

## Good and Bad Figs

"One basket contained very good figs, like first-ripened figs, and the other basket contained very bad figs, so bad that they could not be eaten." Jeremiah 24:2

Using the illustration of good and bad figs, God told the people that like good figs, He would send some of them into Babylonian captivity: "Thus said the LORD, the God of Israel: As with these good figs, so will I single out for good the Judean exiles whom I have driven out from this place to the land of the Chaldeans."<sup>1</sup> But "the remnant of Jerusalem," with which He is displeased, like bad figs, suffered the fate of their king and his officials. The good figs go into captivity and the bad figs remain in the Promised Land.

You would have thought that the opposite would be true: the good figs remain in their homes and the bad figs suffer captivity. God said the opposite. You cannot tell from your circumstances whether or not God is pleased with you. As He said of Israel, "And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul."<sup>2</sup> By way of contrast, Paul said, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."<sup>3</sup>

If you look to your circumstances to determine how God deals with you, you will inevitably be led astray. Your best gauge on your relationship with God is whether you "turn to Me with all your heart."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 24:5 <sup>2</sup> Psalm 106:15 <sup>3</sup> II Timothy 3:12 <sup>4</sup> Jeremiah 24:7