



## Session 3 | Member's Packet



# Session 3 | Viewing Guide

## Israel In Prophecy: A Sign For The Last Generation

### How Can We Determine That We're In The Last Generation?

 (see 3:39) The parable of the fig tree, found in [Mark 13:28-31](#), is the \_\_\_\_\_ that tells us how we can identify the last generation.

 (see 4:13) So, what we need to know is (1) what does the fig tree \_\_\_\_\_, and (2) what does it mean when “it’s branch becomes \_\_\_\_\_ and puts out its leaves”?

### The Culmination Of All Things

 (see 13:30) All this \_\_\_\_\_ that’s going to come upon the earth – the persecution that will come upon Christians, as well as the difficult things that will come upon everyone – will serve to purge and \_\_\_\_\_ those who belong to God, and to \_\_\_\_\_ those who are enemies of God.

 (see 16:14) Those who call on the name of the Lord – those who are born of the Spirit will be a \_\_\_\_\_ that is going to be saved. But everything that has been \_\_\_\_\_ to God is going to be judged.

### What Is The Lesson From The Parable?

1. The Fig Tree = \_\_\_\_\_ (Israel)
2. The Revival Of The Fig Tree = The Re-establishment of \_\_\_\_\_  
The Revival Of The Fig Tree = The Awakening Of The \_\_\_\_\_
3. Summer = The Return Of \_\_\_\_\_

**The Two  
Jerusalems**

When the fig tree is revived → You know that \_\_\_\_\_ is near.

When \_\_\_\_\_ is re-established, along with the other signs given by Jesus →  
You know that Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ – right at the door.



## Session 3 | Weekly Assignment

### Israel In Prophecy: A Sign For The Last Generation

#### Weekly Note Card

“Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don’t know how to interpret this present time?” **Luke 12:56 (NIV)**

<b>READ YOUR BIBLE!</b>				
Click links to LISTEN to your assignment or READ ONLINE!				
<u>Day 1</u>	<u>Day 2</u>	<u>Day 3</u>	<u>Day 4</u>	<u>Day 5</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Mark 13:1-37</a>	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Matt 13:1-30</a>	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Gal 4:21-31</a>	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Rev 21:1-27</a>	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Songs 2:1-17</a>
	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Luke 13:1-9</a>	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Gal 3:23-29</a>	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">Mark 11:12-25</a>	<input type="checkbox"/> <a href="#">1 Pet 4:7-19</a>

#### How Can We Determine That We're In The Last Generation?

##### **Mark 13:28-31 (NET): Parable Of The Fig Tree**

“Learn this parable from the fig tree: Whenever its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also you, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

(see 3:39) This passage is the \_\_\_\_\_ that tells us how we can identify the last generation.

(see 3:42) “This generation will not \_\_\_\_\_ away until all these things take place.” – Which generation? The one that sees \_\_\_\_\_ of these signs come to pass – not just \_\_\_\_\_ of them. *That* generation is going to see Jesus' return.

## The Key To Understanding Jesus' Parables

An **analogy** compares the relationship between two things or ideas with the relationship between two others. A **parable** is an analogy which teaches a lesson through that comparison.

In order to understand any of Jesus' parables – including the parable of the fig tree – we must first:

- 1) Identify the **components** of the parable.
- 2) Identify what each component **represents**.
- 3) Identify the **relationship** between the components.

➔ It is in identifying the **relationship** between the components that we identify the **main lesson**, or **truth**, Jesus is conveying.

➔ We can also glean **details surrounding that truth** by examining **details about the components** found in Scripture.

🔑 The key to unlocking Jesus' parables is in allowing Jesus to define:

- 1) The **components** of the parable,
- 2) What those components **represent**, and
- 3) The **relationship** between the components.

🔑 The key to avoiding error in interpreting Jesus' parables is to refrain from human interpretations. We do this by obeying the command found throughout Scripture, which says:

📖 “Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.”  
[Proverbs 30:6 \(NIV\)](#)

 Read [Matthew 13:10-17 \(NET\)](#):

“Then the disciples came to him and said, ‘Why do you speak to them in parables?’ He replied, ‘You have been given the opportunity to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but they have not. For whoever has will be given more, and will have an abundance. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. For this reason I speak to them in parables: Although they see they do not see, and although they hear they do not hear nor do they understand. And concerning them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says:

*“You will listen carefully yet will never understand, you will look closely yet will never comprehend. For the heart of this people has become dull; they are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, so that they would not see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.”*

‘But your eyes are blessed because they see, and your ears because they hear. For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.’”

- **Understanding eludes** those who respect their own interpretations/ human words that attempt to explain what Jesus means.
- **Understanding is given** to those who simply wait for Jesus to explain what the parable means in Gods' own words. By the end of chapter 13, the disciples have learned this lesson. Instead of asking Jesus, *Why do you use parables?*, it says:

 “Then [Jesus] left the crowds and went into the house. And his disciples came to him saying, ‘**Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.**’” *(emph. added)*

If we want to understand Jesus' parables, we must look for Jesus' explanation of what that parable means. If we want to hear what God is saying, we must listen when God speaks.

Never jump to conclusions – however obvious they may seem – about what God is trying to say. God says what He means, and means what He says. When we add to His words, we do not add clarity. Instead, we inadvertently add *our* thoughts, presumptions, perspectives, and understanding to what *God* is saying. This results in confusion and error. As He says:

‘My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,’ says the LORD.  
‘And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.  
For just as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
so my ways are higher than your ways  
and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.’ [Isaiah 55:8-9 \(NLT\)](#)

## Identify The Components Of The Parable Of The Fig Tree

### Read [Mark 13:28 \(NET\)](#):

“Learn this parable from the fig tree: Whenever its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near.”

- 1) The \_\_\_\_\_ tree.
- 2) The time when the branch of the fig tree becomes \_\_\_\_\_ and puts out its \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) Summer.

## Identify What The Components Symbolize

### What Does The Fig Tree Symbolize?

### [Luke 13:1-9 \(NET\)](#):

“Now there were some present on that occasion who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. He answered them, ‘Do you think these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered these things? No, I tell you! But unless you repent, you will all perish as well! Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower in Siloam fell on them, do you think they were worse offenders than all the others who live in Jerusalem? No, I tell you! But unless you repent you will all perish as well!’ Then Jesus told this parable: ‘A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the worker who tended the vineyard, “For three years now, I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and each time I inspect it I find none. Cut it down! Why should it continue to deplete the soil?” But the worker answered him, “Sir, leave it alone this year too, until I dig around it and put fertilizer on it. Then if it bears fruit next year, very well, but if not, you can cut it down.’”

- Who were these people pointing to as the objects of God's judgment? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- Who was it that Jesus warned would be the objects of God's judgment if they did not repent? *(see vs. 4)* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.
- Jesus uses a parable to illustrate His warning. In that parable what symbol represents the object of God's judgment? \_\_\_\_\_.
- The owner of the fig tree curses it because it fails to bear \_\_\_\_\_.
- So who does the fig tree symbolize? \_\_\_\_\_.

 Read [Mark 11:12-25 \(NET\)](#).

- In vv. 12-14, what is the object of Jesus' judgment? \_\_\_\_\_.
- Jesus curses the fig tree because \_\_\_\_\_.
- Where does Jesus go in vs. 15? \_\_\_\_\_.
- In vv. 15-19, who is the object of Jesus' judgment? \_\_\_\_\_.

In this passage, we see Jesus living out His illustration from [Luke 13:1-9](#) in real life. We see from these accounts that Jesus consistently correlates Jerusalem – or Israel – with the fig tree.

We have now allowed Jesus to define our first component –

**The Fig Tree = \_\_\_\_\_ (Israel)**

### Two Jerusalems

Now that we've identified that Jesus uses the fig tree as a symbol for the people of Jerusalem, we need recognize that Scripture actually speaks of two Jerusalems.

 [Galatians 4:21-31 \(NET\)](#):

“Tell me, you who want to be under the law, do you not understand the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. But one, the son by the slave woman, was born by natural descent, while the other, the son by the free woman, was born through the promise. These things may be treated as an allegory, for these women represent two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai bearing children for slavery; this is Hagar. Now Hagar represents Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written:

***'Rejoice, O barren woman who does not bear children; break forth and shout, you who have no birth pains, because the children of the desolate woman are more numerous than those of the woman who has a husband.'*** But you, brothers and sisters, are children of the promise like Isaac. But just as at that time the one born by natural descent persecuted the one born according to the Spirit, so it is now. But what does the scripture say? ***'Throw out the slave woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman will not share the inheritance with the son'*** of the free woman. Therefore, brothers and sisters, we are not children of the slave woman but of the free woman.”

- **The present Jerusalem** bears the children of God who are born *(choose one)*:
  - of natural descent (from below).
  - of the Spirit (from above).
- The children of God born of natural descent from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – those with whom God established the covenant of the \_\_\_\_\_ on Mt. Sinai – are *(choose one)*:
  - the Jewish people.
  - the Church.
- **The children of the Jerusalem that is above** are those who are born *(choose one)*:
  - of natural descent (from below).
  - of the Spirit (from above).
- **The children of God born of the Spirit** are not born in the natural way. They're born as a result of the promise of God, and are referred to by Jesus as *(choose one)*:
  - the Jewish people.
  - the Church.

→ **The Present Jerusalem = The \_\_\_\_\_ people.**  
 → **The Jerusalem Above = The \_\_\_\_\_.**

### The Present Jerusalem

The present city of Jerusalem (Israel) referred to in **Galatians 4** includes all those who are Jewish by natural descent, but not born of the Spirit. This Jerusalem is figuratively described as Sodom and Egypt in the book of Revelation.

#### **Revelation 11:7-8 (NET):**

“When the [two witnesses] have completed their testimony, the beast that comes up from the abyss will make war on them and conquer them and kill them. Their corpses will lie in the street of the great city that is symbolically called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was also crucified.”

This gives us insight into the state of the Jewish people, and the nature of their sin. The comparison to Egypt confirms that they are still in the house of slavery, just as it says in [Galatians 4:25](#). The specific nature of their sin – the sin of Sodom – is identified in Ezekiel.

 **Exodus 20:2 (NET):**

“I, the Lord, am your God, who brought you from the land of Egypt, from the house of \_\_\_\_\_.”

 **Ezekiel 16:49-50 (NIV): Sin Of Sodom**

“Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were \_\_\_\_\_, overfed and \_\_\_\_\_; they did not help the \_\_\_\_\_ and needy. They were haughty and did detestable things before me. Therefore I did away with them as you have seen.”

## The New Jerusalem

The Jerusalem above (the Church) is described in Revelation as the New Jerusalem. This Jerusalem includes all those – both Jew and Gentile – who are born of the Spirit.

 **Galatians 3:26-29 (NET):**

“For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female – for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to the promise.”

 **Revelation 21:1-4 (NET):**

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and earth had ceased to exist, and the sea existed no more. And I saw the holy city - the new Jerusalem - descending out of heaven from God, made ready like a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying: 'Look! The residence of God is among human beings. He will live among them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death will not exist any more – or mourning, or crying, or pain, for the former things have ceased to exist.'”

 (see 12:33) When we become aware of these two Jerusalems, we can describe them the way that God did. The Bible doesn't say the Jews are not the “real” Israel. The fact is, they are – just as Ishmael was truly Abraham's \_\_\_\_\_. But Ishmael was born of a mother who was a \_\_\_\_\_, and that's what it's like for those who are established according to the covenant of the \_\_\_\_\_ – they cannot inherit that which is established according to the \_\_\_\_\_, which comes through Christ.

We have to be born again, or born of the Spirit – only then do we become a part of that New \_\_\_\_\_.

## 🔑 What Does The Revival of the Fig Tree Symbolize?

### The Revival Of Both Jerusalems

1. According to the parable in [Mark 13:28-31](#), after a long winter (sleep period), the fig tree is revived (awakened).
2. At this time, both Jerusalems are revived: one to judgment (desolation) and one to eternal life.

#### 📖 [Daniel 12:1-2 \(NET\)](#):

“At that time Michael, the great prince who watches over your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress unlike any other from the nation’s beginning up to that time. But at that time your own people, all those whose names are found written in the book, will escape. Many of those who sleep in the dusty ground will awake – some to everlasting life, and others to shame and everlasting abhorrence.”

### The Revival Of the Present City Of Jerusalem

In 1948, Israel was re-established as a sovereign nation, and from that time Jewish people have poured into Jerusalem. We can read one of the many prophetic descriptions of this revival of Jesus' proverbial “fig tree” – written hundreds of years before it happened – in the book of Zechariah:

#### 📖 [Zechariah 8:4-8 \(NET\)](#):

“Moreover, the Lord who rules over all says, ‘Old men and women will once more live in the plazas of Jerusalem, each one leaning on a cane because of advanced age. And the streets of the city will be full of boys and girls playing. And,’ says the Lord who rules over all, ‘though such a thing may seem to be difficult in the opinion of the small community of those days, will it also appear difficult to me?’ asks the Lord who rules over all. The Lord who rules over all asserts, ‘I am about to save my people from the lands of the east and the west. And I will bring them to settle within \_\_\_\_\_’. They will be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness.’”

## The Revival Of the New Jerusalem (The Church)

The Bible also contains prophecies, in both the Old and New Testaments, that describe the revival of the New Jerusalem (the Church) in the days directly proceeding the return of Christ.

Scripture tells us that Jesus is the Bridegroom, and that when He returns He will gather the Church (His Bride) to himself. But first, He has to wake her up – the “fig tree” must be revived.

### [Song Of Solomon 5:2-5 \(NIV\):](#)

“I slept but my heart was awake. Listen! My beloved is knocking:  
'Open to me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one.  
My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night.'  
I have taken off my robe – must I put it on again? I have washed my feet –  
must I soil them again? My beloved thrust his hand through the latch-opening;  
my heart began to pound for him. I arose to open for my beloved, and my hands  
dripped with myrrh, my fingers with flowing myrrh, on the handles of the bolt.”

### [Ephesians 5:14 \(NET\):](#)

“Awake, O sleeper! Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you!”

### [Matthew 25:1, 5-7, 10b \(NET\):](#)

“At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom...When the bridegroom was delayed a long time, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. But at midnight there was a shout, 'Look, the bridegroom is here! Come out to meet him.' Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps...the bridegroom arrived, and those who were ready went inside with him to the wedding banquet. Then the door was shut.”

- According to these passages, what state will the Church (Bride of Christ) be in before Jesus returns? \_\_\_\_\_.

### [Song of Solomon 2:10-13 \(NET\):](#)

“My lover spoke to me, saying: 'Arise, my darling; My beautiful one, come away with me! Look! The winter has passed, the winter rains are over and gone. The pomegranates have appeared in the land, the time for pruning and singing has come; the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree has budded, the vines have blossomed and give off their fragrance. Arise, come away my darling; my beautiful one, come away with me!'”

- In this passage, we see three things:
  - 1) The Bridegroom is rousing, or reviving, His Bride.
  - 2) The fig tree has \_\_\_\_\_.
  - 3) The time period in which the fig tree is budding is the same time period in which the bridegroom is calling the bride to come \_\_\_\_\_ with Him.
- How might this prophetic passage in Song of Solomon relate to the return of Christ, and the gathering of His people to Himself in the air? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

So, we have now allowed Jesus to define the dual meaning of our second component –

**The Revival Of The Fig Tree = The Re-establishment of Israel  
&  
The Revival Of The Fig Tree = The Awakening Of The Church**

✓ **Check Yourself**

As a member of the Body of Christ, have you heard the voice in your spirit urging you to wake up – to get up off of your comfortable bed, and go out to meet Christ?

- Yes  
 No

Have you ever found yourself dragging your feet like the bride in Song of Songs, saying “*I have taken off my robe – must I put it on again? I have washed my feet – must I soil them again?*”

- Yes  
 No

Do you feel you owe God an apology for any past attitudes? \_\_\_\_\_.

What actions do you need to take in your life in order to “wake up” and “go out to meet” Christ? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

- ➔ Take a few minutes to go to God in prayer. Make any necessary apologies, and make the commitment to go out to meet Him in obedience now.

## 🔑 What Does Summer Symbolize?

### 📖 [Mark 13:28-29 \(NET\)](#):

“Learn this parable from the fig tree: Whenever its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also you, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, right at the door.”

In Jesus' parable of the fig tree, knowing that summer is near is representative of knowing that \_\_\_\_\_ is near – right at the door.

We have now allowed Jesus to define our third component –

**Summer = The Return Of \_\_\_\_\_**

## What Is The Lesson From The Parable?

1. The Fig Tree = \_\_\_\_\_ (Israel)

2. The Revival Of The Fig Tree = The Re-establishment of Israel  
The Revival Of The Fig Tree = The Awakening Of The Church

**The Two  
Jeruselems**

3. Summer = The Return Of \_\_\_\_\_

When we understand the relationships between these components, we understand the lesson from the fig tree. Jesus states those relationships clearly:

### 📖 [Mark 13:28-29 \(NET\)](#):

“Learn this parable from the fig tree: Whenever its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also you, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, right at the door.”

So, we have now allowed Jesus to explain the parable to us by defining the relationship between the components:

**When the fig tree is revived → You know that summer is near.**

**When you see these things happening → You know that Jesus is near— right at the door.**

**When Israel is re-established, along with the other signs given by Jesus →  
You know that Jesus is near – right at the door.**

## So Which Generation Will See ALL Of These Things Fulfilled?

- **The generation that will not pass away until Jesus returns** will be the one that sees the prophesied revival of Jerusalem.
- According to [Mark 13:30](#), this is the same generation that will see ALL of these signs come to pass:
  1. The desolation of Jerusalem
  2. Suffering unlike anything that has happened from the beginning of the creation
  3. The man of lawlessness (the Anti-Christ) is revealed
  4. The man of lawlessness sets up the “abomination that causes desolation” in God’s temple
  5. The Lord destroys the man of lawlessness by the breath of his mouth and wipe him out by the manifestation of his arrival

### [Luke 21:20-22 \(NET\)](#): Jerusalem’s Desolation

“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation has come near. Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains. Those who are inside the city must depart. Those who are out in the country must not enter it, because these are days of vengeance, to fulfill all that is written.”

### [Mark 13:19 \(NET\)](#): Unequaled Suffering

“For in those days there will be suffering unlike anything that has happened from the beginning of the creation that God created until now, or ever will happen.”

### [2 Thessalonians 2:1-8 \(NET\)](#): Christ Destroys The Antichrist w/ Breath Of His Mouth

“Now regarding the arrival of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to be with him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, not to be easily shaken from your composure or disturbed by any kind of spirit or message or letter allegedly from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord is already here. Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not arrive until the rebellion comes and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. He opposes *and exalts himself above every so-called god* or object of worship, and as a result *he takes his seat* in God’s temple, displaying himself as God. Surely you recall that I used to tell you these things while I was still with you. And so you know what holds him back, so that he will be revealed in his own time. For the hidden power of lawlessness is already at work. However, the one who holds him back will do so until he is taken out of the way, and then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will destroy by the breath of his mouth and wipe out by the manifestation of his arrival.”

### [Mark 13:30-31 \(NET\)](#): This Generation Will See ALL These Things

“I tell you the truth, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”

## Conclusion:

### One Question

Again, the purpose of a sign is to give you clear direction and/or instruction. This means that a sign must necessarily be something you can *look* at – something that you can *see*.

→ Which is more easily discerned (*choose one*):

- The awakening of the Church, or
- The re-establishment of the nation of Israel?

 Read this prophecy written about the re-establishment of Israel:

 [Deuteronomy 30:1-5 \(NET\)](#):

“When you have experienced all these things, both the blessings and the curses I have set before you, you will reflect upon them in all the nations where the Lord your God has banished you. Then if you and your descendants turn to the Lord your God and obey him with your whole mind and being just as I am commanding you today, the Lord your God will reverse your captivity and have pity on you. He will turn and gather you from all the peoples among whom he has scattered you. Even if your exiles are in the most distant land, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back. Then he will bring you to the land your ancestors possessed and you also will possess it; he will do better for you and multiply you more than he did your ancestors.”

- Have you seen this prophecy – the revival of the “fig tree” – come to pass in your lifetime?
  - Yes
  - No
  
- According to Scripture, are you living in the generation that will not pass away before Jesus returns?
  - Yes
  - No