

3 - MINUTE SERMONS

MEN AND TREES

Trees have played an important role in God's story of man. We shall note a few of special interest.

Trees in the Garden of Eden. The "tree of knowledge of good and evil" - the fruit of this tree was forbidden (Genesis 2:17). After both had partaken of this forbidden fruit, Adam and Eve tried to hide themselves from God among the trees of the Garden (Genesis 3:8). Because of their sin, they were deprived of the "tree of life" (Genesis 3:22ff). Here we have the fruit of one tree killing the fruit of another.

Moses and the tree of Marah (Exodus 15:22-25). God told Moses to cast this tree into the water to make it consumable and useful. In a similar fashion, taking God's word into our hearts can make us useful instead of useless.

Solomon planted trees (Ecclesiastes 2:5); and, he did this for personal pleasure, but found this to be very unprofitable (verse 11).

King Ahaz burns incense under the green trees (2 Kings 16:3-4); this was an idolatrous practice (1 Kings 14; 2 Kings 17: 10-11). God had commanded the burning of incense, and He gave the why and where it should be done. This King Ahaz had ignored.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream tree (Daniel 4:10-11). He had thought too highly of himself, not recognizing the authority of the Most High God. He was humbled, in a most sad way, for his failure on this point; and, only when he accepted as fact that God ruled in the kingdoms of men was his plight any better.

Zacchaeus and the sycamore tree (Luke 19:2-4). Zacchaeus used this tree in order to see Jesus. This was commendable! It was a little trouble for him, but it brought salvation to his house. What if that sycamore tree had not been there? But, it was there! It was one of the natural blessings of God; and Zacchaeus used that blessing to find the Lord.

Jesus on the tree. "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree" (Acts 5:30). Peter says, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree ... " (1 Peter 2:24). The eyes of all the earth are on this tree.

Now, we come back to the "tree of life", lost in the Garden so long before; but, now that to which we may have access. It is located in the midst of the paradise of God (Revelation 2:7); and we may gain access to it, once again, by obeying the commandments of the Lord (22:14). How delightful and gracious are the designs of God!