

# Jeremiah 24:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

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**One basket had very good figs, even like the figs that are first ripe**—the Hebrew *toivot me'od* (טובות מאד, very good) emphasizes exceptional quality. *Bikkurot* (בכורות, first ripe) refers to early figs, considered the choicest fruit, eagerly anticipated and highly prized (Isaiah 28:4, Hosea 9:10, Micah 7:1). First fruits belonged to God (Exodus 23:19), making this imagery particularly significant—these represent people consecrated to divine purposes.

**The other basket had very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad**—"naughty" (*ra'ot*, רעות) means evil, bad, or worthless. The repetition emphasizes absolute corruption: "could not be eaten, they were so bad." The contrast is stark and absolute—no middle category exists. This binary division anticipates Jesus' teachings on fruit-bearing (Matthew 7:17-20) and final separation (Matthew 25:31-46). The vision forces recognition that covenant community membership doesn't guarantee spiritual vitality; God discerns true condition beneath external appearances.

## Historical Context

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First-ripe figs appeared in June, before the main August harvest, and were considered delicacies. They were so valued that their arrival marked a season of celebration. Conversely, rotten figs were not merely unripe or mediocre but completely spoiled—worthless and disgusting. Jeremiah's audience would

immediately grasp the shocking nature of this vision: the exiles whom Jerusalem's residents despised as cursed were actually God's choice first fruits, while those confident in their Jerusalem residency were rotten and destined for disposal. This reversed all conventional wisdom. The temple's presence in Jerusalem, their possession of the land, and their escape from exile seemed like divine favor. Yet God saw hearts: the exiles' humiliation had broken their pride and opened them to repentance, while Jerusalem's residents hardened in self-righteousness.

## Related Passages

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**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. Why might suffering and humiliation (exile) produce "good figs" while apparent blessing (remaining in Jerusalem) produce "bad figs"?
2. How does this vision challenge the tendency to judge spiritual condition by external circumstances or religious privilege?
3. What does the impossibility of eating the bad figs teach about the finality of persistent rebellion against God's correction?

## Interlinear Text

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אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד
basket	One	even like the figs	good	had very	even like the figs
H1731	H259	H8384	H2896	H3966	H8384
אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד
that are first ripe	basket	One	even like the figs	naughty	had very
H1073	H1731	H259	H8384	H7451	H3966
אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד	אָד דַּ וְהָד וּד
which could not be eaten	they were so bad				
H3808	H398	H7455			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 5:7** (Parallel theme): For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

**Isaiah 5:4** (Parallel theme): What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

**Micah 7:1** (Parallel theme): Woe is me! for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat: my soul desired the firstripe fruit.

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