

# THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;  
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,  
**I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God  
IN CHRIST JESUS.***

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

#04-1081

## ***Cursed Fig Tree***

August 3, 2010

Understanding the cursed fig tree is vital if we are to have some understanding of the modern Jewish state of Israel. May the Holy Spirit open our eyes to the truth.

Jesus said: **“So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire”** (Matthew 7:17-19 NASB).

Many people use these verses to refer to the lost or to Christians that they believe are not fruit bearers, for whatever reason. However, Jesus obviously had in mind the words that He spoke to Jeremiah some 600 years earlier about the good figs and the bad figs (Jeremiah 24).

The good figs of Judah accepted the Lord’s judgment of them and willingly went into Babylonian captivity. In other words, they did not fight His judgment of them. Because of their obedience, the Lord promised to return them to their land and give them a heart to know Him. **“They will return to Me with their whole heart”** (Jeremiah 24:7). A remnant returned to rebuild Jerusalem and this formed the heart of the good fig nation of Judah that followed Jesus and accepted Him as the King of Judah.

The bad figs of Judah refused to accept the Lord’s judgment of them and instead obstinately remained in the land. In other words, they fought the Lord’s judgment of them. Because of their disobedience, the Lord indicted them as rotten fruit that could not be eaten and pronounced a further judgment on them. **“I will send the sword, the famine and the pestilence upon them until they are destroyed from the land”** (Jeremiah 24:10). This was a prophetic indictment of the bad fig nation of Judah that later refused to follow Jesus and demanded His death, even though they knew He was the King of Judah. Jesus stated so through a parable using the metaphor of a vineyard to refer to the Judahites.

**(38) “But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’ (39) “They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.”** (Matthew 21:38-39 NASB)

Jesus gave another parable about a vineyard, but this time the fig tree was in its midst.

**(6) And He began telling this parable: “A man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any. (7) And he said to the vineyard-keeper, ‘Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?’ (8) “And he answered and said to him, ‘Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; (9) and if it bears fruit next year, fine; but if not, cut it down.”** (Luke 13:6-9 NASB)

Judah’s King had walked publicly in their midst for three years, but He found no fruit of the kingdom. The nation was worthy to be cut down and burned; however, a plea was made for one more year. Within that year, this fig tree demanded the death of the very Trunk of the tree and sealed their destiny. So, when Jesus saw the lone fig tree, He cursed it as a sign of what was to come of the bad fig tree of Judah.

**Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves only; and He said to it, “No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you.” And at once the fig tree withered.** (Matthew 21:19 NASB)

We need to be clear that this lone fig tree was the nation of Judah that was about to reject their Messiah. Most of the Jews (Judahites) that resided in Judea in that day followed the lead of the hypocrites that were the source of the rot. Have you ever noticed that one rotten piece of fruit in a

basket of fruit will lead to others becoming rotten? The scribes and Pharisees did just that to most of the figs in that day through their hypocritical hearts that did not love the Lord, and they were bolstered by their traditions and doctrines. Like their forefathers, they too fought the judgment of the Lord. They were under Roman rule by the hand of God but rather than submit to His judgment and wait for God to deliver them out of it, they wanted a **political solution**. They wanted to remove the yoke through the sword, not by the Spirit, and, for this, they did not inherit the kingdom that they sought. This sounds a lot like many American Christians in our day who are fighting a political battle.

**“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.”** (Matthew 23:13 NASB)

**(6) ... He said to them, Well did Isaiah prophesy concerning you, hypocrites...: “This people honors Me with the lips, but their heart is far away from Me; (7) and in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” Isa. 29:13 (8) for forsaking the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men... (Mark 7:6-8 LITV)**

Jesus declared: **The kingdom of God will be taken from you** [cursed fig tree], **and it will be given to a nation** [blessed fig tree] **producing the fruits of it** (Matthew 21:43 LITV).

In other words, the cursed fig tree would not inherit the kingdom of God but instead be cast out of it as if it were rotten fruit. In fulfillment of the prophecies of Jeremiah (29:9-10) and the following one from Jesus, God sent His Roman army to destroy the great city Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD.

**“But the king** [God the Father] **was enraged, and he sent his** [God’s Roman] **armies and destroyed those murderers** [bad figs] **and set their city** [Jerusalem] **on fire.”** (Matthew 22:7 NASB)

As Jesus approached the cross, He gave His disciples another parable about the fig tree.

**(29) And He spoke a parable to them: You see the fig tree** [cursed fig nation] **and all the trees** [all the nations]. **(30) Now when they sprout leaves, seeing it, you will know from yourselves that now the summer is near.** (Luke 21:29-30 LITV)

On the one hand, Jesus prophesied of the destruction of the cursed fig tree, and on the other hand, He prophesied of its rebirth. What does this mean? The key is in the fig tree having leaves (rebirth) but no fruit (barren). Jesus prophesied that a day would come when the cursed fig tree would reappear, not to bear fruit but to be judged, when God will once again send His army against this apostate nation.

The cursed fig tree of Judah disappeared as a nation with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. However, on May 15, 1948, the Jewish state of Israel came into being, and, on May 19, 1949, it joined the United Nations (UN) as a full member. Following Israel’s national appearance, many nations (all the trees) came forth, for during the next three decades, the UN saw its membership grow by 92 nations. It is quite interesting that in the same decade that the *apparent* Jews captured Jerusalem (1967), the world saw the greatest increase of nations (42) since the inception of the UN in 1945. Over two-thirds of the current UN membership came about after Israel joined the UN in fulfillment of the Lord’s prophetic word. Thus, all the trees refer to all the nations of the world that will be judged along with the fig tree nation. Why? Because they reject Jesus, the King of the nations, not just the King of Judah!

It is vital to understand that modern Israel is not the true Israel of God but an imposter that usurped the birthright name *Israel* from the house of Israel that lost its national identity when it was taken captive by the Assyrians, starting in 723 BC. The nation of Israel was dispersed among the nations and lost its national identity; something that has continued to this day.

If the Zionists had taken the name *Judah* for their nation, they would have been closer to the truth, but even then it would not have been the truth, for the revived nation has more to do with the birthright claims of Esau and Ishmael than with the scepter of Judah. The King of Judah has already taken His scepter, and He is not returning to the present Jerusalem to sit on a throne. The present Jerusalem must be cast out, never to be repaired again (Jeremiah 19:11; Galatians 4:21-31). The good fig nation of Judah is the ecclesia of Christ, for they have joined themselves with the Lion of the tribe of Judah.