

[Drunk in Thy Presence] / Gospel of Luke 13:1 – 14:7

~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God arrives in a brand-new Bible land with Luke in this report. This section of Scripture brings us several details in the life of Christ that only Luke records. Matthew and Mark omit these accounts entirely; and they all concern differing facets of His earthly ministry. I feel it is worth noting that Matthew and Mark also went to great lengths to remind us that every time Jesus mentioned that He was going to Jerusalem to die, the apostles always asked, "... who will be greatest in the kingdom?" Well, Luke doesn't talk about that. It is that type of contrast that reveals the authenticity of Holy inspired and inerrant writ....

XIII

1 Now there were some present at that very season who told him of the Galilaeans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

2 And he answered and said unto them, Think ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because they have suffered these things?

3 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, think ye that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem?

5 I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

~ We have several very fine lessons following in this report. If you haven't sensed the urgency of where this is going then, read on. First, we should be acutely aware that when another Christian is having difficulties beyond the normal problems of life, it doesn't mean they are greater sinners than the next Christian man or woman who has seemingly been blessed with no outwardly recognizable problems. However, we have another side to this issue, and we need to understand both sides correctly. Christians do not

receive an inoculation against trouble in their lives when they accept Jesus and begin to trust Christ. And the Lord Jesus saith, "in this world ye will have trouble..." Too many Christians judge other Christians by the circumstances in their lives at any particular moment. The result is an immediate and superficial disposition. Jesus promised us trouble, friends - and He makes no apologies for it.

When we see trouble come to the lives of other believers, and we are doing well in our own lives, we can easily get the idea that we are superior to them. When you find yourself on that ground, you are deep in enemy territory, and you are in extreme danger. Sometimes, the Lord permits us to observe other people's troubles so that we might turn back from a similar problem ourselves and get closer to Him. When He does bring us to look upon those traumatic experiences in someone else's life, it always has a lesson for us. That lesson will only be found in the Word of God; and it's going to be deeply personal for you. This problem quickly renders us Christian Tragedies if we do not recognize them and learn in truth and wisdom. You will have the only interpretation from God, too – so, if some third party tries to explain what something means to you, then you will know you have ventured into the area of witchcraft. Yes, it's exactly like that, my beloved. It's deadly serious business....

6 And he spake this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came seeking fruit thereon, and found none.

7 And he said unto the vinedresser, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why doth it also cumber the ground?

8 And he answering saith unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:

9 and if it bear fruit thenceforth, [well]; but if not, thou shalt cut it down.

~ We have established conclusively on safari that the fig tree spiritually represents the nation Israel. When Jesus was here on earth, He found no fruit on the tree and He immediately denounced it. There is no end to the

disagreement concerning the fig tree, but there's no disagreement that God has judged the nation Israel! They totally reject Christ as the Messiah; and that's why they do not enjoy peace in Israel today. To say contraire is laughable - not to mention not credible. This should be an easy lesson for Israel after the last half century plus of current history: Iran is not Israel's problem tonight and the Palestinians are not giving them trouble. GOD is giving them their trouble right now as I type this report AND as you read it!

Israel is a chosen nation and God will bring them back into that land according to Scriptural prophecy someday; but it will only happen by faith and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Messiah. Israel resides physically on the soil of Palestine today, but in total and complete unbelief. As a result, they're just not having peace. That is the direct evidence of the hand of God in the affairs of this world. If you disagree, then you will be in a great company of people who are woefully wrong. If you actually care about being correct when handling the Bible and about being accurate in your eschatology, then you are going to place your trust in the Holy Spirit of God right now to lead your understanding from Holy Writ and point you to a correct conclusion....

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath day.

11 And behold, a woman that had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years; and she was bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up.

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called her, and said to her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

~ This is the worst-case physical malady that we have in the entire Bible. We see the characteristics of doctoral writings in the Greek now from Luke. The terminological translation from the Greek is extremely difficult through this entire next passage. They are mostly medical terms from that day. "Spirit of infirmity" and eighteen years of "chronic" pain over a long period are our focus. The particulars become unimportant. This woman was "bowed over" which is also an acceptable nomenclature in medical terminology. If you research; try, "bent double." The woman could not get

up. This all combines to describe a pitiful wretched life in a poor and desperate condition....

13 And he laid his hands upon her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue, being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, answered and said to the multitude, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the day of the Sabbath.

15 But the Lord answered him, and said, Ye hypocrites, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan had bound, lo, [these] eighteen years, to have been loosed from this bond on the day of the Sabbath?

~ Our Spiritual Safari encounters something now that I cannot understand nor explain. There are many things in life we simply do not understand. This is not an immoral woman; and we find her in the synagogue – in regular attendance – a daughter of the promises given by God to Abraham. I don't think she had come there to be healed, though; in fact, I'm sure of it. The reaction of the religious ruler is incomprehensible to me; and this is the manner in which religion responds to genuine healing to this very day.

Well, the Great Physician says she is loosed. So, you can just write this next alarming statement down: Christ is responsible for the requirement of every hospital that has ever been built. History does not even record hospitals before Christ comes though history, friends. I don't care if we're talking about the godless doctor or the godless group of hospital chains for godless capitalism in the name of some undefined deity – they owe the purpose for their existence to the Lord Jesus Christ – Chief of Staff at every hospital in this world today. Well, Jesus healed her when He placed His hands on her in verse thirteen. I don't think the touch was essential, quite frankly; but He did it. The blind man in Bethsaida was also touched and

healed by Jesus; the contact with Christ being an aid to faith. Contact with Him will do exactly that, by the way. Personal contact with Christ is the loveliest thing you will ever experience. Ever....

17 And as he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame: and all the multitude rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

~ The question of the Sabbath was the all-important question to the religious rulers. The ritual of the Sabbath had become a burden in Israel that was simply too grievous to be born-out any longer in Jewish society. They had tacked-on some of the most absurd rules concerning Sabbath rest that it became the butt of jokes to the outside world; simply because of the hypocrisy religion created. The Sabbath is still the subject of a heated debate today that rages on in the cesspool of flames called religion. People argue the point over-zealously, of course. Some people will dog you with their questions about the Sabbath while ignoring the all-important fact that we are to live this thing and not argue about it. Thank God He didn't leave this woman in that condition. If that is not tremendous to you then, I really just don't know what would be? These people heard the voice of the Lord Jesus and they rejoiced in that. Do you?

Many have been so callously religious for so long that they simply totally exclude Jesus from their lives. They rest on the haunches of smug complacency and, I will be honest, because I always am honest in these reports: I doubt they have ever allowed Christ into their hearts; and I doubt they have ever truly trusted God. These people have no substance and there is no substitute for that! Do you have doubts? Are you puzzled in life? Are you troubled? Are you bent double today with the burdens of life? Well, friends, it's time to come to Jesus as the sinner you really are and stop playing around with God. You can bring Him your burdens and your sins at any time – His emergency room stays open twenty-four hours seven days. I hope you find this a wonderful lesson Luke presented....

18 He said therefore, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I liken it?

19 It is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his own garden; and it grew, and became a tree; and the birds of the heaven lodged in the branches thereof.

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened.

22 And he went on his way through cities and villages, teaching, and journeying on unto Jerusalem.

23 And one said unto him, Lord, are they few that are saved? And he said unto them,

24 Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, open to us; and he shall answer and say to you, I know you not whence ye are;

26 then shall ye begin to say, We did eat and drink in thy presence, and thou didst teach in our streets;

27 and he shall say, I tell you, I know not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and yourselves cast forth without.

29 And they shall come from the east and west, and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And behold, there are last who shall be first, and there are first who shall be last.

31 In that very hour there came certain Pharisees, saying to him, Get thee out, and go hence: for Herod would fain kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go and say to that fox, Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third [day] I am perfected.

33 Nevertheless I must go on my way to-day and to-morrow and the [day] following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen [gathereth] her own brood under her wings, and ye would not!

35 Behold, your house is left unto you [desolate]: and I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

XIV

1 And it came to pass, when he went into the house of one of the rulers of the Pharisees on a Sabbath to eat bread, that they were watching him.

2 And behold, there was before him a certain man that had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath, or not?

4 But they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a well, and will not straightway draw him up on a Sabbath day?

6 And they could not answer again unto these things.

7 And he spake a parable unto those that were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief seats; saying unto them,

~ We're moving towards Jerusalem now and we have heard – way back in the ninth chapter – Luke said Jesus had steadfastly set His face towards Jerusalem to be crucified. There is only one purpose on this mission: to die for the sins of the world! On the way, we're going to stop for dinner with Jesus again in the house of one of the other rulers of the Pharisees - and on the Sabbath, of course. Does it seem like this account has been one long Sabbath? Everything exciting in the lives of Jesus and the disciples seems to have unfolded on the last day of the week.

Well, we have already had one instance similar to this one in the house of Simon the Pharisee - when Mary brought her alabaster box of oil. She washed Jesus feet with her tears back then; because the old hypocrite didn't even offer Jesus a bowl to wash with. We're talking about religious rulers who are in the depths of immorality. The Pharisee was the product of religion and Mary was the product of the underworld. He sat and she stood as we watched Jesus interact with them both. The Pharisee was offended by her very presence - and she was embarrassed by him. There is no possible way they spoke publicly, although they did business together secretly, you may be sure.

The Pharisee is brazen; and she had nothing but contempt for him. She's crying because he is being critical and he, of course, feels superior to her; and she feels inferior to him, too. These are two very different people from two wholly separate stratospheres of life. He feigned represent the best the world has to offer, and she naturally represents the worst the world has to offer. The Pharisee was famous, but the prostitute was notorious. The Pharisee was from the best section of suburbia, while the woman was from the ghetto. He was a theologian, and she was an uneducated tart.

On the level of morality alone, there is no argument that the Pharisee was viewed to exist on a higher level than the prostitute in the eyes of society.

Jesus said in the light of Heaven this woman was accepted but the Pharisee was not! See, friends, the one forgiven much is the one who will love Him much. You can measure salvation by the depths of the sins that you recognize the need of forgiveness for - and from which you desire to repent. What you think of Christ is a crystal-clear mirror image of what you think about yourself. If you are a little sinner, then your savior will be little – not to mention mythological. If you recognize yourself as a hell-doomed sinner, then you will require a Heaven inhabiting Savior! A proper, correct and complete evaluation of our hearts and minds from Scripture makes all the difference in the world.

Well, starting this second dinner will close our safari out in this report - but it's just beginning - and it's going to be super fun! I don't know why so many Christians never have any fun with Bible studies. This is really a book of fun when you wear it right. Okay, so, let's say this Pharisee invited me and you, on the Sabbath Day, to come over and eat dinner with him and discuss the Mosaic Law. I have to tell you – I'm not going! The people watching are something I can do without, quite frankly. This is nothing in the world except another spy mission by the religious rulers. Their agenda is to trap Jesus in His words and kill Him! I'll pass; except that the Holy Spirit of God has moved – so, we have no choice but to attend.

These hypocrites are trying to get Jesus relaxed to see what He will do or say in a casual atmosphere. The tone and the color at this table have been set. The prelude before the meal is due to begin. The air is more than tense, and it can be cut with a knife. The man with the dropsy is a trap deliberately set in Jesus path and planted to achieve their end objective of hate. Well, Jesus doesn't fall into their traps – ever – and this will end as a delightful occasion. So, Jesus asks if He can heal on the Sabbath and they held their peace. They aren't going to answer that. They had been down that road before. So, Jesus asks something else about them pulling their oxen out of a ditch. We know what's going on with these people now. If the oxen were in the ditch, the Lord Jesus said, "of course you know you would pull it out."

Well, here comes the first course of dinner - and the men start choosing the chief seats. Our host has left us no place cards. If there is no assigned

seating, you can count on a mad dash towards one certain place or another. The dinner bell has created a mad scramble here tonight. The rich sure do have terrible table manners, don't they? In our next report, our Spiritual Safari readers will be served dinner with a harsh correction from the True and Living God aimed directly at this crowd of abject liars, fools and hypocrites. This is one dinner you don't want to miss, my beloved ~

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