

## The Fig Tree

In this chapter I will go over the meaning of figs, fig trees, the meaning of *beit* and the account of the miracle between Matthew and Mark. First, I would like to you to the word *beit* in Arabic and Hebrew which mean house. It can be my dwelling place, my house. It is also commonly used to inform others of one's family name or the town where one comes from. Many of the names in the Bible, use the word *beit* followed by a noun. The noun can be the name of a person and it means that he is the founder or the builder of the town and it is called after him. Or it can describe what the town is known for. These names are not one word as we read them in English but they are compound names that mean "house of". Beth-lehem is the "house of bread". In Arabic it means the "house of meat" and I would like to note that while we are talking about this name that this is where the Jews would buy their animals to sacrifice in the Temple. It is very prophetic that Jesus was born in the town called the house of meat. He would be the ultimate sacrifice on the cross. This was not an accident but it was designed by our sacrificial lamb. In another place we see the name of Beth-Faggie which means "the house of figs" which means to the community that this is the town known for its fig trees. This will help us to understand one of the reasons why Jesus cursed the fig tree.

One could wonder why Jesus a man of mercy and compassion, cursed a fig tree. It is interesting to know that this is the only miracle that Jesus cursed rather than blessed or healed. It is the only one that he cursed. The fact that Jesus was coming out of two towns. Beth Faggie which means house of figs and the other one is Bethany which means the house of agony. Another word commonly used in the Bible and as you travel in the land of Israel and Palestine you will see this name written "Kafer" it is equivalent to the word village. It is similar to the word "Nahum" and the meaning is mourning as in sorrow. Most of these nouns and names have been given to the town, the place or the village for a certain reason. A town that experienced disasters would be called "Beth-Hany" and in the West we think this a positive name but it means the "house of agony". The town and the people there have experienced agonizing times. This is similar to Kafer Nahum they have experienced many deaths and this could be because the infant mortality is high in this village. We see that names are given to explain and indicate certain happenings. It is a reminder for everyone that grows up in the town must know why their ancestors chose such names. We use the term "it's a gloomy town" or a "depressing town" because after centuries of telling depressive stories, people will begin to that story.

Back to the house of Faggie, the fig tree typifies the nation of Israel. Fig trees have significant meanings as we will see in the Bible. Sometimes we see it as a place of prosperity, security or shelter. Jesus came out of the house of Faggie which is the town that produces figs and he looked at one of the fig trees and there were no figs on the tree. That means that this tree is a bad representation of the town, of the town that is known for its fruit and it doesn't have fruit. When the Bible said, "I have come to seek and I did not find." (Find Text) "I looked for a man to stand in the gap and I found none." It is interesting that the Bible said that it was not time for fruit yet. Is not that wrong of Christ to curse the tree that does not have figs in it and it is not the season of figs. In order to understand this and to know that Christ was not against the tree. Around the month of

March trees start to blossom and have leaves. But only the fig tree will have leaves and under the leaves you will find a very small sprig of fig. The job of the leaf is to protect the fig fruit from the beating sun. A tree with leaves only has no hope to produce fruit and a tree with only fruit will not make it. What Jesus saw in this town of figs, that there was a tree standing there that did not have the sign that by July and August when the fruit of the fig is fully ripe. This particular tree did not show any sign of having fruit by the end of the season. The other reason figs trees are known to give what is called "first fruit". The first fruit as farmers know it is a hand full of fruit and especially with the fig tree they ripen early as a sign that this is a good tree and it will give good fruit. We can be sure that by the month of February if a fig tree does not have two or three figs, that tree is doomed. The second point is that Jesus did not even see a sign for first fruits. I will be discussing in detail the idea of "first fruits" in the Bible. It is the first thing that you bring to the house of the Lord. It is different from product to product. We will discuss together the different names and the different products. They all have to show first fruits. All creation will produce a first fruit, a sign of healthy products. First fruits will be taken to the house of God as a sign of gratefulness to the Lord. But if there are no first fruits to be taken to the house of God, I have nothing to offer him. We have several stories in the Old Testament, when a king wanted to assure his subjects of safety and prosperity, the king would use the fig tree as a sign. (Find Text) We can put it into today's terms, "vote for me and you will live in prosperity". We see in this verse hear that the king would talk to his subjects or to other countries that they were planning to take over. The king would say that, "if you let me in, everyone of you will sit under a fig tree." Which means that they would all have enough to eat and they would have shelter because the fig tree also provides shelter. Jesus saw that the town of figs did not have figs, which mean that it could not provide food and shelter. We read of the master who told his chief farmer that this tree is not giving any fruit and it is depleting the ground so cut it down. We are read that those who do not bear fruit in the kingdom of God will be cut off. If I do not show first fruit in my life, firstly I do not have anything to offer to God or to the house of God. And I do not have anything to help my people with. We see this in a person who is very selfish, fruitlessness will lead to selfishness, coveteousness, bitterness, and eventually death. The cutting off in the Byzantine culture, people lived together in a community. A person who would be cut off from the community could not survive. When God told Moses that when any soul disobeys the commandments would be cut off not necessarily by stoning or killing but it was as message to communicate to the people not to affiliate with this person. That means that they cannot buy or sell and death will be the ultimate result.

We see that this is why the Bible typified the nation of Israel as a fig tree. So remember my friends that the fig tree typifies shelter, first fruits, prosperity, and relationship with others which means fellowship.