

## **Luke Study 6 - Who Will Be Saved?**

### **13:10-35**

#### **Introduction**

Jesus has been preaching good news to his people, Israel.

Right from the start of his ministry, Jesus has said that he's come to free them: *"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."* (Lk 4:18-19) And ever since then, that's what he's been doing: healing the sick, driving out demons, forgiving sins, and even raising the dead.

But his own people have been rejecting him. Israel's religious leaders have seen him as a threat. The people haven't taken his call to follow him seriously. Jesus is travelling toward Jerusalem, the capital of Israel and representative of everything it stands for, and it wants to kill him! Jesus has come to save his people, but they've rejected him.

They still have a chance. In Lk 13:6-9, Jesus compares Israel to a fig tree that hasn't borne fruit for years, but still has 'one more year' to bear fruit. But will it? Will Israel take its last chance and recognise its Messiah?

Today's passage answers that question: no, they won't. Jesus' own people, Israel, will turn their back on him and, ultimately, kill him.

And yet, there is still hope: some of Israel *will* respond properly to Jesus and be saved.

So who will be saved? And how? Let's get into the text and find out.

#### **Read Luke 13:10-17**

1. What does Jesus do? (vv.10-13)
2. How does the synagogue leader react? (v.14)
3. What do you think this tells us about his priorities?
4. How does Jesus answer him? (vv.15-16)
5. What does this tell us about what the leader's priorities *should* be?
6. What does this tell us about what *our* priorities should be, when it comes to people getting help from Jesus?

Jesus heals - 'sets free' - a woman who has been crippled by a spirit for 18 years. But since he does it on a Sabbath, when people are not meant to work, the synagogue leader objects. He thinks it is more important to keep the law than to help people. Jesus rounds on him for his hypocrisy. Jewish leaders 'untie' their animals on the Sabbath to help

them survive. Shouldn't this woman, who is infinitely more valuable than animals, also be 'untied' - '*set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?*' (v.16) - to help her survive? In other words, Jesus has come to save, and that work must go on 24/7. And that must be our priority too.

The people are delighted by Jesus' reply, but the leaders are humiliated. He's shown them for what they are: people who are meant to care for God's people, but actually chain them. So, they need to learn what the kingdom of God is really like, which is why Jesus now tells two parables.

### **Read Luke 13:18-21**

7. What do you think is the point of the first parable? (vv.18-19)
8. What do you think is the point of the second parable? (vv.20-21)

Jesus' kingdom hasn't looked impressive yet. All he's done is free a few people from some spirits and illnesses. In other words, he looks just like a seed - a little one, a mustard seed. But don't be fooled, Jesus says: big trees grow from little seeds, and this tree - the kingdom of God - is going to be huge. It may look small now, but one day it will get so big that birds will nest in its branches - birds like the woman he's just healed. That's what the kingdom of God will be like.

It will also permeate all of life. Just like yeast works through all of a lump of dough, so will the kingdom of God work through all of life, touching every area. That's what the kingdom of God is also like.

But who will *enter* the kingdom of God? Who will be saved?

### **Read Luke 13:22-30**

9. What does the person ask? (v.23)
10. What does Jesus tell him to do? (v.24a)
11. What will happen to many others? (v.24b-25)
12. Why? (vv.26-27)
13. What will it be like to miss out on entering the kingdom of God? (vv.28-30)
14. What is the warning for us here?

Someone asks Jesus '*Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?*' (v.23) Jesus replies: no matter how many *will* be saved, many *won't*. The door will be shut to them and they'll be locked outside, crying and grinding their teeth. The reason they won't be saved is because they thought mere familiarity with Jesus - '*We ate and drank with you, and you*

*taught in our streets'* (v.26) - would be enough. But it won't. Jesus says it's not enough just to know him; he's got to know you, too. (vv.25, 27) You've got to have a relationship with him, one where you trust and follow him, and he knows you as one of his own. It's people like that - disciples - who will be saved.

But the problem is: Israel - as typified by its capital, Jerusalem - isn't ready to receive Jesus like this yet. And so, Jesus weeps over them. Take a look.

### **Read Luke 13:31-35**

15. What do the Pharisees say to Jesus? (v.31)
16. How does Jesus respond? Why must he go to Jerusalem? (vv.32-33)
17. What will Jerusalem do to Jesus when he gets there? (v.34)
18. What will be the result for Jerusalem of how they treat Jesus? (v.35)
19. What is the warning for us here?

More of Israel's leaders - this time, some Pharisees - tell Jesus not to go to Jerusalem. But Jesus says he has to: Jerusalem is the place where prophets die, and that's what he's come to do. But he wishes it weren't this way. He wishes Jerusalem - and everyone it represents - would accept him, and then he could bring them close to him, as a hen brings her chicks. But they refuse, so they will be left desolate: without their king, shut out of the kingdom.

Today's passage is full of warnings: warnings not to restrict people's access to salvation; warnings not to treat Jesus casually; warnings not to reject Jesus outright. It's grim.

But there is also comfort: comfort that Jesus wants to help people *all* the time; comfort that Jesus will save those he knows; comfort that Jesus' instinct is to gather people to him, like little chicks, not destroy him. That is great comfort indeed.

Why don't you spend some time in prayer about that now?