

## Ned Ranger - The Fig Tree

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This evening we want to talk about the vine and the fig tree. From the text in Micah 4. 4. They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid. For the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.

First we'll talk about the fig tree, and toward the end of our talk we'll bring them together, talk about other things also the vine, the olive tree.

Our Lord mentioned the fig tree quite a number of times. Pastor Russell fired the fig tree. Jesus spoke a parable. A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came and sought fruit thereon and found none. Then he said unto the dresser of these vineyards, behold, these three years I am come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none.

Put it down. Why cumbereth it the ground? And he answered and said unto him, lord, let it alone this year also till I shall dig about it and dung it, and if it bear fruit, well, if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

Our Lord Jesus had been here on earth serving the fig tree for three years, serving the Jewish nation for three years. He came unto his own people, and his own people received him up. There were a few disciples in his first three years, not a very large number.

He was going to serve them another six months, which would be in the fourth year. At the end of the next six months, he was going to die for the Jewish nation. You know, Jesus died on the cross for the Jewish nation. Any other death would have redeemed the Gentiles. Because the Jews were under the double curse.

Not only under the Adamic curse, but also cursed by the law. Jesus must die on the cross to redeem them, deliver them from the curse of the law.

If enough of the Jews would receive Jesus within the next year, if there could be 144,000 disciples found there who would make their calling end their election. Sure the message would never have gone to the Gentiles. The fig tree would not have been destroyed. The Heavenly Father knew beforehand that the fig tree would not produce enough disciples for Jesus to make up the 144,000. He knew that the fig tree would be destroyed.

We find that it was destroyed. Even after Pentecost, there were some thousands of disciples accepted Jesus as their Redeemer. Became footstep followers of Jesus. Not enough to make up the body of Christ, and the fig tree was cast off and finally destroyed in 1870.

Another incident in our Lord's earthly career, which the fig tree entered in Matthew 21:18 20. Now in the Morning as he returned into the city, he hungered, and when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it and found nothing thereon but leaves only, and he said unto it, let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever, or to the end of the age, and presently the fig tree withered away.

The dying Lot says, instantly the fig tree withered away, and when his disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, how soon as the fig tree withered away.

On Mark 11 we have a little longer record of this incident. Mark 11, 12, 14 we read, and on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry, and seeing a fig tree afar off, having

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leave he came, if haply he might find anything thereon, and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for the time of Sphinx was not yet, and Jesus answered and said unto it, no man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever, and his disciples heard it.

But Jesus didn't say, in this case, blessed are your ears, for they hear. Nevertheless, Mark records that his disciples did hear these words, and their ears were blessed, and our ears are blessed because they did hear these words and recorded them for us.

A note says here, the time of figs was not yet. These were not Jesus words. Mark records these in his Gospel under inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

There are no hidden words in the Gospel in the Bible.

The Emphatic Diaglott makes a statement that this was the time of figs. If there were going to be figs on that tree, there should have been figs at this time. Other Bible scholars agree that if there were going to be figs on the tree that year, there should have been figs at that particular time. So if that was true, that natural figs should have been there, and Mark still records a time when figs were not yet then there must be some other significance there for us.

I recall at the time the covenant was made with the nation of Israel, Mount Sinai.

But the covenant was not accepted by a representative of the nation. For the people. The people themselves accepted the covenant. As we read in Exodus 19:8, all the people answered together and said, all that the Lord hath spoken, will we do. All the people heard the words of the law, as Moses spoke to them in Exodus 24:3.

And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments, and all the people answered with one voice and said, all the words which the Lord hath said, will we do again? Exodus 24:7 and he took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of the people, and they said all that the Lord hath said, will we do and be obedient?

Instead of being accepted by a representative of the nation, for the nation, the people of Israel accepted the covenant individually and individually agreed to abide by the words of the covenant and to be obedient.

The blessings that were promised by the law was he that doeth these things shall live by them. Jesus was the only one who kept that perfect law, magnified the law and made it honorable, demonstrated that the law was not above the ability of the perfect man to keep it.

The blessings of the law were individual blessings to these who had agreed to keep the covenant and to their children who came under the covenant. But the time for the blessings to come as a result of these individual covenants with Jehovah had not yet arrived. At the close of the millennial age, when all the world of mankind will enter into an individual covenant of the Lord, that will be the time for the blessings to come to the individuals. Because of their individual covenant with Jehovah, as we read in Jeremiah 55, they shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall never be forgotten. By the close of millennium they will enter into individual covenants with the Lord and will receive blessings thereby.

But at Jesus time, the time for these blessings had not yet come. The time for these blessings had not yet come. The time of figs was not yet the time of figs is not yet.

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But the time of figs will come when, because of individual covenants, the people shall receive blessings from our Heavenly Father. Going on in the 11th chapter of Mark, from the 20th to the 26th verses, our Lord made lessons for his disciples from this incident in the morning as they passed by. This was the next morning in the morning as they passed by and saw the fig tree dried up from the roots, and Peter calling to remembrance, saith unto him, master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursest is withered away, and Jesus answering, saith unto them, have faith of God. The way the King James reads, a better translation would be, have the faith of God.

Heavenly Father has made these plans. He has a set time for the accomplishment of each purpose in his plan. He has the power and the ability to carry out his plan. There is no concern in Jehovah's mind as to whether his plans will work out. Are you disciples enter into this faith of God, this full confidence which Jehovah has in his plans, enter into that same Faith.

Have the faith of God, and know that though this fig tree is now cursed, has withered away, that in due time it will put forth leaves, and in due time there will be fruit on it. Fig tree, have the faith of God. It shall be done.

For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe those things which he says shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, whatsoever things ye desire. When ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

Apostle James says, ye have not because ye ask not, and ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss. When we come to our Heavenly Father in prayer, we should pray for those things which he has promised to his children. We should pray for those things which we know to be in harmony with his will, and when we pray for those things which he has promised, which we know to be in harmony with his will, we are to have full confidence that in his own time and in his own way he will answer our prayer.

We have the faith of God, and He goes on, and when ye stand praying, forgive if ye have ought against any that your Father which is also in heaven, and your Father also which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses. For if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses. When the model prayer which Jesus gave to his disciples. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

If we come to the Heavenly Father in prayer, and we have not forgiven our brother, we have not forgiven our neighbor, we have not forgiven our enemies, we have malice or hatred or envy or strife in our hearts. When we come to the Heavenly Father in prayer and we ask him, forgive us our trespasses. As we forgive those who trespass against us and, and we haven't forgiven them, then in reality we are asking our Heavenly Father, do not forgive us our trespasses, for we have not forgiven those who trespass against us. That is a lesson that each child of God should bear in their hearts.

That when they come to the throne of grace, that their hearts should be full of love for the truth, love for the brethren, love for their neighbors, love even for their enemy. Only those who have this love, this mark of perfect love, will attain to a place in the kingdom.

That does not mean, dear friends, that we aren't going to have some thoughts of malice or envy or strife or hatred against this One or that one. We still have this treasure in earthen vessel. We can't keep the thoughts from coming to our minds sometimes. We do not need to harbor those thoughts.

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We do not need to keep them in our minds and to ponder over them.

As our pastor said many times, we can't keep the crows from flying over our heads, but we can keep them from building nests in our air.

But when these thoughts come to us, as they do, and as they will continue to do, Set your affection on things above. Begin to think about the heavenly promises, those things which the Lord has promised to us. Set your thoughts on the kingdom, God's love to us and think on these things. That takes conscious effort on our part. Brothers.

We can't think on these things, on the heavenly things, without conscious effort, and by using this conscious effort to think on these things, these other thoughts will fade away. If we keep our affection set on things above, we will have no time to hate our brother or our neighbor or even our enemies. So our Lord Jesus made a lesson to his disciples out of the incident of the fig tree.

And shortly before his death, Jesus cast off the nation of Israel. Lo, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Thou hast killed the prophets and stonest them that I sent unto thee. How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not behold, your house is left unto you desolate, and ye shall see me no more until ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

The fig tree was cursed. It was utterly annihilated. The nation of Israel was utterly annihilated. By AD 70, as a nation, there were still a few strongholds left after that.

Notice here the prophecy of our Lord. Ye shall see me no more until ye shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Never yet has the nation of Israel acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, and yet they must. There was a prophecy of Jesus which must be fulfilled.

Perhaps you remember in 1948, shortly after the Kingdom of Israel was established in Palestine, that there was an item in the paper and it was announced over the radio and it was also referred to in the dawn magazine. A man in Holland had requested the nation of Israel to retry Jesus, stating that he had documentary evidence which would clear Jesus name, and now you, nation of Israel, you have a legal Sanhedrin which is legally qualified to try a case. Retry Jesus. He didn't have a fair trial.

We have heard nothing more of that, and yet here is a prophecy that the nation of Israel will not see the Lord again until they shall say, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

This prophecy was uttered three and a half years after Jesus began his ministry. Right near the close of it. I have a little wonder, and I'll let you in, so you can wonder with me. Will the nation of Israel retry Jesus three and a half years after they were set up in the kingdom that would be this fall? I do not know.

I'm just watching. I'm wondering.

But whether it is this fall, next fall, or the fall after that, this prophecy must be fulfilled. Our Lord's own word.

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Then you remember shortly before his crucifixion, the disciples came to him and said, what shall be a sign of thy presence and of the end of the age? And he went into some detail, showing what things must take place before his second presence. To Matthew 24:32 to 34. We read now learn a parable of the fig tree when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. So likewise when ye see these things, know that it is near, even at the door.

Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled.

In volume four, Pastor Russell discussing this verse, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. In the chapter of our Lord's great prophecy, our pastor uses added the years of the generation, 36 and a half years, which was above the average length of life in 1878, and he adds the 36 and a half years of this generation to 1878, bringing it up to the fall of 1914. That was as far as chronology was revealed to Pastor Russell, and there he stopped on page 604 in volume four.

This is not an exact quotation or pastor says it would be just as reasonable to use a century or 100 years, or 120 years, the lifetime of Moses, or the period stated in Genesis 6:3, and add this to the time of the falling of the stars. The thought was that seemed to put us too far into the future. Our dear brethren, we are living right up here in this future. If we add 120 years to November of 1833, the time of the falling of the stars, bring us up to November of 1953.

Our pastor said it's just as reasonable as the use of 36 and a half years, which he used. Now I suggest that you look in volume four, page 604, a few pages before and back and see what he says about it. I'm not going to tell you what happened in 1953. I don't know.

I recall. Part of the Jewish Sabbath system. They had a Jubilee. Every 50th year was to be a jubilee year. A jubilee had two principal features.

One, those who had been sold into bondage and as bond service were to be set free to return to their old homestead. The other feature was that the land was to lie idle. They were neither to plant nor to reap.

But in the second Chronicles 36:21, we read to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbath for as long as she lay desolate, she kept Sabbath to fulfill. Three strikes in ten years.

You recall what our pastor said about that? There had been appointed 70 Jubilees. 19 of the 70 had passed over the nation of Israel while they were still in the land. 20th Jubilee period came while the nation of Judah was captive in Babylon, and they could not even make a pretense for keeping that 20th jubilee.

Our pastor pointed out that because they were grasping and selfish, they did not allow the land to lie idle on these jubilee years, and so while they were captive in Babylon, previously the nation of Israel had been taken captive and away from the land, and in this 70 years there was no one in the land. The land desolate, and for those 70 years the land enjoyed her Sabbath.

That part of the jubilee. There had been 70 Jubilees in Jehovah's land. That part of the jubilee had been kept there. The land enjoyed her Sabbath for 70 years.

We used to think that because of the human element, but those who had sold themselves into bondage would rise up and demand their rights and would be set free to return to their own

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homestead. We find no further reference to this in the Scriptures. But we do find in reference to the seventh or Sabbath year in Exodus 21:2, if thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years shall he serve, and in the seventh year he shall go out free for nothing. Again, in Deuteronomy 15:12, if thy brother, an Hebrew man, or an Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee and serve thee six years, then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee.

In Jeremiah 34:12, 14, we read Jeremiah's summary of this.

Therefore the word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah from the Lord, saying, thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, I made a covenant with your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of Bondmen, saying, at the end of seven years, let ye go. Every man his brother an Hebrew which hath been sold unto thee, and when he hath served six years, thou shalt let him go free from thee. But your fathers hearkened not unto me, neither inclined their ear. Now if this is true, that this part of the jubilee was not kept, and Jeremiah indicates here that it was not kept, then somewhere in the stream of time there must be a period of 70 years in which the Jews or the Israelites returned to their own homestead. What can we find on that?

You recall that in 1878, Lord Beaconsfield, the prime Minister of England at the Berlin Congress of Nations where they were settling differences between Russia and Turkey, made it possible for the Jews to return to Palestine to own the land and to live there which had been denied to them for centuries.

If we add 70 years to 1878 brings us up here to 1948, and during those 70 years the Jews were returning to Palestine. They didn't stop in 1848, I mean in 1948. But the end of the 70 years was marked in 1948 by additional blessing coming to the Jewish nation in that they were permitted to set up a government.

Well, Here was a 70 years returning feature of the jubilee accomplished before our very eyes, ending at the time when the Lord permitted the nation of Israel to re establish a government in Palestine.

The Psalmist seems to refer to this in Psalm 97. This has other applications, but it seems to fit here very well. The days of our years are threescore and 10, and if by reason of strength it be four score years, yet is there strength, labor and sorrow. The days by years of three score and 10 are 70 years from 1878 to 1948.

And if by reason of strength to be fourscore years, yet is there strength, labor and sorrow, and that's an additional 10 years from 1948 to 1958, and if they survive that 10 years, yet within that 10 years shall be the greatest labor and sorrow that the world has ever known. The greatest time of trouble that has ever been upon the earth, we believe will be within that 10 years.

The days of our years are threescore and 10, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength, labor and sorrow.

While the nation of Israel and Palestine have a man made title to the country, they have been recognized by other nations. They have been recognized by the United Nations. They do not have a title from Jehovah. Full blessings have not come to the nation of Israel. The promise was made to Father Abraham, to thee will I give the land, and to thy seed after thee the promise was not to Abraham to thee will I give the land, and to thy seed before thee.

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The seed did not receive the title to the land until added after Abraham has come back and had received the land first for himself, then later the nation of Israel may have a title to the land. The full blessings have not yet returned to the nation of Israel.

We want to read to you two paragraphs from our pastor's writing, *Our Most Holy Faith*, page 158, or in the reprints page 4451 the subheadings the Death of the Testator the apostle explains that no will or testament or bequest is of validity so long the necessitator liveth. Whatever covenant or agreement may be had, it awaits a final sealing or completion by the death of the testator. The apostle applies this to Christ. By his death Jesus passed on to us, the Church, the benefit of his merits, namely, the earthly rites of justification to all that was lost in Adam and redeemed by the precious merit of Christ's sacrifice finished at Calvary. In accepting these earthly blessings, we as his members agree to the terms, namely, that we also surrender our rights to these as servants or ministers of the new Law Covenant that these earthly blessings, secured by our Lord's obedience and death, should pass through us and still be the Redeemer's asset to be given to Israel under Israel's new law Covenant.

Now notice this next sentence very carefully. The fact that Israel is still outcast from God's favor. Now we would add there God's full favor. This favor is returning to the nation of Israel. The fact that God is the fact that Israel is still outcast from God's full favor is merely an evidence that the body of Christ is not yet completely sacrificed.

For bear in mind that the covenant is of no validity until the death of the testator. The Lord Jesus, the primary testator, has accepted believers as members of his body, and he is working in them by His Holy Spirit to will and to do the Father good pleasure that they may lay down their lives in sacrifice, filling up that which is behind of the afflictions of Messiah. As soon as the last member of the Church shall have died as a member of his body, the new law covenant with Israel will be sealed, sealed with the blood of the testator. The death of the testator the death of the Christ members We are very glad for these words from our pastor. But as long as the full favor has not come to the nation of Israel, it is an evidence that some of the feet members remain upon the earth, but the door is not yet shut.

We have another slight reference to a fig tree. Matthew 7, 15:20 Beware of false prowess by which come to you in sheep pulling, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Even so every tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth forth not good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

I don't think it's really necessary to bring this point to you, dear friends. There have been some classes where I have found some of the members of the classes were browsing around outside the good tree which brought forth the good fruit by which they came in this way to the Lord. In the mail there were various periodicals coming to them from the north and from the south, and from the east and from the west to browsing around on these thorns and the Ciceros trying to find some good fruit there to help them along way to the kingdom.

Those who are doing this were weak spiritually, those who have stayed by Pastor USA's works, the studies of scriptures, the reprints, those who are coming along with the dawn publications now are the ones who are strong spiritually, who are pressing on toward the prize. It is just a waste of time

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to go out of the way to find some good fruit on these thorns and thistles that come to us. The best thing to do is to immediately throw them away, cast them in the fire, stay by the good tree that we know is good, we have tested it to be good, and it brings forth good fruits. Let's stay right there and continue our course faithfully to the end.

Matthew 23:29, 35, 36 Jesus was speaking to the Scribe and the Pharisees, seeming to think that they were especially good. Behold ye scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been protectors with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore be ye witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers, ye serpents, ye generation of vipers. How can ye escape the damnation of Gehenna if ye keep on this Way of thinking.

How can you escape the sick and death in the time of restitution?

It is necessary for you to come down to earth and get your head down to the proper size. Think properly if you are going to be able to go up the highway of holiness. Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall be scourged in your synagogues and persecute them from city to city.

That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth. From the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, whom he slew between the temple and the altars. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation. The fig tree was cursed. The Jewish nation was going into oblivion.

But in addition to going into oblivion, perhaps part of the cause of going into oblivion was the fact that upon this generation of Jews was placed the penalty for all the willful sins committed in the world from righteous Abel up to that time.

Now, what would be the value of that?

We know how severe was the time of trouble that came upon that generation of Jews. That was the severest time of trouble that had ever been upon the world, localized in the area around Jerusalem, that came upon that generation of Jews and utterly destroyed them as a nation. Because the penalty for these willful sins was placed upon them, and they bore the penalty in that time of trouble. The people of this first 4,000 years coming out of the tomb would come out with no penalty hanging over them.

Jesus paid the price for the damaged sin which was ripple. This generation of Jews bore the penalty for all the rest of the willful sins committed up to that time. So those people would come out of the tomb free to go up the highway of holiness. The only detriment to their progress would be their own will to desire to do righteously. There was no penalty hanging over them any further.

How about the next 2,000 years? You remember in the tabernacle shadows after this bullock and the Lord's goaded and sacrifice, the high priest came out the court and took the scapegoat. His passed over the head of the scapegoat the sins of the people, the willful sin. He sent the scapegoat out into the wilderness by the hand of a fit man there to die.

The scapegoat is tied for the great company crisis. For that the world who descends from Jesus time up to the present time will have a penalty, and that penalty will be placed upon this Great

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company class and go into the time of trouble with which this age ends. Paul says he has delivered these over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

When the time comes, all spirit begotten ones upon the earth must die. They will be destroyed by Satan and his cohorts. Their place will be destroyed, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

These who will be of the great company class contracted with the heavenly Father that they would lay down their earthly lives. Our Lord Jesus, when he imputed to them his robe of righteousness to cover their imperfections, guaranteed that they would die as human beings because they held back, because they withdrew their sacrifice, because they tried to hang on to earth with one hand and reach for heaven with the other. They were not willing sacrifices. They must go into this time of trouble and wash the robes and make them clean of the blood of the lamb. They must die as human beings, and they thus will bear the penalty for all the willful sin for this last 2000 years, so that when all mankind come out of the tomb, they will be free to go up the highway of holiness, if they will.

Romans 11:12. We read now, if the fall of them the Jewish nation be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness on the 15th verse. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? Yes, the receiving of the Jewish nation back into full favor will bring back the ancient world east to human perfection. Life from the dead.

In the 25th verse. I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceit. That blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fulness or the full number of the Gentiles come in. When the full number of the Gentiles have come in, favor will be restored. Full favor will be restored to the nation of Israel.

And then the ancient worthies will come back. Just prior to the ancient worthy return. The new covenant will have been filled by the blood of these testators, head and body. In this same 11th chapter of Hebrews, the apostle Paul speaks of the olive tree. 10 branches being broken off.

The wild branch is being grafted.

The roots and the trunk of this olive tree were the Abrahamic covenant. The branches were the elect.

Did you ever eat an olive? How many seeds did it? Have you ever see an Olive of two seeds, one seed.

Does that mean anything to us? Galatians 3:16. We read now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made, and he saith not unto seeds as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ, and if he be Christ, then are ye.

Abraham's seed inherit according to promise. The 29th verse for the olive there was used in a picture of the one seed, the seed of Abraham, the spiritual seed of Abraham. This one seed is within the olive is enclosed by the meat in which is the olive oil. For this seed of Abraham, covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness. They are under the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

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They are begotten by the Holy Spirit. They are led by the Holy Spirit. The very apt choice of a fruit to picture the one seed, the true seed of Abraham.

How many seeds does a fig have? I never counted them. Did you ever notice. How did you ever notice the similarity of the fig seed to a grain of sand? Get some under your denture sometimes.

See how they feel like a grain of sand. Abraham was to have another seed also. In the sands of the seashore, and here in the fig are these seeds which represent the same seed which will be all the restitution plants in the millennial age. There are the two seeds of Abraham, the olive and the fig.

Again showing the wisdom of our heavenly Father and the selection of Lady's Proust. To picture the two classes.

John 15:1 11 we will not take time to read at all. Jesus is saying, I am the true vine. The branches.

The fruit of the vine will be for the blessing of the people. The fruit of the vines will bring the restitution blessings to the people. It will be which comes to the people, bringing them up to human perfection. The ancient worthies, who will be the visible representative, cannot give this to the people. This comes from the true vine, this life which brings them up to human perfection.

Well, that is the true vine.

Now we read in Habakkuk 3:17 and 18.

Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine. The labor of the owl shall fail, and the field shall yield no meat. The flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stall. Yet I will rejoice in the Lord. I will joy in the God of my salvation for the fig tree.

The Jewish nation has no figs on us yet. The time of figs is not yet the time for the blessings to come as a result of individual covenant with the Lord. Has not yet arrived.

There shall be no fruit of the vines. The time for the bringing life to the world of mankind from the true vines has not yet arrived.

Prophet Habakkuk here was speaking of a particular short period of time. The labor of the olives shall fail.

It wasn't yet time for the blessings to come from the Messiah. The field shall yield no meat fails the world. In the world we've had the nation of Babylon, Medo, Persia, Greece, Rome done to its papacy today we have socialism and communism. We have the labor class and the capitalistic class. The field shall yield no meat.

There's nothing in the world that can bring lasting blessings to the world of mankind. However, today we have many classes that say, well, if you would just do what I say, or if you will do what we say, we will bring utopia. We will bring blessings to everyone, and yet there are no blessings that they can bring to the world.

The flock shall be cut off from the fall, the little flock gone from this earthly fold to their heavenly fold, and there shall be no herd in the stars.

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On Psalms 51:19 we read of the time when each one shall be able to offer bullocks. You remember in Tabernacle Shadows a book for the picture of the perfect man, Jesus. At this time of which Habakkuk is speaking, There are no herds in the stall. There are no perfect men of on the earth. The ancient widows have not yet returned to the earth.

Little flock is gone. No figs in the fig tree. The ancient worthies aren't back, and yet here is a class saying, I will rejoice the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. Very similar statement in Revelation 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him.

For the marriage of the lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Yes, in this little period of time, here is the great company class remaining upon the earth. Little flock has gone to their reward. The ancient worthies aren't back.

The great company class who are there, who are going through great tribulation, have recognized the bride is gone. They have lost their place in the kingdom, they lost their crown, but they are rejoicing in the Lord, that he still loves them, that he still has a place for them on a spirit plane, and that they will be changed from this earthly plane to a spirit plane and shall serve before the throne.

Now we were going to talk about the vine and the fig tree. Now let's bring them together first. Kings 4:25 the first occurrence of these words are placed Together Judah and Israel dwelt safely every man under his vine and under his fig tree. From Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. Solomon, you remember, was an illustration of the millennial raids.

A time of peace. 40 years of peace and prosperity and plenty. No wars to make him afraid. Every man sat under his own violent victory. Zechariah 3:10 in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall he call every man his neighbor under the vine and under the fig tree.

And in Micah 4, 4, the words of our text, they shall set every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid. For the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken.

Well, this can't be a literal statement, but they are going to sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree. They aren't going to do that all through the millennial age. In Isaiah 65:21 read that they shall build houses and inhabit them. They're not going just to sit under the vine and under the fig tree. But then it must have some other meaning for it.

We see that the vine is the Christ. The fruit of that vine will be for the healing of the nations, to bring him up and give them life. As Adam enjoyed perfection of life in the Garden of Eden. Each one coming up this highway of holiness will appropriate to himself his portion of this blessing right to come up the highway of holiness.

In Micah 4, the last part of the second verse, we read that the law shall go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the capital, Palestine, the Jewish nation. The Jewish nation of the fig tree. The ancient worthies will be there, the visible representatives of the invisible king. The word of the Lord shall go forth from these ancient worthies to all mankind.

As a part of their work during the millennial age. They received their instruction in the ways of righteousness from the fig tree. The ancient worthies, having received their life from the vine, their instructions from the fig tree. Thus they set every man under his vine and under the big tree, and they look the highway of holiness, perfection.

## Ned Ranger - The Fig Tree

A time when those who love righteousness for righteousness sake, and those who hate iniquity will receive the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. There we believe that the kingdom will pass from Abraham to his seed. To Abraham will I give the land, and to his seed after him, at the end of the thousand years, Abraham's seed representing all those who love righteousness and hate iniquity, they will receive the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

Brethren, if these things be true, it shows us that the time we wish to make our calling and our election sure is very short. As we said this afternoon, Let us do with our might all that we can do to make our calling and our election sure that it is the one thing that is important to us. Nothing else is important to us except to make our calling and our election sure. May the Lord add His blessing.

Our kind, gracious, loving Heavenly Father. Again we come into Thy presence, humbly thanking Thee that thou hast been with us throughout this hour. We thank Thee for the picture of the fig tree, for the understanding of the fig tree that when it puts forth leaves we may know that the kingdom is even at the door. Help us, dear Father, to appreciate this fully. That we may even now knock upon the door.

Help us to realize that the truths which we know are more precious than they were years ago.

Help us to realize fully, dear Father, that our deliverance is near at hand. Help us to do each day as though it were to be the last day upon the earth.

Help us, dear Father, to work diligently to prepare our new mine. To keep our affections set upon the things above, upon those things which are pleasing to Thee. Help us to keep all malice and anger and hatred out of our hearts. To have our hearts full of love. Full of love for Thee, for the truth and for the brethren, for our neighbors and even for our enemies.

And we would do good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith. Now we commit ourselves to Thy care and thy keeping. We ask Thy blessing to be with all thy children who yet remain beside the veil. Thou bless each of them. Thou continually guide and direct us in Thy path.

Help us to be in Thy hand as clay in the hands of a potter, that Thou mayest mould us in the breast of the vine. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the power of the evil one, and wilt thou fill us more and more with Thy Holy Spirit? With the Spirit of love, of wisdom and of a sound mind, we ask in Jesus name, amen.