

The Symbolism of Trees In Scripture

A Commentary on Discipleship



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Shophetim/Judges 9:7-Trees teach us tremendous truths about YHWH. YHWH uses trees throughout Scripture to portray and reveal truth about Himself, His kingdom and even His talmidim/disciples. We see in Beresheeth/Genesis 2:9 the tree of good and evil, symbolizing the two kingdoms of Light and darkness. Man then and now MUST CHOOSE which one to serve.

In Gilyahna/Revelation 2:7 a tree symbolizes Gan Aden/Heaven and in Ezekiel 17:23 as well as in many other places, it symbolizes national Yisrael. In Mattityahu/Matthew 13:31-32 we see a tree as a metaphor for the kingdom of YHWH. A tree symbolized victory and often death as seen in the tree of Golgotha, as well as in the Torah principle of hanging the cursed man on a tree. In this instance, a tree is an instrument of cursing, condemnation and death. In the case of Ezekiel 37, the two literal trees/not sticks, are clear and glorious references to Israel's two houses. But in the Shophetim/Judges 9:7 context, we see different kinds of talmidim/disciples outlined before us.

7 And when they told it to Yotam, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim [mountain of a call to disciples to be blessed as seen in Torah], and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said to them, Listen to me, you men of Shechem, that Elohim may listen to you. [This is a call to all Yisrael, but specifically to Ephraim-Yisrael, or non-Jewish Yisrael.]

8 The eytzim went forth once upon a time to anoint a melech over them; and they said to the olive eytz, Reign over us.

Yisrael in a fallen nature always seeks a human king like the nations, BUT in the beginning YHWH was to be the only true King over Israel.

9 But the olive eytz said to them, Should I leave my fatness, with which by me they honor Elohim and man, and go to be promoted over the other eytzim?

The olive tree represents humble, teachable and meek talmidim. This person knows that their anointing and power in the Ruach HaKodesh comes from YHWH alone; the olive oil is brought about by crushing and this kind of disciple allows Yahshua to fall on him and break his self sufficiency, in order to be sold out and fully dependent on Yahshua. The oil flowing as a result of the crushing brings forth life, which is used for life and light. Noah sent the dove that returned with an olive branch a sign of life and newness of

swimming in YHWH's fatness. An olive tree disciple serves faithfully where and when he is placed and doesn't seek positions and accolades that are not theirs. Also this kind of tree/disciple will drink and share of its fatness with others-Tehillim/Psalms 128:3. This talmid produces fruit as seen in Yochanan/John 15. Melechim Alef/First Kings 6: 23-30 reminds us that the Ark of the Covenant was built with olive wood. Because YHWH and His Presence are the source of all the good that lies in faithful talmidim.

10 And the other eytzim said to the fig eytz, Come, and reign over us.

11 But the fig eytz said to them, Should I forsake my sweetness, and my tov fruit, and go to be promoted over the other eytzim?

Fig Tree-Proper response. This kind of disciple gives forth sweetness and pleasant odors. He or she is an encourager, an up lifter, and a unifying and edifying individual. This talmid seeks to heal relationships, pains and hurts in others. Figs are seen in Beresheet/Genesis as man's attempt to heal Adam and Eve. Figs were their first attempted remedy and covering. This talmid walks in a healing ministry. This healing gift can manifest in many different ways including godly counsel and advice. In Yeshayahu/Isaiah chapters 38-39 we see that it was the fig tree that healed King Hezekiah! It's the kind of talmid that adds and doesn't subtract from the kingdom. Fig Tree disciples give life to the weaker trees in the kingdom. Nathan was a fig tree disciple as seen in Yochanan/John 1:45-49. They have no deceit, or hidden agendas. Mishle/Proverbs 27:18. They seek to promote YHWH's agenda and have no guile, or ulterior motives. Yet often they do not know the fullness of their calling and refuse to step out in faith to new levels of understanding and are afraid to take risks. They tend to wait and not step out in new areas and can get really attached to a routine, or their own comfort zone. They can fall into the trap of trying to help YHWH in their own strength and their own understanding.

12 Then said the other eytzim to the vine, Come, and reign over us.

13 And the vine said to them, Should I leave my wine, which cheers Elohim and man, and go to be promoted over the other eytzim?

The vine is a synonym for production of fruit like grapes. This is the kind of disciple that walks in happiness and contentment and doesn't seek out more than he or she can handle. The vine disciple has a one-purpose calling and is committed to doing one thing extremely well, rather than taking on many projects and being an average achiever in many areas. This disciple can specialize in an area through focus and tends to know his or her role without getting easily confused and double minded thus producing stability and reliability, albeit within a limited sphere. This talmid is a "stick to it till the job is done type person." Highly reliable but limited. A vine disciple refuses to be moved out of his or her assigned place and role. They hold specified ministries not done by others such as a "moel," or circumciser in the faith. They don't shake or move easy, yet are bound to fall into temptations of their flesh, as seen by the reference "should I leave my wine."

14 Then said all the other eytzim to the bramble, Come, and reign over us.

15 And the bramble said to the eytzim, If in emet you will anoint me melech over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow: and if not, let fire come out of the bramble,

and devour the cedars of Lebanon. [A synonym for the Tabernacle and later the Temple built with wood from the cedar trees of Lebanon.]

Bramble-A parable, or drash given by Gideon's son, to show how self-promotion in Yisrael never works, and that just like Yahshua taught us, the road to greatness in Yisrael is in service to others. The bramble disciple wants to be served "under my shadow," not the shadow of the Almighty and is an opportunist. People like Jim Jones, L Ron Hubbard other cult leaders, who see the ministry as a road to wealth, fame, notoriety and personal gain. They are abusive types pierced through with many sorrows and pains of sin. The bramble talmid seduces other disciples to lose their life for another human's sake and not YHWH's sake. These disciples tend to be abusive, manipulative and disingenuous. Their yes means no, and their no mean yes, and their promise is worthless. They are unreliable in any task, UNLESS it benefits them, or enriches them in some manner.

The bramble produces no wine, no olive oil, no figs, and are fruitless in their own lives and yet entice other trees/disciples to follow their unseemly, unruly and often rebellious lives. Their goals are not to lead people to understand YHWH, but to create disciples after their own lusts and fleshly behaviors, like Simon the Sorcerer. The bramble disciple will only serve with a microphone and a platform and only if they are the focus of adoration and attention displaying no true calling AT ALL from YHWH. As soon as their selfishness is exposed they will turn on the other disciples and leaders and declare them to be unloving and mean spirited. They will then seek out the other trees to lead and will work with them only until once again they are discovered as self-seekers. These kinds of people will only work with you if you agree to TRUST in their shade. If you expose them, or reject their selfish ambitions they will cause fire and venom to come out thus revealing their true intentions.

Close- What's most interesting is that Yotam, Gideon's son pronounces his brother Avimelech as the bramble. Avimelech chose to be a bramble disciple and not manifest the character of the righteous talmidim, even though he was a judge's son. By doing so, he was killed by a woman, a type of evil religion and false belief systems, and thus led many others to death. Here we see the son of a righteous judge, who knew to do good but did it not, and thus to him it became sin and death. When you hear the challenge to be an Olive, Fig or Vine Tree in the Kingdom and instead choose "bramblehood," you are in grave and imminent danger. Stop focusing in on the speck in the eyes of those around you and remove the murderous beam that dwells in your eye today! Or else you and those who follow you will surely perish!