

JESUS' MESSAGE TO OUR TROUBLED WORLD

(Luke 13:1-9)

Amidst the alarming news of increasing death toll, rising number of Coronavirus infection, economic turmoil, escalating fear and restlessness due to this global pandemic, we must tune in to God and listen to what He has to say about this viral crisis (Isa. 46:9-10; 45:7; Dan. 4:35; Eccl. 7:14; Lam. 3:37-38). After all, it's the message of God that is most truthful, most reliable, most authoritative, most comforting and most life-changing (Isa. 40:8). Reflecting from Jesus' instruction in Luke 13:1-9, let's consider three urgent messages from God to our troubled world.

1. A Pressing Call to _____

Every crisis is a divine summon from God demanding our undivided attention. This global pandemic conveys an urgent and pressing call from the Lord to repent and return to Him. When our Lord Jesus addressed the two tragedies which took place in the nation of Israel, He responded with a message of repentance (Luke 13:1-5). Calamities are not God's way of singling out exceptionally sinful people because in the sight of God, we are as equally sinful and guilty as everyone else in this world (Romans 3:10-12,23). Tragedies should instead drive us to our need for genuine repentance which is turning away from our sin and turning to God for His forgiving mercies (Luke 13:3,5). The worst pandemic is not the novel coronavirus, but the unrepented sin in our own hearts. Therefore, we must examine and humble ourselves before God through genuine and godly repentance (Jer. 15:19; Lam. 3:40; Acts 3:19; 1 John 1:8-10).

2. A Painful Warning of _____

The ultimate tragedy, according to our Lord Jesus, is not losing your physical life here on earth because of some severe catastrophe. The ultimate tragedy is dying in your sin, perishing in eternal hell and suffering the final judgment of God (Luke 13,3,5; John 3:16; 10:28). This current global pandemic and other cataclysmic events are but painful warnings of God's coming final judgment. Throughout redemptive history, the Lord sends disasters and plagues as a divine declaration of His displeasure and judgment on sin (Gen. 6:5-7; Deut. 28:15,20-22; Rev. 18:4-8).

3. A Personal Offer of _____

What then is our hope in the face of God's holy, righteous and wrathful judgment? Praise God, our hope is found in the gospel of Christ! Through a parable, our Lord Jesus illustrates the perfect justice and perfect mercy of God (Luke 13:6-9; 2 Pet. 3:9). The greatest demonstration of God's mercy is the saving mediation of our Lord Jesus through His incarnation, sinless life, substitutionary death on the Cross and victorious resurrection from the grave (1 Tim. 2:5-6). As our risen and reigning King, our Lord Jesus commands everyone to repent and accept His gracious offer of complete forgiveness and eternal salvation (Matt. 11:28-29; John 11:35,40; Rom. 10:9-13). This gospel hope also comforts all Christians as it provides eternal security to all believers through the work of Christ as our divine intercessor and advocate (Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:33-34; Lam. 3:21-24).
