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A table of contents for *The Expository Times* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expository-times_01.php

pdfs are named: [Volume]_[Issue]_[1st page of article].pdf

am most glad to have that side put so well before me.'

6th April 1913. He dictated a letter from Folkestone to say that he had been struggling with severe illness for nearly eight weeks, in the hands of a nurse, and with a doctor coming every day. 'The throw-backs have upset all my plans, and I must wait and see what is possible.'

Christmas Day, 1914. 'Ever since August, beyond the work of the day for the day, my thoughts have been running mainly upon the War. Just now I am struggling with a pamphlet—one of the Oxford series, if it comes off. I want to state the case in such a way as could be *put into the hands of a German*. But I find it very difficult.'

21st July 1915. 'One can't help comparing our respective fates. I don't really repent of mine. Given such powers—or want of powers—as I have, I can't help hoping that I may be found to have spent them not wholly without usefulness to a *certain class of minds*, and with a view to the future. . . . Don't you feel as Westcott did when he said that he had accomplished all his programme and more than his programme?'

[The answer to which is, that I never had even so much as a programme.]

26th March 1920. 'I'm afraid I have been very idle. I don't quite know how far that is the right word. I am hoping, if all's well, soon after Easter, to get to Bath with my sister, and there to talk over things with an excellent doctor there and to see how the land really lies. But the last few months, since I came here [from Ch. Ch. to 18

Bradmore Road] I have seemed unduly lethargic and helpless. I am sadly behindhand with getting the house into order; and yet now one seems to feel the Spring coming back into one's veins again, and I *may* take a new start, or something of one. . . . We are just finishing—though I don't suppose that it will be out before autumn—some Notes on the new Lessons, like those on the Psalms. I am quite in hopes that it will be a help and mark an advance. Burney is excellent on O.T. But we shall have to do what we can to get it into circulation, and I am afraid shan't be able to give ourselves many copies.

'You certainly have the advantage of me—have not so many of the weaknesses of age—though the years ought to be substantially in my favour. And yet I can say that, like you, I have a great deal to be thankful for.

'P.S.—I shall have to post this before I can hear of the Sports and Boat Race, which still keep their interest.'

Trinity Sunday, 1920. 'Many thanks for all your kind solicitude about my health. It easily might be much worse. The doctor is quite encouraging, and he advises me to lead the very quiet life, which is just what I wish to do.'

These hopes were not to be realized. In September he went into a nursing home with a view to an operation, which, however, was not of a serious character. Before the operation took place he had, in quick succession, two strokes of paralysis. After lying unconscious for a day or two, on 16th September he passed *ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*.

Under the Fig-tree.

BY PROFESSOR DR. GUSTAF DALMAN, GREIFSWALD.

IN Palestine one very often has reason to long for shadow. A fig-tree may in such cases seem inviting enough on account of its big leaves (1 Mac 3⁷) and hanging branches. When a fig-tree is watered from a fountain or rivulet (Ps 1³), its verdure may be so luxuriant that somebody sitting under it would be quite hidden from anybody passing by. In spite of this I personally never liked to rest in a fig-tree's shadow. Its smell seemed to me dis-

agreeable, and I missed the cooling breeze which one always enjoys so much under an olive-tree. Even the Arabs avoid sleeping under fig-trees, believing them to be haunted.¹

In olden times it must have been otherwise. Judah and Israel liked to dwell every one under his vine and under his fig-tree (1 K 5⁶). Rabbi Akiba

¹ According to my own inquiries, but see also Baldensperger, *P.E.F. Quarterly*, 1893, p. 203 seq.

used to sit with his fellows under a fig-tree to study the Law in the early morning, and left this place only when the figs grew ripe, to avoid suspicion on the part of the owner (Jer., Berakhoth 5^c; Koheleth Rabba 5, 11; Shir Rabba 6). Another reason was it which induced Rabbi Jochanan¹ to sit down on the east side of a fig-tree. He suffered from a severe bulimy and knew that on this side the fruit were best (Koheleth Rabba 7, 11; cf. Jer., Joma 45^b; Babl., Joma 83^b).

Even animals sought shelter under fig-trees. For a shepherd gave as sign for the month Adar, that the bull dies in the hurdles (at night-time) and should like (in the daytime) to cast off his skin in the shadow of the fig-tree (Jer., Rosh ha-Shana 58^b, Sanhedrin 18^c; cf. Babl., Sanhedrin 18^b, with some alterations in the text). The coldness of the nights and the heat of the sun at daytime is really characteristic of Adar. The fig-trees have just become green, but their shadow does not help much the animals which hope to find coolness under it.

Turning from such sayings to the word of Jesus to Nathanael: 'Before Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee,' one does not feel inclined to search for some special doing of Nathanael under the fig-tree, as if this had been what was meant by Jesus, though He does not mention it. The fig-tree is thus, for instance, supposed to have been the place where Nathanael was praying or longing for the coming of the Messiah. In Palestine no idea is more common than that Nathanael had repaired to the shadow of a fig-tree because the sun was shining and the heat of the day in the valley of Jordan was oppressive. There he was resting when Philip called him. The only supposition is that he could not be seen by Jesus at that place, either because the fig-tree covered Nathanael with its branches, or because it was so far away from Jesus that Nathanael could not be seen by Him. Jesus tells Him that He knew him in spite of that. Nathanael shall know that His knowledge is above human capacity.

¹ S. Klein believes that it was Jochanan ben Zakkai. See his study 'Weinstock, Feigenbaum und Sykomore in Palästina' from the Schwarz *Festschrift*, special print, p. ix, note 8.

It is a curious problem of geographical botany, why just a fig-tree is mentioned. Jesus would certainly not think of a fig-tree in the Galilean home of Nathanael. It is true, it would be more in its place near Cana of Galilee than in that Bethany beyond Jordan where John baptized (Jn 1²⁸). Near Jordan one should rather expect an euphratpoplar or a Christthorn-tree (*Zizyphus Spina Christi*). Why does John not mention one of these, if he had some knowledge of the locality? Here Jewish superstition might give some help. Just those two kinds of trees are mentioned among the five trees, the shadow of which was believed to be harmful for the sleeper (Babl., Pesachim 111^b).² The principle is given that all trees with a great number of branches or with sharp thorns have to be avoided, and it may have been against custom to sit down under such trees. The fig-tree is not in the Talmudical list of haunted trees, though it has been added in the Munich manuscript. It was, in fact, at that time the favourite shadow-tree. This may be sufficient for the explanation of Jn 1⁴⁸.

Still it must be added that cultivated fig-trees would not be at all impossible at a suitable place in the Jordan valley. Wild fig-trees could even stand at a spring, as they formerly did at Elisha's fountain near Jericho, until its basin was regulated. If that Bethany was near the springs of Wādi el-Charrār, as I think,³ I may mention that the Greek monks had there quite a plantation of fig-trees and olives, when I visited the place eight years ago.⁴ It may finally be called local colouring, that not a house or chamber is mentioned instead of the fig-tree. Bethany beyond Jordan was no town and no village, otherwise John the Baptist had not settled there. It was a lonely place, perhaps with some huts. The multitudes which came to it for baptism had to be very contented, if they found a kind of abode under a fig-tree. If the place where Jesus 'stayed' (Jn 1^{38, 39}) was better, it could hardly have been more than a hut made with the branches and the reeds of the thicket at the river.

² Read *kinnāra* for *kanda* with the Munich MS.

³ *Orte und Wege Jesu*, p. 86.

⁴ *Palästinajahrbuch*, 1913, p. 24.