

3-2018

## The Miracles of Jesus Christ: Cursing the Fig Tree

Harold Willmington

*Liberty University*, [hwillmington@liberty.edu](mailto:hwillmington@liberty.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second\\_person](https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second_person)



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "The Miracles of Jesus Christ: Cursing the Fig Tree" (2018). *The Second Person File*. 236.

[https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second\\_person/236](https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second_person/236)

This The Miracles of Jesus Christ is brought to you for free and open access by the Theological Studies at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Second Person File by an authorized administrator of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact [scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu](mailto:scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu).

# THE MIRACLES OF JESUS CHRIST

## MIRACLE THIRTY-THREE: Cursing the Fig Tree (Mt. 21:18-19)

### SURVEY

One morning, a few days before His crucifixion, en route to Jerusalem from Bethany, Jesus views a fig tree. Being hungry, He approached it, only to find much foliage but no fruit. *"May you never bear fruit again,"* the Savior said to the tree, which immediately withered and dried up!

### SIGNIFICANCE

- This is the only one of Christ's thirty-five recorded miracles that would cause Him great pain and sorrow. It was so important that years later the Apostle Paul took three entire chapters (Rom. 9-11) to expand upon its theological implications.
- To explain the above, many believe this tree was a symbol of Israel, that divinely favored but utterly fruitless fig tree. Jesus was therefore, if this be true, setting aside the nation due to the absence of fruit. Later, that same day, He made this clear to the Pharisees, those spiritual custodians of the tree:

*"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."* (Mt. 21:42-43)

- This particular kind of fig tree found in Israel is different from all other fruit trees in that it bears its fruit before its leaves. This is not the case with apple, pear, cherry, or any other fruit-bearing trees. Even though the tree was apparently blooming earlier than usual, Jesus had the right to see fruit, for the leaves were there.
- This was the first of two miracles performed by Jesus during the final Passover week. See also miracle 34.

### SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

- As has been previously noted, Jesus had every right to find fruit upon the tree of Israel. Its green and massive foliage was impressive indeed, for to it was given the tabernacle, the temple, the Old Testament Scriptures, plus the ministries of godly prophets, priests, and kings. But upon close inspection, it bore no fruit.
- The overriding lesson from this miracle is painfully obvious—God desires fruit.
  1. His chosen nation failed to bear fruit.

*"Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images."* (Hos. 10:1)

2. His present plan is for believers to bear fruit.

*"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."* (Jn. 15:8)

- Jesus later would say that He was the true vine and His followers were the branches (Jn. 15:1). The only function therefore of a branch is to bear fruit. Branch wood is never used for firewood or building material! Furthermore it must be realized a branch does not produce fruit (the vine does this), but rather bears it!