

14. This person may have the ability to control many aspects of his life and the circumstances he confronts, but what he cannot control is his tongue.
15. His behavior pattern becomes an example for James to issue his own certified condemnation which follows next, beginning with the phrase, “these things.”
16. “These things”—**ταῦτα οὗτος** (*taúta houítos*)—refer to the relentless attacks made by the sins of the tongue. This is one of the manifestations of reverse process reversionism, defined as:

**The total influence of evil and divorcement from reality. What was previously considered right is now considered to be wrong and vice versa. It is the status quo of unrestrained and perpetual sinfulness, fragmentation, and excessive cosmic involvement. Such a believer has been brainwashed by satanic propaganda.<sup>11</sup>**

17. Regardless of how a believer functions in this environment, it is condemned by James with the phrase, **οὐ χρέη** (*ou chré*): “should not.” This is followed by the present middle infinitive of **γίνομαι** (*gínomai*): “in this manner.”

**James 3:10** words that regularly proceed from the very same mouth comes praises toward God, but also execrations toward believers. Fellow believers, these things should not occur in this manner. (EXT)

**James 3:11** Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh [ **γλυκύς** (*glukús*): “sweet” (KJV) i.e., “potable” ] and bitter water? (NASB)

1. In verses 9–10, James points out the clues to identify the reversionistic believer: he speaks out of both sides of his mouth. He pays verbal homage to the Lord and Father but grants his volition the privilege to regularly chastise, belittle, accuse, and criticize a fellow believer.
2. Verse 10 once again places blame on the tongue. He uses the noun “mouth,” but what the mouth contains is the tongue which enunciates the dichotomous comments toward the Godhead and to fellow believers.
3. Beginning in verse 11, James illustrates his displeasure with believers who betray their decline into reversionism with contradictory comments. With their tongues they praise the Lord and the Father and later fellow believers.
4. James summarizes his conclusion of the behaviors presented in verses 10–11 with the critique, “These things should not occur in this manner.”

---

<sup>11</sup> See expanded definition from the visual, “Reverse-Process Reversionism,” posted with this lesson.



5. James then amplifies the obvious contradictions verses 10–11 illustrate with four indisputable examples of how they expose reversionism.
6. Verse 11 begins with the negative interrogative particle, **μήτι (mēti)**: “does” which sets up a series of questions. Its use here introduces circumstances by which one may rightly respond with only one answer.
7. These are described as “rhetorical questions” and are defined as follows:

**Rhetorical Question: A question posed for its rhetorical effect and not intended to induce or require a reply. The rhetorical question is frequently used in persuasion and in oratory. Since the answer is obvious, it makes a deeper impression on the hearer than a direct statement would.<sup>12</sup>**

8. The first of James’s four rhetorical questions is, “Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water?”
9. The noun, “fountain,” is, **πηγή (pēgē)**. It is translated not only by the word fountain but also, “cistern, spring, and well.”

**In a country where no rain falls for half of the year, springs assume an importance unknown in more favored lands. Wherever a spring exists it is very apt to be the nucleus of a village. It may furnish sufficient water to be used in irrigation, in which case the gardens surrounding the village become an oasis in the midst of the parched land. The water of the village fountain is often conveyed by a covered conduit for some distance from the source to a convenient spot in the village where an arch is built up, under which the water gushes out.<sup>13</sup>**

10. Obviously, these springs provide a water source for communities over the course of a rain-deprived area for most of the year. These water sources are always depended upon to provide clear drinking water for everyone in the area.
11. They consistently expect the spring to supply fresh water, never both fresh and bitter. Such a thing never actually happened nor was it expected to.

---

<sup>12</sup> *Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Toronto: Coles Publishing Co., 1980), s.v. “Rhetorical Question.”

<sup>13</sup> Alfred Ely Day, “Fountain,” *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), 2:1141–42.



13. Principle: It is impossible to acquire from the same fountain both sweet, or potable, and bitter water. That the tongue is able to do this is proof that the one doing so is in reverse process reversionism.
12. Consequently, the people never considered the idea that a fountain would supply both fresh and bitter water. The first rhetorical question therefore exposes the logical fallacy revealed in verses 9 and 10.

**James 3:11** Does a spring supply to a fountain both fresh [ γλυκύς (*glukús*): “sweet” (KJV) i.e., “potable” ] and bitter water? (EXT)

13. The second, third, and fourth rhetorical questions follow in:

**James 3:12** Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh. (NASB)

1. In rhetorical question number two, James asks if a fig tree can produce the fruit of an olive tree. These two trees have vastly different growing seasons and harvests.

In Palestine and other warm climates the fig yields two crops annually—an earlier one, ripe about June, growing from the “old wood,” i.e. from the midsummer sprouts of the previous year, and a second, more important one, ripe about August, which grows upon the “new wood.”

By December, fig trees in the mountainous regions of Palestine have shed all their leaves, and they remain bare until about the end of March, when they commence putting forth their tender leaf buds, and *at the same time*, in the leaf axils, appear the tiny figs.<sup>14</sup>

2. The olive trees’ growing season is quite different from the figs’:

The olive is in flower about May. The first olives mature as early as September in some places, but, in the mountain districts, the olive harvest is not till November or even December.<sup>15</sup>

(End JAS3-40. See JAS3-41 for continuation of study at p. 401.)

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., E. W. G. Masterman, “Fig, Fig-Tree,” 2:1109

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., “Olive Tree,” 3:2185.



14. James's second rhetorical question deploys his second dichotomous illustration of a fig tree producing the fruit of an olive tree. Not only is this impossible to do, but the Jewish citizens of Palestine also knew that the harvesting seasons of fig and olive trees are vastly different.
15. A fig tree's fruit is harvested in August while that of olive trees is harvested as late as November and December. This is a double dichotomy.
16. There is also a nationalistic element contained in the dichotomous question, "Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives?" It is easily discerned in Scripture that the national tree of Israel is the fig because it is the key element in the Lord's prophecy of Israel's demise in A.D. 70 and its restoration at the Second Advent.

1. Observe the Lord's reference to the fig tree in Matthew 21:19–21:

**Matthew 21:19** Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, Jesus came to it and found nothing on it except leaves; and He said to it, "No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you [ **Jewish authority to communicate doctrine is removed** ]!" And at once the fig tree withered.

2. The fig tree represents Israel and its custodianship of Scripture. This tree was full of leaves, but no figs. The fig tree produces the fruit first. The leaves emerge later which indicates the figs are ready for harvest.
3. The leaves symbolized the absence of divine viewpoint and therefore human viewpoint as taught by the scribes and others from the Talmud, known then as the "oral law."
4. The leaves therefore symbolized legalism by those who placed spiritual emphasis on works. The absence of fruit revealed their complete rejection of grace.

**Matthew 21:20** Seeing this, the disciples were amazed and asked, "How did the fig tree wither all at once?"

**v. 21** Jesus answered them, "[ ἀμήν (*amén*) ] I am telling you the truth, if you have faith, and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, the Mount of Olives, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will happen [ **prophetic of the Second Advent** ]." [ See Zechariah 14:4 ]



5. It is by faith that the fruitless fig tree and the Mount of Olives may be cast into the sea at the Second Advent. This event is the subject of the Lord's commentary in:

**Matthew 24:32** Learn this parable from the fig tree: whenever its branch [ a title of Messiah, Jesus Christ ] is about to sprout [ Second Advent ] and put on leaves [ evangelism in the Tribulation ], you know that summer is near [ Second Advent ].

**v. 33** So when you see these things, know from the experience of what you have learned that He is near, even at the door.

**v. 34** "I am telling you the truth, the Jewish race will not pass away until all these things take place [ Second Advent ].

**v. 35** "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away."

6. The withered fig in Matthew 21:19 revealed that the nation Israel was in reversionism. Its duty was to evangelize the lost and teach doctrine to the saved. The Messiah was in town and lived in the region, yet those responsible for evangelism still clung to a fruitless fig tree.
7. The reason client nations all have their habitual journeys is because they cannot maintain the discipline to study the immutable Word of God, grow in grace, and stand fast.
8. In addition, the church is to support, maintain, and supply missionaries either to the lost of the client nation or those whose volition might be challenged about Christ in foreign countries.
9. I submit that the loss of thought in the United States is rapidly transforming it into a fruitless fig tree. Doctrine is being taught by many, but positive response diminishes year by year.
10. And about this trend I have this to say: Because of the failure of the church in general, because of the Luciferian strategy in the nation's schools, the prospects for the survival of this client nation are in grave danger.
11. I recently observed my thirty-fifth year as pastor of this church. As we now move through our thirty-sixth year, this congregation should be dominated by adults who were children born during the first 10 to 15 years of this ministry and beyond.



12. What is the reason? I do not cast total aspersions upon them. A person who has been propagandized by the lie from grade school through university is the victim of a corrupt and evil generation.
13. Regardless of the negative social, political, and theological impacts on the souls of this nation's population, the Word of God remains alive and powerful.
14. In many ways, the United States is devolving into a state that the Lord described regarding Israel in Matthew 21:19 as a fruitless fig tree.
15. In James 3:12, James asks the question, "Can a fig tree produce olives?" How do olives get into this discussion? Just as Israel is depicted as a fig tree, the Greeks are identified with the olive which was the national tree of that country.
16. Although the olive has historically been a prominent tree in Palestine, it was and remains the same in Greece which is today famous for its olives and olive oil.
17. Whereas the fig is symbolic of Israel, in the first century, the olive was emblematic of Greece. The Jews were the center of the worship of the singular Elohim while the Greeks worshiped at numerous sanctuaries throughout the nation:  
**Three great centers of Greek religion: Olympia, in Élis, as the chief sanctuary of Zeus; Délyphī, in Phósis, as the oracular seat of Apollo; and Eleúsis, in Attica, as the pilgrim-shrine to which all Greeks resorted who would be initiated in the mysteries of Deméter and Cora.<sup>1</sup>**
18. With this question, James is forcing the Jews to recognize national reversionism. They are the race that is given the challenge of taking the Word of God not only to their family and fellow residents of Jerusalem but also to the world.
19. How can they do this if their personal fig tree is empty of doctrine? Their inventory of truth is barren. Can a barren fig tree produce olives?
20. Then, "Consider this," he implies, "Can Jewish parents produce Greek children? No, of course not. But Jews are able to produce children who do not know the Lord.

---

<sup>1</sup> William Arthur Heidel, "Greece," in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, gen. ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), 2:1297.



21. The third dichotomy which follows in verse 12 reads, “(can a) vine produce figs?” The word “vine” is the noun, ἄμπελος (*ámpelos*) and it primarily refers to grapes whose harvest is considered a sign of prosperity.
22. The topography of Palestine is conducive to the construction of vineyards:

The mountain regions of Judaea and Samaria, often little suited to cereals, have always proved highly adapted to vine culture. The stones must first be gathered out and utilized for the construction of a protecting wall or of terraces or as the bases of towers (Isaiah 5:2; Matthew 21:33). As a rule the vine-stocks lie along the ground, many of the fruit-bearing branches falling over the terraces (cf., Genesis 49:22).

The cultivation of the vine requires constant care or the fruit will very soon degenerate. After the rains the loosely made walls require to have breaches repaired; in the early spring the plants must be pruned by cutting off dead and fruitless branches which are gathered and burned. As the grapes ripen they must be watched to keep off jackals and foxes.

Figurative: Every man “under his vine and under his fig-tree” was a sign of national peace and prosperity.<sup>2</sup> To plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof implied long and settled habitation; to plant and not eat the fruit was a misfortune and might be a sign of God’s displeasure. A successful and prolonged vintage showed God’s blessing.<sup>3</sup>

### The Prophecy Related to the Vine and Fig Tree

1. In the devil’s world, personal property is always vulnerable to numerous challenges both human and environmental. Possessions of worth or value are subject to theft by unscrupulous predators or thieves or by nature itself.

---

<sup>2</sup> This quoted phrase has millennial implications of the peace and prosperity typical of the dispensation as the following excerpts demonstrate.

<sup>3</sup> E. W. G. Masterman, “Vine: Its Cultivation,” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), 4:3050-51.

