



## The Gospel of Saint Luke

**13:1-5. There were present at that time some that told Him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. Ans Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you: nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**

There was a man names Judas<sup>1</sup> of Galilee, whom this same Evangelist mentions in the Acts of the Apostles. He was a self-proclaimed student of the law who had led astray many other Galileans with his teachings. He taught his followers that they should call no man "Lord," neither speaking the word with their mouth, nor showing and master honor or affection, not even the king. As a result many of these Galileans were cruelly tortured for not calling Caesar their lord. These men had also been teaching others not to offer any sacrifices except those commanded by Moses, and thus they were interfering with the sacrifices made on behalf of Caesar and the Roman people. It is likely, therefore, that Pilate became infuriated with them and gave orders that they be slain alongside those very sacrifices offered on behalf of the Roman people to which they objected, so that their blood was mixed with the blood of the sacrifices. Certain men related these events to the Saviour as if the Galileans had acted in defense of piety, and they wanted to find out whether it pleased Him. For some thought that these Galileans were sinners and had rightly suffered this punishment, in that they had caused revolt and had aroused Pilate to hate the Jews. This was because their rebellion of not calling Caesar "Lord" had spread among all the Jews. The Saviour does not deny that they were sinners, but He says that those who suffered punishment were no more sinful than others who had not so suffered. "Unless you repent," He says, "and stop stirring up rebellion and civil strife, and unless you strive to serve God with your deeds, you will suffer worse things than this. You should not strive to bring renown upon yourselves by inciting civil strife under the pretext of religious zeal." The tower which fell at Siloam was a sign of what was later to happen to the people. By means of the few who were killed on that occasion, the Lord instructed many that they would suffer worse things. What happened to the tower prefigured what would happen to the whole city, and the eighteen who died foreshadowed all the people: the whole race of those who remained stubborn in their unbelief was destroyed when the city of Jerusalem fell at the hands of Titus. Let this also be a warning to us in regards to the events which befall us every day. Because some fall into great dangers and temptations, while we remain untouched, let this not cause us to be negligent, imagining that we have not experienced such troubles because we are so righteous. On the contrary, we are instructed that those others are being chastised so that we may correct our own lives, lest we suffer something worse.

*The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to Saint Luke* by Blessed Theophylact Archbishop of Ochrid and Bulgaria  
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<sup>1</sup> Acts 5:37