

Title: JESUS' ANSWER TO JOB, LUKE 13:1-9
(Chatham, NJ; 03/03/13, AM) [E – Topical]

Theme: When someone brings up a recent tragedy, Jesus responds by saying the real issue is that everyone is under a cloud of judgment and must repent if they expect not to perish.

Purpose: To remind everyone that judgment is coming and to exhort them to change their ways.

Introduction:

1. The problem of evil and the problem of the righteous person suffering have plagued mankind for a long time.
2. It can be a sticking point for some people.
3. It is most certainly one that the Christian has to face head on.
4. Someone in Jesus' audience mentions a recent tragedy and by implication the question of evil and suffering.

I. Making Sense of Evil

A. The Question

1. Begins as an observation, 1
2. Jesus sees several assumptions behind such statements
3. Evil is horrible; bad people suffer such fates; glad it wasn't us
4. However, Jesus knows that violence strikes without reason or meaning

B. Two Situations

1. First, probably Zealots rebelling against Herod
2. A vile death: worse than they deserved?
3. Second, a freak accident
4. Caused by bad Karma or divine retribution?
5. Jesus never addresses why these happened

C. His Answer

1. Points to a bigger problem
2. Were any of those in either group worse sinners because of their suffering?
3. His **no** is emphatic
4. One common denominator: "you will all perish unless you repent"
5. Perish = eternal damnation and separation from God
6. This is the elephant in the room
7. People don't want to admit their own evil
8. Jesus brings their need for repentance to the front

II. The Barren Fig Tree: Judgment Delayed but Immanent

A. The Parable

1. A worthless, fruitless fig tree
2. The owner – God
3. Cut it down now - judgment
4. The vinedresser – Jesus
5. Give it another chance - mercy
6. Then cut it down – judgment still immanent

B. Peter explains the same thing without the parable, 2 Peter 3:8-9

1. "God is not slow" – he is patient and merciful
2. He wants to give all people a chance to repent
3. Yet judgment still looms large: the Day will come (10)
4. How far in the future depends on God's sense of time (8)

5. Repentance, mercy, and judgment are the same key themes

III. God Demands Repentance

A. Jesus' message

1. Unless you repent...(Luke 13)
2. Repent, the Kingdom is at hand, Mark 1:15
3. To the woman caught in adultery: go and sin no more
4. John demanded proof of repentance: change evil behaviors
5. Not make it up to God (saying prayers, "doing" penance)
6. Not just feel sorrow for sins (Godly sorrow brings repentance, 2 Cor. 7:10)
7. Repentance is inherent in the Gospel message, Luke 24:47
8. He repeats that to Paul, Acts 26:18

B. The church's message of salvation predicated on repentance

1. Acts 2:38 – repent and be baptized
2. Romans 2:4 – God's kindness leads to repentance
3. An impenitent heart incurs the wrath of God

Conclusion:

1. Now is the time to change your lifestyle.
2. Now is the time to get right with God.
3. Judgment Day will come like a thief in the night.
4. Only by repenting and accepting the forgiveness of the Gospel will you avoid perishing in the coming Day of Judgment.
5. No need to delay; do it today.