

# Luke 13:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

## Analysis

**These three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none**—The fig tree represents Israel (or any professing believer), and the three years (τρία ἔτη, tria etē) likely symbolize Jesus' public ministry. The vineyard owner's patience has been exhausted; the unfruitful tree **cumbereth the ground** (καταργεῖ, katargei—'renders useless,' 'wastes').

This parable follows Jesus' call to repentance (13:3, 5) and illustrates God's righteous impatience with fruitless religion. The fig tree wasn't merely neutral—it actively wasted soil and space that could produce fruit. Israel had enjoyed centuries of prophetic ministry and three years of the Messiah Himself, yet remained barren of righteousness. The question why cumbereth it exposes the offense of unproductive faith: it consumes resources while yielding nothing for God's kingdom.

## Historical Context

Fig trees were cultivated extensively in first-century Palestine and typically bore fruit within three years of planting. A mature tree failing to produce after this period was considered hopelessly barren. Vineyards often included fig trees planted among the vines, making efficient use of space. Jesus spoke this parable during His journey to Jerusalem (13:22), with His crucifixion approaching—Israel's

final opportunity to receive her Messiah. The 'three years' matches the duration of His public ministry (AD 27-30).

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

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

## Study Questions

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1. What 'fruit' does God specifically seek in your life, and how might you be consuming spiritual resources without producing kingdom results?
2. How does this parable challenge the assumption that religious heritage or church membership equals fruitfulness?
3. In what ways might you be 'cumbering the ground'—occupying space in God's kingdom without bearing fruit for others?

## Interlinear Text

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εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς τὸν ἀμπελουργόν Ἰδού, τρία  
said he Then unto G3588 the dresser of his vineyard Behold these three  
G2036 G1161 G4314 G289 G2400 G5140

ἔτη ἔρχομαι ζητῶν καρπὸν ἐν τῇ συκῇ ταύτῃ καὶ  
years I come seeking fruit on G3588 fig tree G3778 and  
G2094 G2064 G2212 G2590 G1722 G4808 G2532

οὐχ εὑρίσκω· ἔκκοψον αὐτήν οὐατί καὶ τὴν γῆν  
none find cut it why and G3588 the ground  
G3756 G2147 G1581 G846 G2444 G2532 G1093

καταργεῖ  
cumbereth  
G2673

## Additional Cross-References

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**Matthew 7:19** (Parallel theme): Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

**Luke 3:9** (Parallel theme): And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

**John 15:6** (Parallel theme): If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

**Exodus 32:10** (Parallel theme): Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.

**John 15:2** (Parallel theme): Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

**Leviticus 19:23** (Parallel theme): And when ye shall come into the land, and shall have planted all manner of trees for food, then ye shall count the fruit thereof as uncircumcised: three years shall it be as uncircumcised unto you: it shall not be eaten of.

**Daniel 4:14** (Parallel theme): He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches:

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