



## Today's Message

Date: May 9, 2021

Speaker: Pastor Steven Thomas

Title: *The Problem of Evil and the Providence of God*

Text: Luke 13:1-9 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> There were some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? <sup>3</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. <sup>4</sup> Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

<sup>6</sup> And he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. <sup>7</sup> And he said to the vinedresser, ‘Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?’ <sup>8</sup> And he answered him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. <sup>9</sup> Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’ ”

Introduction: The opening passage of chapter thirteen continues the Jesus' subject from the end of chapter twelve. In 12:49-59, he challenged his hearers not to squander God's mercy. Instead, they should turn to him in repentant faith. Luke includes Jesus' interaction with the crowd in 13:1-5 in which he focused on the “problem of evil.” He applied that teaching with a parable (13:6-9)

designed to point them to the mercy of God and call them to repentant faith.

**I. Suffering is an ever-present reality. 1-5**

- A. It comes in a variety of ways . . . 1-5
  - 1. It comes through injustice. 1
  - 2. It comes through “accidents.” 4
- B. but it serves God’s purpose. 2-3; 5
  - 1. God uses suffering to remind us of our condition.
  - 2. God uses suffering to call us to repentance.

**II. Suffering teaches lessons about God. 6-9**

- A. God has the right to expect the “fruit” of repentance from you. 6-7
- B. God extends mercy to the fruitless. 8
- C. God does not extend his mercy forever. 9

**Today’s take-home truth: Despite today’s pain, God is merciful to you; do not take his mercy for granted.**