

WEEK 19: MARK 13 - JESUS PREDICTS THE END TIMES

HIGH SCHOOL

GOAL

To develop a better understanding of Mark 13

LESSON

Materials Needed: Orthodox Study Bible

Extended Learning Opportunities:

The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel According to St. Mark pages 109-116

The Gospel of Mark the Suffering Servant by Fr. Lawrence Farley pages 205-220

In the Footsteps of Jesus Episode 1: Herod's Temple in Jerusalem - YouTube (4 min)

<https://youtu.be/sZCEWE7ioUM>

GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 13

Read verses 1-2 and then discuss:

Jesus tells these four disciples about the impending destruction of the Temple, which occurs in 70 A.D by the hands of the Roman Army. Today, only the retaining walls of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem remains. Of the four retaining walls, the Western Wall is the side of devoted pilgrimage by Jews because it is the closest wall to where the Holy of Holies once stood. This was a sacred part of the Jewish Temple that was only accessed by the High Priest once a year.

There were two Temples built in the same location, which is believed to be the location where Abraham was going to sacrifice his son, Isaac. The first was built by King Solomon. It was destroyed by the Babylonians and then rebuilt by King Herod the Great.

The first Temple had been the home of the Ark of the Covenant. This was an elaborately decorated box which contained the stone tablets of the 10 Commandments. It contained the uncontainable Word of God.

The second Temple housed the Theotokos, who contained the uncontainable, Jesus, in her womb. She was the true Holy of Holies.



The Western Wall in Jerusalem

By Golasso - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=12647724>

Verses 3-13:

Jesus explains to His disciples that the Temple will be destroyed. They find this hard to believe and ask for Jesus to give them a sign of when this will happen so they can prepare themselves for the End. The destruction of the Jewish Temple was a separate event from the end of the world. The disciples thought they were one in the same event and Jesus clarifies that they are different ones. Less than 40 years after this conversation with Jesus, the Roman Empire completely destroys the Jewish Temple and it is never rebuilt again.

Jesus also tells His disciples that they will be apostles to all nations - preach about God - and will be persecuted because of it. "But he who endures to the end shall be saved."

Verses 14-23:

The "abomination of desolation" is the destruction of Jerusalem. St. Mark makes a side note - a reminder really - "let the reader understand", that this was prophesied by Daniel

the prophet and the time is coming. It would have been seen as treasonous at this point in time to say that Rome would destroy Jerusalem, so he warns as many Christians as possible in the way that he could.

Jesus tells them to leave everything behind when the destruction of Jerusalem is at hand - don't go back for clothes you left on the ground, don't go back to your house...just leave Jerusalem.

Verses 24-27:

Here Jesus separates the destruction of Jerusalem from the end of the world. "After the tribulation" is the the hardship that Jerusalem went through - famine, war, earthquakes. "Then" means - in the future, after the destruction of Jerusalem. There isn't a specific time given for the Second Coming of Christ.

How all the earth will see the Son of Man coming in heavenly glory is not explained, nor can it be. The Second Coming is, by definition, the event by which this age, which we can see and imagine, becomes the age to come, which we cannot imagine. St. Peter would later write that on that day 'the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat,' giving way to 'a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells' (2 Peter 3:10, 13). When all reality as we know it is dissolved and transformed into the more enduring realities filled with the Presence of God, we will know the answer to such questions. The Lord does not speak of His final Coming to tantalize our curiosity, like one showing the preview scenes of a movie. Rather, He speaks to assure His disciples that He will indeed return and that there is no danger of them missing it. - Fr. Lawrence Farley, pages 215-216

Verses 28-31:

Just as when the fig tree puts out leaves, immediately it is summer, so too the oppression of the Antichrist will be followed immediately by the second coming of Christ, with nothing else intervening.
- St. Theophylact, page 114

Verses 32-37:

The day and time of the Second Coming of Christ is not provided to us, for our own benefit. We all want to know when that will happen but it would be unhealthy for us to dwell on it once we knew about it. Therefore, we always strive to prepare ourselves to be ready not only for our potential own death, but also for the Second Coming of Christ through confession, fasting, receiving Holy Communion, and always working towards theosis.

REVIEW:

- Where was the Jewish Temple located?
- What was special about the first Jewish Temple?
- What was special about the second Jewish Temple?
- When was the second Jewish Temple destroyed? Was it ever rebuilt?
- What feast day do we celebrate on November 21st? What is it about? How does it relate to us as Orthodox Christians today?
- Do we know when the Second Coming of Christ will occur?

WEEK 19: MARK 13 - JESUS PREDICTS THE END TIMES

MIDDLE SCHOOL

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There were two Temples built in the same location, which is believed to be the location where Abraham was going to sacrifice his son, Isaac. The first was built by King Solomon. It was destroyed by the Babylonians and then rebuilt by several kings thereafter. Herod the Great renovated and expanded the Temple during his reign as king.

The first Temple had been the home of the Ark of the Covenant. This was an elaborately decorated box which contained the stone tablets of the 10 Commandments. It contained the uncontainable Word of God.

The second Temple housed the Theotokos, who contained the uncontainable, Jesus, in her womb. She was the true Holy of Holies. We celebrate her Presentation into the Temple every year on November 21st. We also celebrate when the Archangel Gabriel told the Theotokos she was pregnant with Jesus on March 25th every year. Both of these are major feast days for us as Orthodox Christians.

We bring our babies to church when they are 40 days old to be blessed in imitation of the the Theotokos and Christ being presented to the Temple. Our priest will say special prayers starting in the narthex and walk the baby, followed by the parents, to the altar at the front of the church.

Verses 3-13:

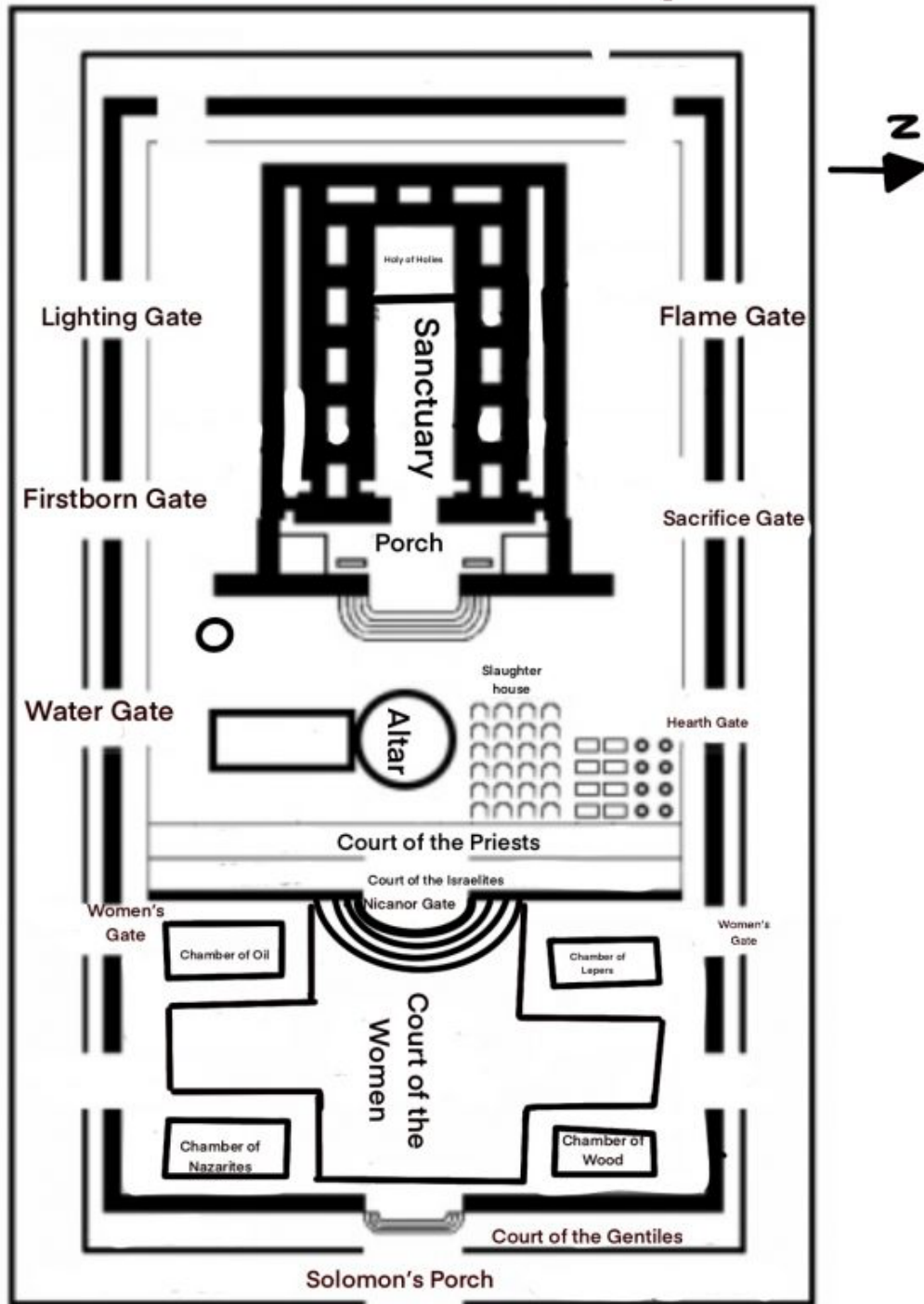
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Jesus also tells His disciples that they will be apostles to all nations - preach about God - and will be persecuted because of it. "But he who endures to the end shall be saved."

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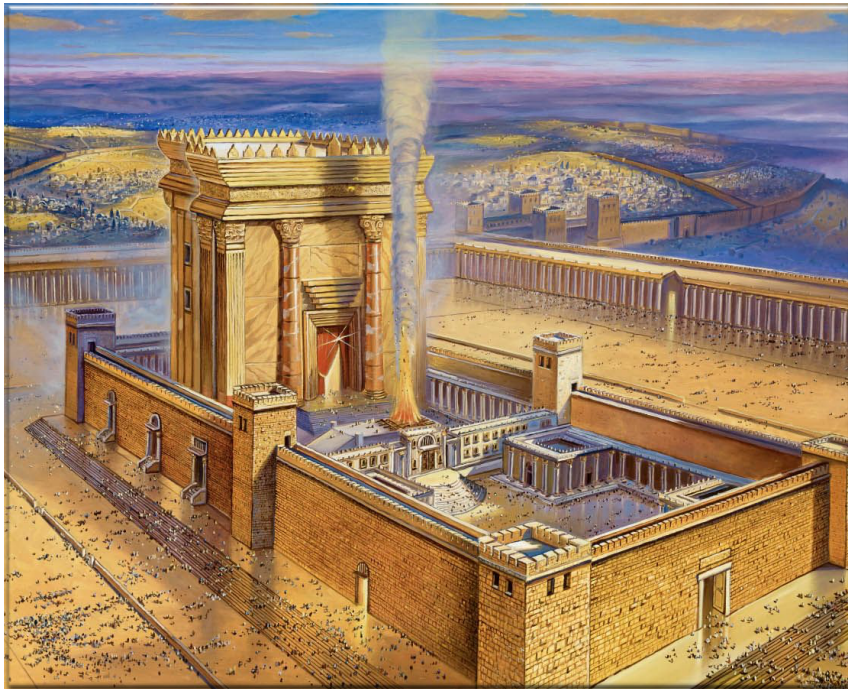
Simple Diagram of Jerusalem's Temple





FIRST JEWISH TEMPLE:

- Built by King Solomon
- Housed the Ark of the Covenant (stone tablets of 10 Commandments) - the uncontainable Word of God



SECOND JEWISH TEMPLE:

- Built by subsequent kings; renovated & expanded by King Herod the Great
- Housed the Theotokos, who contained the uncontainable Word of God, Jesus



All that remains of the Temple in Jerusalem are the retaining walls on the Temple Mount. Jews will make pilgrimages to the Western Wall because it is the closest side to where the Holy of Holies once stood. This was the most sacred part of the Temple.

Both the Theotokos and Jesus were presented at the Temple as children for a blessing. These are major feast days for us as Orthodox Christians - on November 21st (Theotokos) and February 2nd (Jesus).

In imitation of them, we bring our babies to church when they are 40 days old for a blessing.

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3RD - 4TH GRADE

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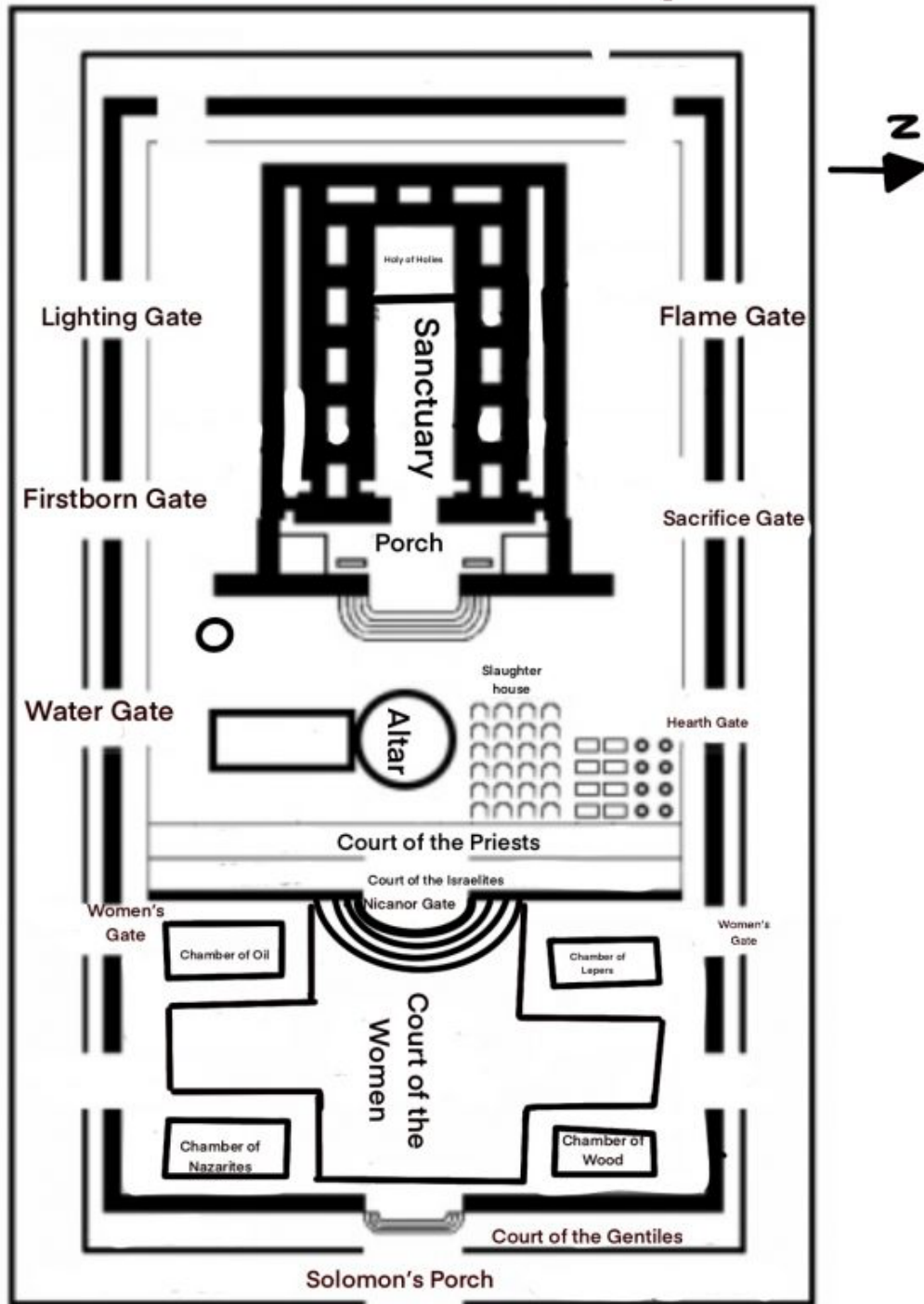
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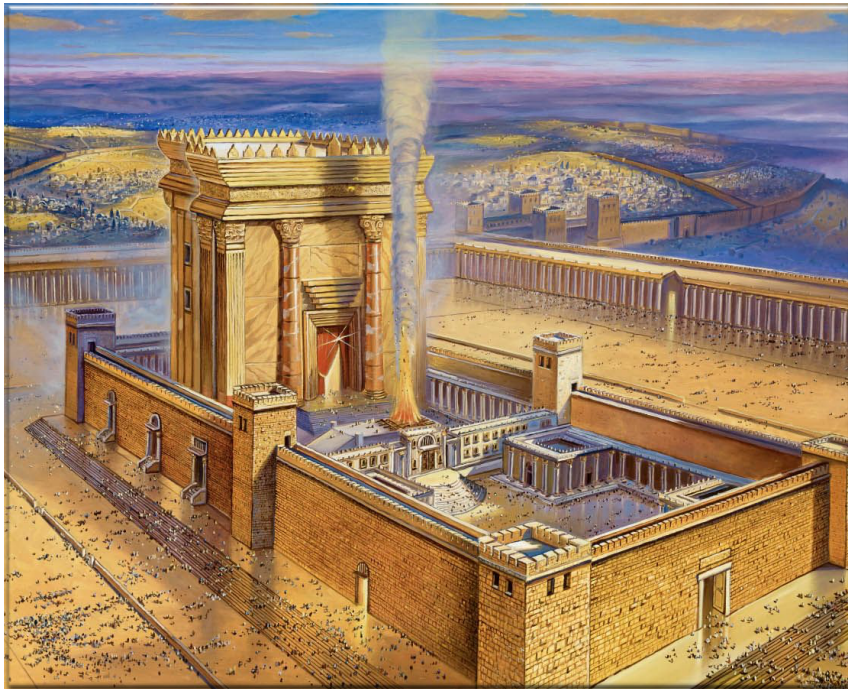
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1ST - 2ND GRADE

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GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 13

Jesus uses stories, called parables, to explain things that are sometimes hard for us to understand. There are two times when Jesus uses a story about a fig tree to explain something to his disciples in the Gospel of Mark. (Mark 11 & 13)

Have you ever seen a fig tree? Have you ever tasted a fig? We're going to learn more about this tree and its fruit today!

Do you remember learning about the four seasons? What are they?

The fig tree likes warm weather and its leaves start to bud (or grow) just as summer begins.

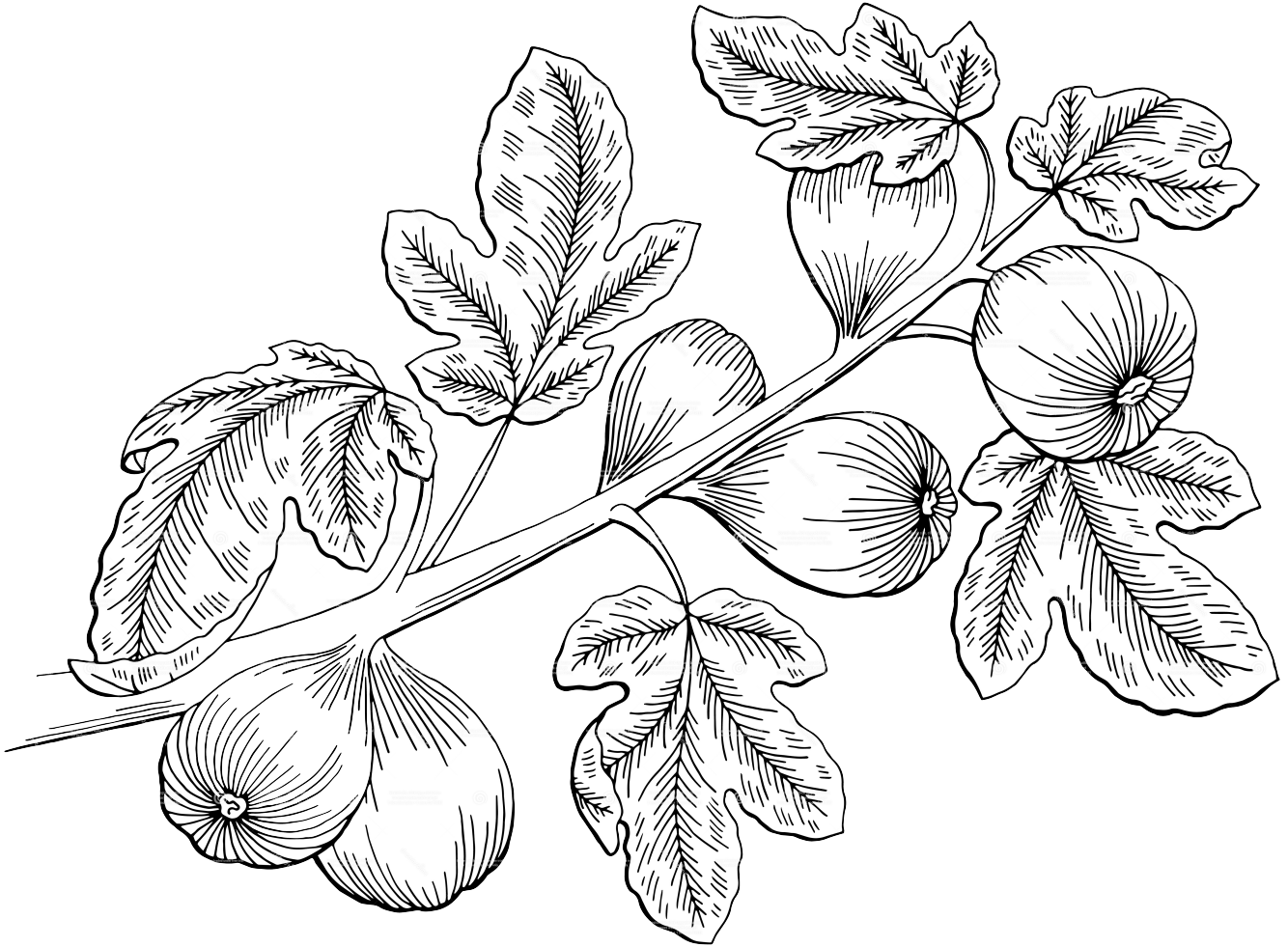
Offer a dried fig to each child to hold. Encourage them to open it up with their fingers and see all the seeds inside of it.

Figs have a lot of seeds but they are sweet and tasty! *Encourage your kids to take a bite and see what a fig tastes like.*

REVIEW:

- What is a parable? (It's a story Jesus told to help explain something that is hard for us to understand.)
- When do fig tree leaves start to grow? (When it's summer!)

FIG TREE BRANCH



Jesus tells us some parables using a fig tree in the Gospel of Mark. A parable is a short story that teaches us a lesson.

A SMALL FIG TREE



Fig trees can get big! The leaves start to grow at the beginning of summer.

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PRE-K - KINDERGARTEN

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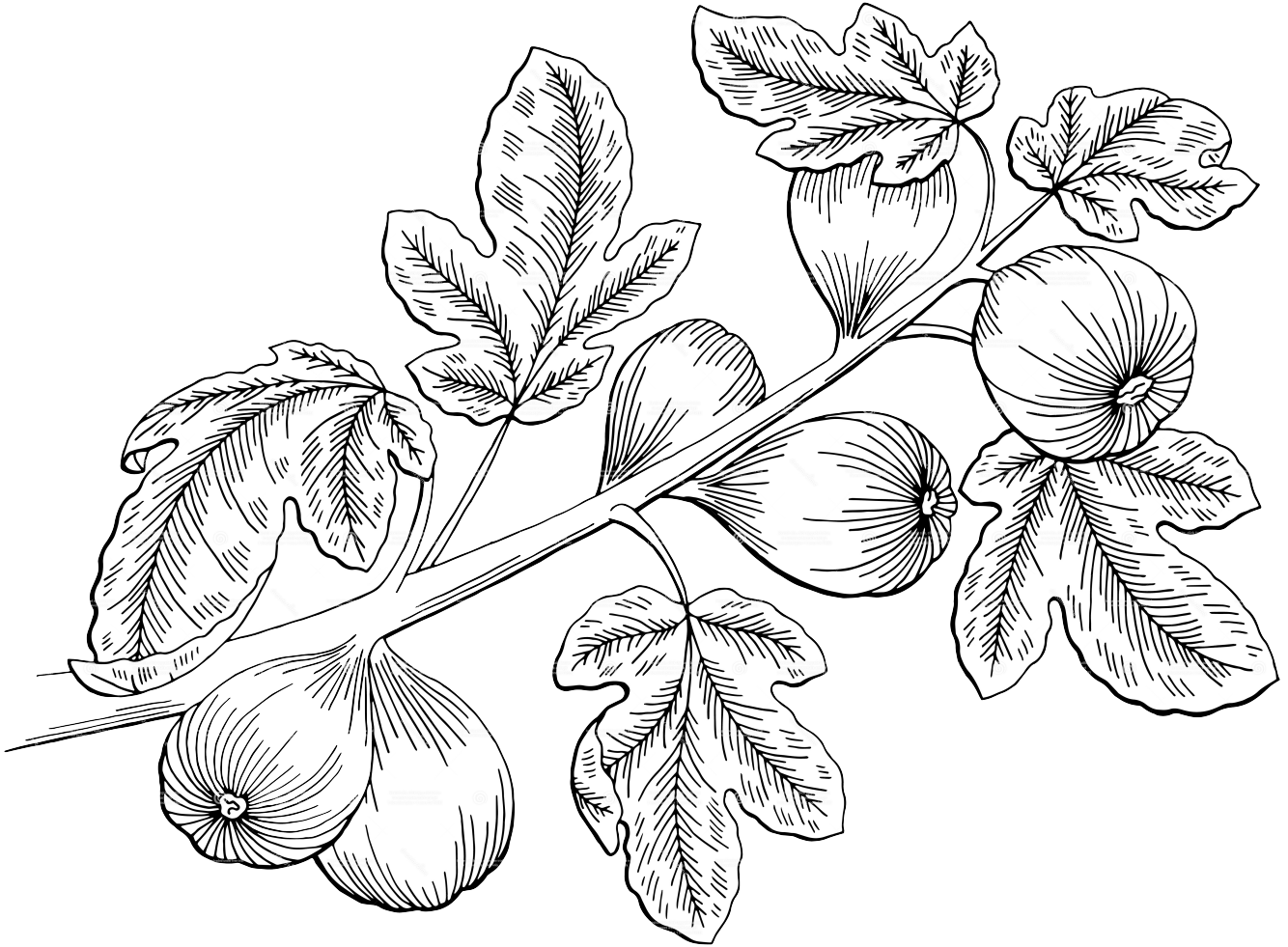
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