacemakers for divisions in the Body of Messiah.

Luke 13:31–35: Yeshua vs. Herod the fox; Yeshua vs. rebellious ‘brood of chicks’ in Yerushalayim

Luke 13:31–35	Matt. 23:29–39	Luke 19:41–44
<p>Just at that time some Pharisees approached, saying to Him, “Go away, leave here, for Herod wants to kill You.”³² And He said to them, “Go and tell that fox, ‘Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach My goal.’³³ “Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet would perish outside of Hierousalem.³⁴ “O Hierousalem, Hierousalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!³⁵ “Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you will not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”</p>	<p>[Yeshua said,] “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,³⁰ and say, ‘If we had been living in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partners with them in <i>shedding</i> the blood of the prophets.’³¹ “So you testify against yourselves, that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.³² “Fill up, then, the measure of the guilt of your fathers.³³ “You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?³⁴ “Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city,³⁵ so that upon you may fall the guilt of all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.³⁶ “Truly I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.³⁷ “Hierousalem, Hierousalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.³⁸ “Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!³⁹ “For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”</p>	<p>When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it,⁴² saying, “If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.⁴³ For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side,⁴⁴ and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.”</p>

Luke 13:31: ‘Herod wants to kill You’

Some commentators have speculated through the centuries that the P’rushim were trying to scare Yeshua into

leaving the region of Galilee for that of Yehudah to be more under their control, drawing from the failed “attempt of Amaziah, priest of the golden calf at Beit-El, to frighten the prophet Amos out of Israel into Judea” (Amos 7:10–17).¹⁵

Yet, commentator David Stern observed that not all the P'rushim were Yeshua's enemies. Yeshua said to one he was “not far from the Kingdom of God” (Mark 12:34), and some trusted in Yeshua as the Messiah yet still considered themselves Pharisees (Acts. 15:5), including Paul (Acts 23:6).

Jewish proverbs are full of the contrast between the lion, the king of animals, and the fox, the lowest of animals, according to commentator Daniel Lancaster.¹⁶ Such proverbs and allusions from the *Talmud*:

- “When the fox is in his hour, bow down to it.” (b.*Megillah* 16b)
- “The scratch of a fox's claw is of no consequence.” (b.*Chullin* 53a)
- Unworthy rulers are “foxes and sons of foxes.” (b.*Chagigah* 14a)
- Akiva compares Roman government to a fox. (b.*Berachot* 61b)
- “The lion [you feared] turns out to be merely a fox.” (b.*Bava Kama* 117a)

Herod, indeed, viewed Yeshua as a threat on par with Yokhanan, who Herod beheaded for speaking God's judgment against his behavior.

“At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the news about Iesus, ² and said to his servants, ‘This is John the Baptist; he has risen from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him.’” (Matt. 14:1–2)

“And King Herod heard of it [actions of Yeshua's students in casting out demons and healing the sick through anointing with oil (v. 13)], for His name had become well known; and people were saying, ‘John the Baptist has risen from the dead, and that is why these miraculous powers are at work in Him.’ ¹⁵ But others were saying, ‘He is Elijah.’ And others were saying, ‘He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.’ ¹⁶ But when Herod heard of it, he kept saying, ‘John, whom I beheaded, has risen!’” (Mark 6:14–16)

Luke 13:34: ‘you would not have it’; Matt. 23:37: ‘you were unwilling’

The image of God wanting to gather Israel and protect her people as a hen protects her chicks is a touching and heartbreaking picture of God's patience with people called by the Name yet ignorantly or defiantly wanting to run their own ways.

This message of the kingdom of wanting Israel to come to the Messiah to have life came through Yokhanan and the Messiah. One picture of this came is recorded in *John* 5 about the healing of the man born blind and the message that healing sent to the leadership of Israel.

“The man [born blind] went away, and told the Iudeans that it was Iesus who had made him well. ¹⁶ For this reason the Iudeans were persecuting Iesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷ But He answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working.’ ¹⁸ For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.

³¹ ‘If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true. ³² There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true. ³³ You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth. ³⁴ But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved. ³⁵ He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

³⁶ But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John; for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish — the very works that I do — testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me. ³⁷ And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form. ³⁸ You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent. ³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; ⁴⁰ and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.’”

(John 5:15–18, 31–40)

Luke 13:35; Matt 23:38: ‘your house is left to you desolate’

A number of commentators view this as the death knell for Israel as God's people, before He transferred His attention to “the church.” Others see this as God's closing the book on Torah-based worship by saying that God left the House. Stern observes:

“As is clear from the use of the word *house* in Jer. 22:5, which Yeshua alludes to, Yeshua is not speaking here about the Temple, destroyed 40 years later by Roman armies, but to the future generations of Israel, who will be desolate of salvation so long as they seek to achieve it by themselves (‘abandoning your house to *you*’) and do not welcome God's Messiah Yeshua.”¹⁷

This warning against “desolation of salvation” is evident in the word of the LORD to the house of Yehudah through Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) in chapters 12 and 22. Consider the following from this passage:

- What is the origin of the people of Israel?

15 Stern, David H. *Jewish New Testament Commentary: a Companion Volume to the Jewish New Testament*. Clarksville, Md: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1992.

16 Lancaster, p. 849.

17 Stern on Luke 13:35.

- What's the source of the nation's power?
- How were the people, and especially the leaders, to maintain that connection to the Founder of Israel?
- How were the people treating that relationship with the Creator of Israel?
- Who forsook whom?
- What is the "house" in focus with this prophecy?
- What is the meaning of "inheritance" here?
- How dependable is God's compassion in the midst of judgment?

Jer. 12:1-4, 7-17: "Righteous are You, O LORD, that I would plead my case with You; Indeed I would discuss matters of justice with You: Why has the way of the wicked prospered? Why are all those who deal in treachery at ease? ² You have planted them, they have also taken root; They grow, they have even produced fruit. You are near to their lips But far from their mind. ³ But You know me, O LORD; You see me; And You examine my heart's attitude toward You. Drag them off like sheep for the slaughter And set them apart for a day of carnage! ⁴ How long is the land to mourn And the vegetation of the countryside to wither? For the wickedness of those who dwell in it, Animals and birds have been snatched away, Because men have said, 'He will not see our latter ending.' ...

⁷ [Speaking for the LORD] 'I have forsaken My house, I have abandoned My inheritance; I have given the beloved of My soul Into the hand of her enemies. ⁸ My inheritance has become to Me Like a lion in the forest; She has roared against Me; Therefore I have come to hate her. ⁹ Is My inheritance like a speckled bird of prey to Me? Are the birds of prey against her on every side? Go, gather all the beasts of the field, Bring them to devour! ¹⁰ Many shepherds have ruined My vineyard, They have trampled down My field; They have made My pleasant field A desolate wilderness. ¹¹ It has been made a desolation, Desolate, it mourns before Me; The whole land has been made desolate, Because no man lays it to heart.

¹² 'On all the bare heights in the wilderness Destroyers have come, For a sword of the LORD is devouring From one end of the land even to the other; There is no peace for anyone. ¹³ 'They have sown wheat and have reaped thorns, They have strained themselves to no profit. But be ashamed of your harvest Because of the fierce anger of the LORD.'

¹⁴ Thus says the LORD concerning all My wicked neighbors who strike at the inheritance with which I have endowed My people Israel, 'Behold I am about to uproot them from their land and will uproot the house of Judah from among them. ¹⁵ And it will come about that after I have uprooted them, I will again have compassion on them; and I will bring them back, each one to his inheritance and each one to his land. ¹⁶ "Then if they will really learn the ways of My people, to swear by My name, "As the LORD lives," even as they taught My people to swear by Baal, they will be built up in the midst of My people.

¹⁷ 'But if they will not listen, then I will uproot that nation, uproot and destroy it,' declares the LORD."

- Does "My house," equated with "My inheritance," in verse 7 refer to the Temple or to the people?

Jer. 22:1-6: "Thus says the LORD, 'Go down to the house of the king of Yehudah, and there speak this word ² and say, "Hear the word of the LORD, O king of Yehudah, who sits on David's throne, you and your servants and your people who enter these gates. ³ Thus says the LORD, 'Do justice and righteousness, and deliver the one who has been robbed from the power of his oppressor. Also do not mistreat or do violence to the stranger, the orphan, or the widow; and do not shed innocent blood in this place. ⁴ For if you men will indeed perform this thing, then kings will enter the gates of this house, sitting in David's place on his throne, riding in chariots and on horses, *even the king himself* and his servants and his people. ⁵ But if you will not obey these words, I swear by Myself,' declares the LORD, 'that this house will become a desolation.' " ⁶ For thus says the LORD concerning the house of the king of Yehudah: 'You are like Gilead to Me, *Like* the summit of Lebanon; Yet most assuredly I will make you like a wilderness, *Like* cities which are not inhabited."

- Does "this house" in verse 5 refer to the Temple or to "the house of the king of Yehudah," i.e. leadership of Yehudah?