

The Fig Tree—Matt. 21:19-20; Mark 11:13,14&20,21

Mar 11:13 And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.

Mark 11:14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.

This statement is somewhat puzzling—until we understand the growth and reproductive cycles of fig trees. Notice the following interesting information about the fig season in Palestine:

Fig-trees in Israel can and often do have figs by Passover time. I will come back to that. But, remember the fig-tree **first bears** fruit, and afterwards its leaves. **It was only because Jesus saw leaves that he properly expected to find figs.** Leaves symbolize professions. The fig-tree, that is Israel, professed to be God's people but it was an empty boast--there was no fruitage.

The Spring or Passover-time crop of figs were called the **first-fruits** and they were **few** in number. **First-fruits, few** in number—that reminds us of the **Little flock class** doesn't it.

What does this mean? God first gave Israel, as a nation, the fig-tree an opportunity to be the **First-fruits** or Little Flock. They could have been the spiritual seed of Abraham that is to bless the world, but they failed to bear fruit.

As a consequence the KJ in Mark 11: 14 says "Jesus answered and said unto it (the fig tree), No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever." This is a poor translation. The Diaglott reads—"And answering he said to it, Let no one eat fruit of thee to the age, that is,(the Millennial Age or the Kingdom)." The fig tree in the Kingdom will be Israel. Then Israel will bear the main crop of figs, that is, the Gentile world of mankind who will become Israelites in deed.

Br. Ken Rawson