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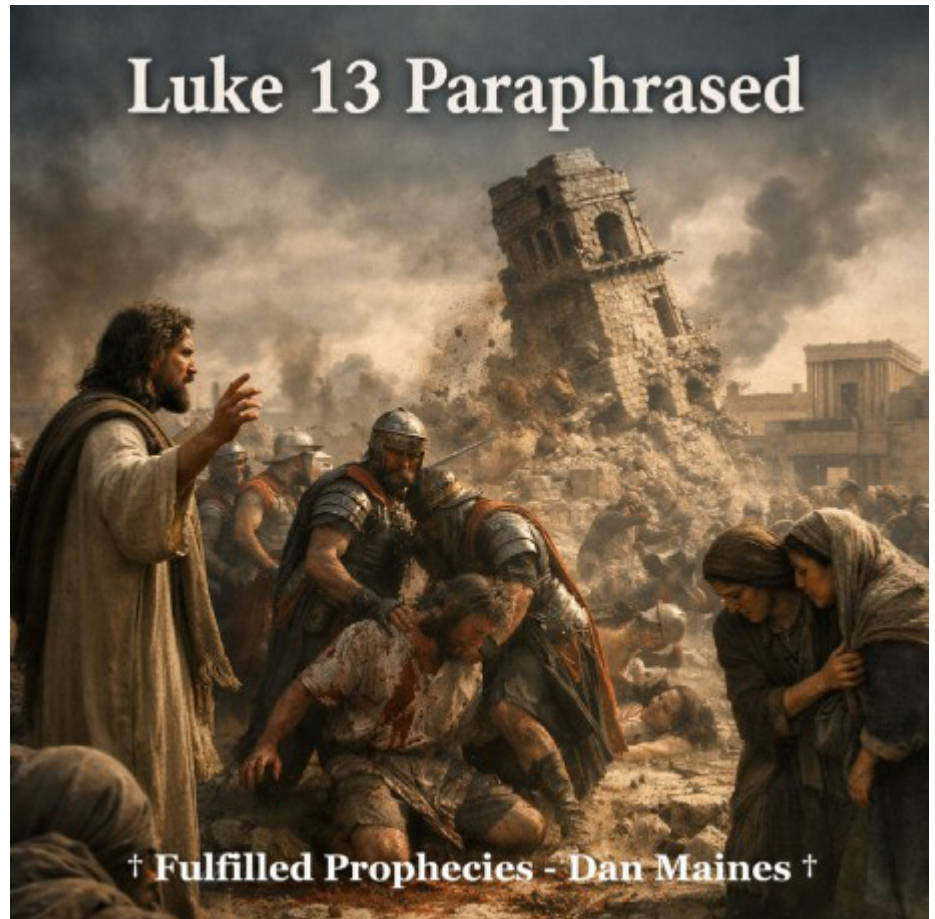
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Luke 13 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Luke 13 Paraphrased

Introduction

- † Jesus addresses real events happening in their time, correcting false assumptions about sin and judgment
- † He warns that judgment is not random, it is directed at that generation unless they repent
- † The urgency throughout the chapter points directly to the coming destruction of Jerusalem within their lifetime (Luke 21:20-22)

Luke 13:1

Some people told Him about Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices

† This was a known recent event, showing political violence under Roman authority (Josephus, Antiquities)

† The people assumed these victims must have been worse sinners

† Jesus corrects this thinking, judgment was coming on all who refused to repent

Luke 13:2

He answered and said they were not worse sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this way

† Jesus rejects the idea that suffering always equals greater sin (John 9:2-3)

† The focus shifts from comparing others to examining oneself

† Judgment was not selective, it was about to fall broadly

Luke 13:3

No, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish

† This is a direct warning to that generation

† The word perish points to physical destruction, fulfilled in AD 70 (Josephus, Wars of the Jews)

† Repentance was the only escape from that coming judgment

Luke 13:4

Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think they were worse offenders than all others in Jerusalem

† Another recent tragedy used to teach the same truth

† Sudden death was not proof of greater guilt

† The warning is universal to Jerusalem

Luke 13:5

No, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish

† Repetition emphasizes urgency

† This is not about distant events, it is about imminent covenant judgment

† Jerusalem would fall just as suddenly

Luke 13:6

He began telling this parable, a man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any

† The fig tree represents Israel (Hosea 9:10)

† God expected fruit, righteousness and obedience

† Their failure showed covenant unfaithfulness

Luke 13:7

He said to the vineyard keeper, 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

† The three years reflect Christ's ministry

† Israel had opportunity but remained unfruitful

† Judgment was justified

Luke 13:8

He answered, leave it alone this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer

† A final extension of mercy

† This reflects the patience of God during the apostolic period

† Time was limited

Luke 13:9

If it bears fruit next year, fine, but if not, cut it down

† The outcome was already clear, judgment would come

† This was fulfilled in AD 70

† Israel as a covenant system was removed

Luke 13:10

He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath

† Jesus continued to confront religious leaders directly

† Synagogues were centers of resistance to Him

† The setting highlights their hypocrisy

Luke 13:11

There was a woman who had a disabling spirit for eighteen years, she was bent over and could not straighten up

† Her condition shows bondage under the old system

† Physical healing points to spiritual restoration

† Eighteen years shows long suffering

Luke 13:12

When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said she was freed from her sickness

† Jesus initiates healing

† He demonstrates authority over both physical and spiritual oppression

† This reveals the kingdom already present

Luke 13:13

He laid His hands on her, and immediately she stood upright and glorified God

† Immediate healing shows divine power

† Her response contrasts the leaders' hardness

† The people recognize God's work

Luke 13:14

The synagogue official was indignant because Jesus healed on the Sabbath and said there are six days for work, come then and be healed, not on the Sabbath

† Religious leaders valued rules over mercy

† Their system was exposed as corrupt

† This reflects the failure of the old covenant leadership

Luke 13:15

The Lord answered and said hypocrites, does not each of you untie his ox or donkey on the Sabbath and lead it to water

† Jesus exposes their inconsistency

† They cared more for animals than people

† Their hypocrisy justified judgment

Luke 13:16

This woman, a daughter of Abraham, bound for eighteen years, should she not be set free on the Sabbath

† Jesus affirms her covenant identity

† True Sabbath rest is liberation

† He restores what the system failed to do

Luke 13:17

His opponents were humiliated, and the crowd rejoiced at all the glorious things being done

† The people recognized truth

† The leaders lost credibility

† This tension builds toward the coming judgment

Luke 13:18

He said what is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it

† Jesus explains the nature of the kingdom

† It begins small but grows

† It was already active in their time

Luke 13:19

It is like a mustard seed that a man planted, and it grew into a tree and birds nested in its branches

† The kingdom starts small but expands

† This was fulfilled through the spread of the gospel

† It includes the nations (Ezekiel 17:23)

Luke 13:20

Again He said, to what shall I compare the kingdom of God

† Emphasis through repetition

† The kingdom is being revealed progressively

† It is not future only, it is present

Luke 13:21

It is like leaven hidden in flour until all of it was leavened

† The kingdom works internally and thoroughly

† It transforms everything over time

† This shows its unstoppable growth

Luke 13:22

He traveled from town to town teaching as He made His way to Jerusalem

† Jerusalem is the focus

† Everything is leading to its judgment

† His journey is purposeful

Luke 13:23

Someone asked if only a few are being saved

† This reflects concern about salvation

† The question assumes limited access

† Jesus redirects the focus

Luke 13:24

Strive to enter through the narrow door, many will try and will not be able

† Effort is required

† Many in Israel would be excluded

† The door was closing on that generation

Luke 13:25

Once the master shuts the door, people will stand outside knocking, but he will say he does not know them

† This reflects finality

† Opportunity was limited

† This connects to the judgment on Jerusalem

Luke 13:26

They will say they ate and drank with Him and heard Him teach

† Proximity to Jesus did not guarantee acceptance

- † Many heard Him but rejected Him
- † Religious familiarity was not enough

Luke 13:27

He will say depart from me, I do not know where you are from, you workers of wrongdoing

- † Rejection is based on lawlessness
- † Covenant identity without obedience is meaningless
- † This echoes Matthew 7:23

Luke 13:28

There will be weeping when they see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom, but themselves thrown out

- † This shows reversal
- † Many Jews would be excluded
- † Gentiles would be included

Luke 13:29

People will come from east and west and recline in the kingdom of God

- † The nations are included
- † This fulfills the promise to Abraham
- † The kingdom expands beyond Israel

Luke 13:30

Some who are last will be first, and first will be last

- † Status is reversed
- † Those who seemed secure would fall
- † Those considered outsiders would enter

Luke 13:31

Some Pharisees warned Him that Herod wanted to kill Him

- † Political tension is rising
- † Jesus is aware of the threat
- † Yet He continues His mission

Luke 13:32

He said tell that fox I cast out demons and perform healings today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish

† Jesus calls Herod a fox, exposing his weakness

† His timeline is fixed

† His work will be completed

Luke 13:33

I must continue today and tomorrow and the next day, for a prophet cannot perish outside Jerusalem

† Jerusalem is identified as the place of judgment

† It is the city that kills prophets

† This points directly to its coming destruction

Luke 13:34

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to her, how often I wanted to gather your children, but you were unwilling

† Jesus laments their rejection

† Their history of violence sealed their fate

† Their unwillingness brought judgment

Luke 13:35

Your house is left to you desolate, and you will not see me until you say blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord

† The temple would be destroyed

† Desolation was imminent

† This was fulfilled in AD 70 (Josephus, Wars of the Jews)

Historical References

† Josephus records the fall of Jerusalem and massive loss of life, confirming the fulfillment of this warning

† Eusebius describes the early Christians fleeing Jerusalem before its destruction

† Clement of Alexandria speaks of the transition from the old system to the new covenant reality

How it applies to us today

† We don't rely on outward religion, we walk in true repentance and obedience

† We recognize that God's kingdom has already been established and fulfilled

† We trust in Christ, not systems or traditions that have already passed away

† We live in the reality that judgment has already come and the kingdom now stands

Q & A Appendix

Q: Was Jesus talking about a future end of the world

A: No, He was warning His generation of Jerusalem's destruction (Luke 21:20-22)

Q: What does perish mean here

A: It refers to physical destruction in judgment, fulfilled in AD 70 (Luke 13:3)

Q: What is the fig tree

A: It represents Israel failing to produce fruit (Hosea 9:10)

Q: Who enters the kingdom

A: Those who respond in faith and obedience, including the nations (Luke 13:29)

Q: What is the desolate house

A: The temple and Jerusalem left empty and destroyed (Luke 13:35)

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Luke 13

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

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