

- C. Why did we get spared huge disaster? Why did others suffer loss? That we might, on the grand stage that the world is watching, show God's mercy, justice, and righteousness to the world around us. That we might act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What were some of the fears you faced before, during, or after the hurricane hit us? Did you experience grief from loss from the storm?
- Did you see fruit that was born in the lives of believers around you? Were you the recipient of God's grace through others? Explain.
- Did you find yourself praying prayers of lament, or as it might be said, prayer that keep the conversation going with God even when you might feel anger toward, or confusion about God?
- What attitudes might have been revealed in you in the face of fears or the experience of loss? Did selfishness rear its ugly head?
- How did the land of Canaan position Israel to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation in a way that no other location could have?
- How does Canaan provide a picture (at least in what it was supposed to be) of what it means for us to be in the world, but not to be of it?
- Where did Israel have to go after leaving Egypt and before going to Canaan? Why is that significant?
- What is the relationship between the discussion about injustice and tragedy in Luke 13:1-5 and Jesus' parable in Luke 13:6-9?

In the Sight of All Nations
Jerry Cisar — September 17, 2017

Text: Luke 13:1-9

Introduction

I. Why did the Lord put Israel in Canaan?

- A. Why there instead of somewhere else?
- i. Leviticus 26:45 The nations knew about Him, but their question was, "What is He like?"
 - ii. What was historically unique about the land of Canaan?
 - iii. Canaan was out of the bondage of Egypt, but by no means was it out of the world. They were called to live in a way radically different from the world!
- B. What stood midway between Egypt and Canaan? *Sinai*.
- i. Exodus 19:4-8
 - a) For Israel to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation means that they will be a people and nation who lives life in the sight of all the other peoples and nations.
 - b) Deuteronomy 6:25
 - c) Micah 6:8

CJ Wright: *“We are inclined to think of ‘holiness’ as a matter of personal piety or, in Old Testament terms, of ritual cleanliness, proper sacrifices, clean and unclean foods, and the like.... [Holiness] includes generosity to the poor at harvest time, justice for workers, integrity in judicial processes, considerate behavior to other people (especially the disabled), equality before the law for immigrants, honest trading and other very ‘earthy’ social matters. And all through the chapters runs the refrain ‘I am the LORD’, as if to say, ‘Your quality of life must reflect the very heart of my character. This is what I require of you because this is what reflects me. This is what I myself would do.’ ‘Holiness’ is the biblical ‘shorthand’ for the very essence of God. [Old Testament Ethics for the People of God]*

- ii. The problem with the Pharisees of Jesus' time was not that they were fastidious keepers of the Law, but that they actually failed to keep the Law. (Matt. 23:23)

II. What did the Lord want His people to do in the Land? (Luke 13:6-9)

- A. Bear Fruit!
 - i. Isaiah 5:1-8
 - ii. The *bad fruit* consisted of bloodshed, cries of distress, the accumulation of wealth at the expense of the poor.
 - iii. *Good fruit has to do with how we live in relationship to others in God's family.*
- B. Jesus was issuing a warning about fruitlessness in this parable.
 - i. Luke 20:47; 12:1
 - ii. Matthew 7:20-21

- C. What does this parable about a fig tree in a vineyard have to do with the injustice of Pilate and the tragedy of natural disaster? To that we now turn.

III. What does fruit-bearing have to do with tragedy? (Luke 13:1-5)

- A. Jesus' parable in the context of what precedes it.
 - i. People come talking about this grave injustice of Roman oppression which resulted in the loss of many lives.
 - ii. Jesus adds the horror of a “natural disaster.”
 - a) They viewed disaster as demonstrations of what people deserve.
 - b) “You aren't bearing anymore fruit than they are, and if that doesn't change you will be in big trouble.”



Jesus doesn't take us out of the world with all its difficulties, but leaves us in it that we might put on display what it looks like not to live according to the same value system as the world; what it looks like when we don't serve the God's of the Egyptians, or Canaanites, or Mammon, but only the Lord our God.

- B. Why did other places suffer the onslaught of a cat 5 hurricane and we didn't?
 - i. These events reveal the need for fruit, not the presence of sin or righteousness, nor the greatness of faith in prayer.
 - ii. John 15:7-8

Why does the Lord allow us to experience things like Irma? iv. Because the world is watching. Not only are the eyes of the nation on Florida, but our neighbors and co-workers watch us. The Lord allows us to be on center stage so that just like He told those in Galilee and Jerusalem, we too might bear fruit – demonstrate His mercy, His grace, His righteousness, and the selfless laying down of life, possessions, time, etc.