

CHIEF MINISTRIES

June 2014

The LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. ^{v2} One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe: and the other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad. ^{v3} Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil. ^{v4} Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, ^{v5} Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good. ^{v6} For I will set mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land: and I will build them, and not pull them down; and I will plant them, and not pluck them up. ^{v7} And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart. ^{v8} And as the evil figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil; surely thus saith the LORD, So will I give Zedekiah the king of Judah, and his princes, and the residue of Jerusalem, that remain in this land, and them that dwell in the land of Egypt: ^{v9} And I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them. ^{v10} And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers. (Jeremiah 24:1-10 KJV)

The Lord woke me up early Sunday morning and I heard "Jeremiah 24". So I went and read it and this is what I'm to write:

The Lord knows those who are His! Now, the figs in this story were taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. Jeconiah (the king's son) was sent off to Babylon along with the princes of Judah, the carpenters and smiths. These were "the better" inhabitants of the land. The builders, the authority, the ones that could make something happen. Now all of these captives were from the tribe of Judah (the praisers). They took on the name of the Lord because they had seen the goodness of the Lord. They knew how to praise – but..... were they His? Or had they taken His name in vain? You know why God took them captive? Because of their repeated sinning! Their bad habits of doing whatever they wanted in their own eyes, yet in the eyes of God it was evil. Most of the leaders placed over Judah during this time were evil. Now understand God did this to get those who were really His to draw nearer to Him through their trials and tribulations, difficulties, struggles even blatant disobedience. Taken into captivity! Hmmm. Look around you right now. Is this shoe going to fit? I believe it does. Let's go a little deeper.

After this captivity, Jeremiah was shown two baskets of fruit. One contained very good figs and one very naughty (I like that translation). "Like these good figs" says the Lord, "so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of the praisers whom I have sent into the land of the Chaldeans for their good." Who were the Chaldeans? Let's look at Habakkuk chapter 1:6-14:

For behold, I am raising up the Chaldeans, that bitter and hasty nation, who march through the breadth of the earth, to seize dwellings not their own. ^{v7}They are dreaded and fearsome; their justice and dignity go forth from themselves. ^{v8}Their horses are swifter than leopards, more fierce than the evening wolves; their horsemen press proudly on. Their horsemen come from afar; they fly like an eagle swift to devour. ^{v9}They all come for violence, all their faces forward. They gather captives like sand. ^{v10}At kings they scoff, and at rulers they laugh. They laugh at every fortress, for they pile up earth and take it. ^{v11}Then they sweep by like the wind and go on, guilty men, whose own might is their god!" ^{v12}Are you not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, you have ordained them as a judgment, and you, O Rock, have established them for reproof. ^{v13}You who are of purer eyes than to see evil and cannot look at wrong, why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he? ^{v14}You make mankind like the fish of the sea, like crawling things that have no ruler. (Habakkuk 1:6-14 ESV)

God has the power to place man where He wants them to be to do whatever is needed to fulfill His own word and bring about events He has predicted to carry out His plan for man. The Chaldeans were bitter, hasty, terrible, dreadful, men of decision, dignified, swift, fierce, violent, merciless, scoffers, scorners, mockers and idolaters. Does this sound like any type or group of people around you right now? The Lord ordained them for a judgment. He established them for a reproof. Are you ready and willing to listen? I already know you're able!

The application to the praisers (Judah) was that the good people would eventually be restored and blessed (v 5-7) while the wicked would be destroyed. The reason I make reference to "the praisers" is because we see the exact same thing today. Many come to the house of the Lord because they have seen the goodness of the Lord and they'll open their mouths and praise God. He said *He would inhabit the praises of His people*. But how many are making noise just because they're asked to in the house of the Lord. You know how many times I've been left notes or kites by men saying, "I wish you wouldn't tell me to lift my voice to God, or put my hands up in the air, or stand up in worship. I try and get them to see, I'm not telling them, the Word of God tells them to *"lift your hands in the sanctuary shout unto God with the voice of triumph"*. There were no chairs in the house of the Lord. If you were there to worship, you do those things anyways - without being reminded what the Bible clearly says to do. So there will always be those who draw near with their lips, but their heart is far from God. People will say, "you're judging me, you don't know my heart". Well, au contraire mon fehr, out of the abundance of your heart your mouth is going to speak - so in other words - what you're full of is what comes out! It's not that difficult to see where you are at my friend.

And yet, here we all are in captivity together. For some of us it was – A blessing from God - probably ALL of us. Remember He said, *"I caused you to be carried away captive"* ^{v14}. And yet, you hear the whiners every day - "Oh these Chaldeans are too much for me (my translation) their mean and merciless to me, on and on, blah, blah, blah." How about thanking God for saving your life, rescuing you from the pit, giving you a new identity. Could it be that you're a naughty fig and destined to be? Only God can truly change you. Have you really let Him? The sad thing is in this prophecy at the end, there were those who were destined to be just that. Rotten to the core, thinking just because they were grouped in with the praisers; lifting their voice when everyone else does that that would be their key to God's kingdom. Unfortunately not. The King of the praisers himself congratulated themselves with the ones who were spared being taken to Babylon with Jeremiah the first time around, but in reality, it was because they weren't fit to be taken, and they never would have been taken later if they had not rebelled. Just as bad figs have to be rejected as being too spoiled and rotten for any use, so Zedekiah, his princes and other remaining people of Jerusalem, and the Jews that fled to Egypt were to be rejected by the Lord, given into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar and dispersed among the kingdoms of the earth (v9). None of these would take part in the blessings of verses 5-7 in the latter days. These bad figs were to be scattered and would be a reproach - people will find fault with you. It's not because you are being picked on or all eyes are on

you. It's because you claim to be a good fig but you're really not. And then the religious naughty figs will say "oh, they don't really know me – Really? Here in prison? Everyone knows you and what you are doing which is a reflection of who you really are. God's bringing the exposure and He'll use a man to make it happen. You'll be a proverb – Remember the guy that played the piano in the church, or taught Sunday school or wore that cool bracelet and ring? He's skipped parole, robbed a bank and now he's headed to Sing Sing! A taunt - If you're Christian, I don't want anything to do with it! A curse - perhaps you'll have your eyes plucked out like Zedekiah or remain in captivity - maybe parole wasn't meant for the game players.

Don't get mad at the messenger. Take it up with the giver of the message - God! Those evil, useless figs are to get the sword, famine and pestilence until they're consumed off the land.

Ah, but the good figs, God says He will acknowledge them that are carried away captive. There is no acknowledgment like God's acknowledgment He'll set His eyes upon you for good. You get to be the apple of His eye - the center of His attention - notice I said His - not everyone else's! He'll bring us back to our promised land, He'll build us and not pull us down (it's because we have a sure foundation). He'll plant us and not pluck us up (it's because our fruit will be good and sweet and there will be much of it). He'll give us a heart to know Him (there's nothing like recognizing when He's in your midst) we will be His people and He will be our God. We will return to Him with our whole heart. Not just our Sunday or midweek heart, but our everyday love of the Father, putting Him first heart. This is the kind of return to God that He always demands of any who seek Him!

I pray my friends that you're a good fig, not a religious fig, not a acts like a fig when he gets what he wants fig.

Only you really know, but so does God and sometimes he'll let His prophets know too. Repent. Do what's right!

Be a good fig.

I'm praying for you,

Chief

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