

Fig Tree

Lange on Lk. 21.29-32. Perhaps our Lord speaks here especially of a fig-tree, because this had served Him so frequently as a type of the Israelitish people, Mark 11.12-14; Lk. 13.6-9. But that He here also speaks of that symbolical fig-tree, in other words, that He designates the reviving Israel as a prophet of His near approach (Stier), appears to us quite as unproved as that the Lord means to allude to the amarum and veneratum quiddam in the sap of the fig-leaves, and adduces the incrementa malignitatis, as presages of His coming (Ebrard). In both cases the mention ~~of~~ at least of all the trees would be quite incongruous, and we therefore consider it as better to assume that He spoke so especially of the fig tree because He wished to designate it as a special kind of tree, in distinction from the others.

Lange on Lk. 13.6-7 If we assume the fig-tree as the symbol of Israel (Hosea 9.10; Mat. 21.19), the vineyard could then only designate the whole world, in which these people had been planted as an entirely peculiar phenomenon.

Lange on Mt.21.19 Origen, Chrysostom, and the moderns generally ((explain the fig tree)) as a prophetic symbolic representation of the doom upon the spiritual unfruitfulness of Israel. Lange notes that Trench calls attention to the fact that the only times that the fig-tree appears prominently in the NT it appears as a symbol of evil; here and at Lk. 13.6. According to an old tradition, it was the tree of temptation in Paradise. . . Adam attempted to cover his . . . shame with fig-leaves, and to assume a false appearance before the Lord.

That Jesus had in view the spiritual condition of His people as figured by this tree, is plain from the parable, Lk. 13.6. Yet Israel was, in God's purpose, the early fig-tree among the nations, Hos. 9.10.

Plummer on Luke 13.6-9 The fig tree, as in Mk. 11.13, is the Jewish nation, but also any individual soul. Comp. Hos. 9.10; Joel 1.7. It is arbitrary to assert that the withering of the barren fig tree in Mt. 21 and Mk 11 is a transformation of this parable into a fact, or that the supposed fact has ^{here} been wisely turned into a parable.