

The Parable of the Fig Tree



Matthew 24.32-35

- And from the fig tree learn the parable; when already the branch of it has become tender and the leaves are sprouting, you know that the summer is near; thus also you, when you saw all these, know that he/it is near at the doors/gates. Truly I say to you that this generation surely will not pass away until all this happens. The heaven and the earth will pass away, but my words shall not pass away, but concerning that day and hour no one has known, and not the angels of heaven nor the son, if not the father alone.

Mark 13.28-33

- And from the fig tree learn the parable; when already the branch of it became tender and puts forth the leaves, you know that the summer is near; so also you, when you see these happen, know that it/he is near at the doors/gates. Truly I say to you that this generation will surely not pass away until where/whither these all happen. The heavens and the earth will pass away, but my words will surely never pass away.

Luke 21.29-33

- And he told a parable to them; see the fig tree and all the trees; when they already put out, while seeing for yourself you know that already the summer is near; thus also you, when you see these after having happened, know that near is the kingdom of God. Truly I say to you that surely never shall this generation pass away until all occurred. The heaven and the earth will pass away, but my words will surely never pass away.

Matt and Mark

- 32 Apo de thj/sukh/maqete thn parabolh/otan hdh o kladoj auth/genhtai apal o j kai ta ful la ekfuh ginwskete oti egguj to qeroj
- 33 outwj kai umej/otan idhte panta tauta ginwskete oti egguj estin epi quraj
- 34 amhn legw umih oti ou mh parelqh h genea auth ewjan panta tauta genhtai
- 35 o ouranoj kai h gh/parelusetai oi de logoi mou ou mh parelqwsin
- 36 Peri de thj/hmeraj ekeinhj kai wraj oudej oiden oude oi aggel oi tw n ouranw/oude o ui ojei mh o pathr.
- 28 Apo de thj/sukh/maqete thn parabolh/otan hdh o kladoj auth/apal o j genhtai kai ekfuh ta ful la ginwskete oti egguj to qeroj estin
- 29 outwj kai umej/otan idhte tauta ginomena ginwskete oti egguj estin epi quraj
- 30 Amhn legw umih oti ou mh parelqh h genea auth mecrij ou tauta panta genhtai
- 31 o ouranoj kai h gh/parelusetai oi de logoi mou ou mh parelusetai
- 32 Peri de thj/hmeraj ekeinhj h' thj wraj oudej oiden oude oi aggel oi en ouranw/oude o ui ojei mh o pathr.

Mark and Luke

- 28 Apo de thj/sukh/maqete thn parabolh/otan hdh o kladoj auth/apal o j genhtai kai ekfuh ta ful la ginwskete oti egguj to qeroj estin
- 29 outwj kai umej/otan idhte tauta ginomena ginwskete oti egguj estin epi quraj
- 30 Amhn legw umih oti ou mh parelqh h genea auth mecrij ou tauta panta genhtai
- 31 o ouranoj kai h gh/parelusetai oi de logoi mou ou mh parelusetai
- 32 Peri de thj/hmeraj ekeinhj h' thj wraj oudej oiden oude oi aggel oi en ouranw/oude o ui ojei mh o pathr.
- 29 Kai eipen parabolh n autoij idete thn sukhh kai panta ta dendral
- 30 otan probalwsin hdh bleponte af eautw h ginwskete oti hdh egguj to qeroj estin
- 31 outwj kai umej/otan idhte tauta ginomena ginwskete oti egguj estin h basileia tou/qeou
- 32 amhn legw umih oti ou mh parelqh h genea auth ewjan panta genhtai
- 33 o ouranoj kai h gh/parelusetai oi de logoi mou ou mh parelusetai

Budding fig tree in Matt

- *Instruction on the Mt. of Olives*
- Signs of the end of the age
- Persecution foretold
- Desolating sacrilege
- Coming of the Son of Man
- Fig Tree
- Necessity for Watchfulness
- Faithful and unfaithful slave

Budding fig tree in Mark

- Widows offering
- Destruction of temple foretold
- Persecution foretold
- Desolating sacrilege
- Coming of the Son of Man
- Fig tree
- Necessity for watchfulness
- Plot to kill Jesus

Budding fig tree in Luke

- Widows offering
- Destruction of temple foretold
- Destruction of Jerusalem foretold
 - Fig tree
- Coming of the Son of Man
- Plot to kill Jesus

Other occurrences of fig trees sukhj

- Mt 21.19-21, Mk 11.13, 20-21, Lk 13.6-7
 - Cursed fig tree
- Gen 3.7
 - Adam and Eve clothes
- Micah 4:4
 - “but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.”

Branches **kladoj**

- Mt 13.32, Mk 4.32, Luke 13.19
 - mustard seed grows
- Mt 21.28, Mk 11.8
 - Palm branches

Tender **apaloj**

- No other

Leaves fulla

- Mt 21.19, Mk 11.3
 - Cursed fig tree

Puts forth ekfuh

- No other

Near egguj

- Mt 3.2, 4.17
 - repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand
- Mt 10.7
 - preach as the koh is at hand
- Mt 26.18
 - Passover – my time is at hand
- Lk 19.11
 - near to Jerusalem

Summer qeroj

- **Isaiah 28:4** And the fading flower of its glorious beauty, which is on the head of those bloated with rich food, will be like a first-ripe fig before the summer; whoever sees it, eats it up as soon as it comes to hand.
- **Isaiah 18:6** They shall all be left to the birds of prey of the mountains and to the animals of the earth. And the birds of prey will summer on them, and all the animals of the earth will winter on them.

Door qura

- Mt 6.6
 - Shut the door to pray
- Mt 25.10
 - Door shut on the bridesmaids
- Mt 27.6, 28.2
 - Stone to the door of the tomb

Door qura

- Mk 1.33
 - Simon's house
- Mk 2.2
 - heal a paralytic
- Mk 11.4
 - colt tied
- Mk 15.46, Mk16.3
 - door of the tomb

Door qura

- Lk 11.7
 - Door has already been locked
- Lk 13.24-25
 - Narrow door

Door in Old Testament

- In Exodus associated with the tabernacle
 - Place to talk to God
 - Place for offering
 - Place for consecration

Fig Tree *Ficus carica* Facts

- 2 crops/year
- Dried figs used for food on long journeys through the desert.
- Pollination by wasp (*Blastophaga psenes*)
- Male and Female trees
- First crop one year after plant becomes woody

- Last tree to produce leaves in the spring – beginning of summer.
- Lives up to 200 years
- Many branches
- Valued for shade and use in poultice

Capon

- ...the apocalyptic end events are not just warm-up acts for a coming of Christ that will supersede them, but that very coming itself, under the form of death. (480)

Capon

- The Word did not “show up” in a world from which he was previously absent; he was here all along.
- ...the incarnate Word is present, now and always, in the world’s mortality (480)

Capon

- “The summer is at hand; we don’t have to do anything but believe it. We will all get a gorgeous tan in the due season; all we have to do now is be sure we can find the bikini of faith – the light, free and easy postage stamp size garment of acceptance of his acceptance – that will expose us to as much of the Sun as possible.” (483)

Clementine Apocalypse of Peter

– Parable of the Fig Tree – E2

“Shoots of the fig tree are those righteous men called, who become martyrs by his hand, and the angels will bring them joy, and no hair on their head will be lost.”

Apocalypse of Peter

- E2
 - And ye, receive ye the parable of the fig-tree thereon; as soon as its shoots have gone forth and its boughs have sprouted the end of the world will come...
 - Verily, I say unto you, when its boughs have sprouted at the end, then shall deceiving Christs come, and awaken hope...
 - Dated after 80AD

Apocalypse of Peter

- Summer – the end of the world
- Fig tree – Israel
- Shoots that bear fruit – Jews who become Christian and bear martyrdom

Hippolytus

- Fig tree – world
- Branches and leaves – miraculous signs given by the Antichrist
- Summer – fruits are harvested, end of the world

Tertullian

- Buds that precede summer – conflicts in the world that precede the coming of the kingdom

Word play Amos 8.1-2

- Summer=End
- Hebrew:
 - Summer - קיץ
 - End - קץ

“This Generation” Neil Nelson

- “...a kind of people characterized by Matthew as unbelieving and headed toward eschatological judgment”

Nelson - disciples

- Understand the words and mission of Jesus (Bornkamm/Barth)
- Imperceptive and deficient in their thinking
 - conflict between the evaluative point of view of the disciples and that of Jesus increases throughout the narrative until it reaches great intensity in the last 1/3 of the gospel. (Kingsbury)

- View is self-concern, opposite of servanthood (Kingsbury)
- How well could have the disciples understood Jesus’ second coming if they did not understand the purpose and necessity of his death and resurrection? (Nelson)

Nelson – this generation

- Sign seeking is discouraged in the gospel
- Sign is Christ himself
- Time to be watchful, ready, loyally endure opposition, preach the gospel, be faithful and merciful in ministry.

This generation reflection

- Gen 7.1
 - Noah not part of “this generation”
- Exodus
 - Wilderness wandering – Moses not part of “this generation”
- Ps 12.8
 - “godly do not belong to this generation, though they live among them”

Parousia and “this generation”

- “...the unrepentant, faithless and wicked people who are alive when the Son of Man comes will be taken in judgment and shut out of the kingdom”
- “...one that rejects Jesus and his messengers, is blind to the signs of his coming, remains unrepentant, and faces eschatological judgment”

This generation

- Not the contemporaries of Christ
- Not Israel as a race
- Not the generation of the end times
- They are the evil class of people who reject Christ and his disciples up until the day he returns.

Augsburg Confession

- XVII Concerning the Return of Christ to Judgment
 - “It is also taught that our Lord Jesus Christ will return on the last Day to judge, to raise all the dead, to give eternal life and eternal joy to those who believe and are elect, but to condemn the ungodly and the devils to hell and eternal punishment. Rejected, therefore, are the Anabaptists who teach that the devils and condemned human beings will not suffer eternal torture and torment...”

Christian Dogmatics

- What about the universalist thrust in the Pauline theology? As in Adam all men die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive (1C15.22) For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross (Col 1:19-20) (p564)

- The gospel is the announcement that in one man’s history death is no longer the eschaton, but was only the second to last thing... Since death is what separates humankind from God in the end, only that power which transcends death can liberate humanity for eternal life with God... It means that the salvation we enjoy now is like borrowing from the future, living now as though our future could already be practiced in the present, because of our union with the risen Christ through faith and hope. (p566)