

Fig Tree

By

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In biblical scripture, the fig tree is depicted in scripture as natural, reasonable and ultimately at variance with the designs of our Lord.

The imagery of the fig tree is not represented in either the tabernacle of Moses or the temple of Solomon. The palm tree, olive and cedar trees do have their representations but the fig tree is no where to be found. When you do find it usually it is on the other side of judgment.

The figs are a product of a system that the Lord hates. The tree (system) that produces them is portrayed biblically in a very negative light.

Gen 3:1-8

3:1 Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

A correlation in typology can be made between the tree of knowledge and the fig leaves used as aprons. (I have always wondered where Adam took the leaves from.)

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil in lay man's thinking for years has been depicted as an apple tree.

The Lord continually speaks to us in scripture in symbolic terms. Digging up the biblical imagery makes the task relatively easy.

The questions I have asked are :

1. What types do the tree of the knowledge of good and evil have for us throughout scripture?
2. If the fig tree is the source of the aprons worn by Adam and Eve how can I make a correlation between the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the fig tree?
3. How does the fig tree represent itself in the new and old testaments.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

This tree is only mentioned one time in scripture.

I believe it is actually referred to many times throughout in a type. It illustrates the law and man's futile effort to work his way back to God.

Before the fall, Adam was not familiar with the concepts of knowing good and evil.

Before this knowledge there was sweet fellowship with the Lord. Thus a curse was associated with this knowledge.

Gal 3:10

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the CURSE: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

The tree of knowledge is associated with the knowledge of sin. Just knowing the difference between good and evil will not justify or save anyone.

A correlation begins to emerge between this tree that brought curses to mankind and his useless attempt to justify or cover his guilt with the leaves of a fig tree.

The knowledge of sin brought guilt and shame to Adam. Quickly he tries to restore himself with a useless attempt and he fails. What can we learn from this earliest attempt at self justification?

Rom 3:20

20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin

Many have never really learned the lesson of the fig leaves. Self righteousness plagued a number of major figures in the bible. Religion and human reasoning always seem to serve us well when we are deep in our own will.

Rom 7:7-9

7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, **I had not known sin, but by the law:** for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

Before Adam's encounter with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he was dead to sin. This tree in biblical imagery emerges to teach that its fruit destroys mans relationship with God.

9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

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The fruit of this tree is viewed symbolically throughout scripture in the negative. In Jeremiah we see clear identification of Israel and the fruit of the fig tree.

The Lord describes the people of Israel "naughty figs".

Jer 24:1-25:1

24:1 The LORD shewed me, and, behold, two baskets of figs were set before the temple of the LORD, after that Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, and the princes of Judah, with the carpenters and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon.

2 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.

3 Then said the LORD unto me, What seest thou, Jeremiah? And I said, Figs; the good figs, very good; and the evil, very evil, that cannot be eaten, they are so evil

The fig tree represents a system that produced everything that God hated.

Its fruit was to be cursed.

Matt 21:17-21

17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

19 And when he saw a tree fig in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.

20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

Jesus was at the end of his ministry and all the indicators of final judgement were replete throughout his preaching. He was going to put an end to a system that opposed

everything that was good and holy.

Natural Israel was to experience the greatest judgment known to mankind

And Jesus said:

Mark 13:28-31

28 Now learn a parable of **the fig tree**; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near:

29 So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors.

30 Verily I say unto you, that **this generation** shall not pass, till all these things be done.

Reference after reference is made to this fig tree but to no avail. God was about to judge the fig tree (natural Israel)

Luke 13:6-9

6 He spake also this parable; A certain man had a **fig tree** planted in his vineyard; and he came and **sought fruit thereon**, and found none.

7 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?

8 And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it:

9 And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.

Rev 6:12-14

12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, **even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.**

14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

The curse that follows the fig tree is subtly referred to in James.

James 3:10-13

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

12 Can **the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries**? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

The fig tree (the Law, natural Israel) is not compatible with the olive tree

(spiritual Israel). It could never produce salvation or restore the broken relationship between God and man. He had to destroy one so that the other could thrive and produce a great revival. The Law in and of itself could not bring perfection (maturity)

Gal 3:1-3

3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

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Revival came when Jesus called men out of the darkness of dead religion. We see Jesus calling good men out of that system when he finds Nathanael under the shade of a fig tree.

John 1:45-51

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, ***when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.***

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.