**Grafted in as a Wild Olive Tree**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Romans 11:15-20**

**Wednesday Evening**

**December 11, 2024**

**Romans 11:15-20**

15 For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 16 For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. 17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,

18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in." 20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.

**15 For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?**

Saints, Israel’s rejection by God meant that God offered salvation to the rest of the world.

God had always planned to include the Gentiles, even if that meant a temporary setting aside of the Jews.

**Isaiah 49:6**

Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

**2 Corinthians 5:18-19**

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

**Ephesians 2:16**

and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

When the chosen people, who were designated as the vehicles of God’s blessing to the world, actually blocked that message from getting through, God made sure that the message arrived anyway.

When Jews come to Christ and God accepts them back, there will be great rejoicing, as if dead people had come back to life.

Though we may not grasp all the nuances of Paul extensive argument, his purpose is unmistakable.

He wants to give Gentiles every reason possible to welcome their Jewish brothers and sisters in the faith with open arms.

At the same time, he wants to help his Jewish brethren reciprocate that welcome.

Neither group is to claim supremacy in the church.

The message is: God has made room in his family for both of you, so you must get along together.

**16 For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.**

Saints, Paul believes that Israel’s refusal to accept Christ is temporary and that one day the nation will be brought back to God. He explains this in an illustration.

**Jeremiah 2:3**

Israel was holiness to the LORD, The firstfruits of His increase. All that devour him will offend; Disaster will come upon them," says the LORD.' "

**1 Corinthians 5:6-7**

6 Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

The roots, obviously, are the first part of a tree, and form the “character” of the branches.

Abraham’s faith was like the root of a productive tree, and the Jewish people are the tree’s natural branches.

As a result of God’s choice and Abraham’s response, the nation that descended from him was holy.

Paul extends the principle to cover the fate of his people. If the remnant of Jews who had lived by faith were called holy by God, then there is still hope for the whole, proving that God has not rejected them.

If the root, the tree of justification by faith, is holy, then any branch attached to and nourished by that root will also be holy.

**17 And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,**

Saints, God did not tear down the entire tree, but some of the branches were broken off because of sin and unbelief.

These branches are Jews who failed to respond in faith to God’s mercy.

**Ephesians 2:11-13**

11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh--who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands-- 12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

**Galatians 3:14**

that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

In their place, the Gentile believers are likened to branches from a wild olive tree that have been grafted in.

Grafting involves inserting a bud or shoot of one plant into a slit in the stem or trunk of another plant.

The shoot shares in the nourishment from the main stem or trunk (God’s rich nourishment) and grows, receiving the same blessings that the natural branches had.

**18 do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.**

Saints, But the Gentiles, the wild olive shoots who have been grafted into the cultivated olive tree (Israel), have no grounds for bragging.

**Isaiah 51:1-2**

1 "Listen to Me, you who follow after righteousness, You who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were hewn, And to the hole of the pit from which you were dug. 2 Look to Abraham your father, And to Sarah who bore you; For I called him alone, And blessed him and increased him."

**Jeremiah 11:16**

The LORD called your name, Green Olive Tree, Lovely and of Good Fruit. With the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, And its branches are broken.

The Gentile “branches” need to remember that they are just as dependent on “the root,” for their survival as the Jewish branches.

God has not changed his original plan; salvation stems from the promise to Abraham and God’s choice of Israel.

Both Jews and Gentiles share the tree’s nourishment based on faith in God. For Paul, the only appropriate attitude for any “branch” is humble thankfulness.

Any attitude of superiority is to be avoided, for it might indicate that grafted-in branches are candidates for the same fate as the original ones that had been broken off.

**19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."**

Saints, A Gentile believer might make this argument.

It is true that it was necessary to break off some branches in the grafting process.

But it would be a mistake to assume that Paul is limiting God’s acceptance, as if there was only so much room on the tree for branches.

The point is not so much replacement as opportunity.

**Galatians 3:14**

that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

**Galatians 3:28-29**

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

**Jeremiah 11:16-17**

16 The LORD called your name, Green Olive Tree, Lovely and of Good Fruit. With the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, And its branches are broken.

17 "For the LORD of hosts, who planted you, has pronounced doom against you for the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done against themselves to provoke Me to anger in offering incense to Baal."

The idea is not that Jews were broken off so that we could take their place; but rather that they were broken off so that the Gentile opportunity for justification by faith might become clear.

This is underscored by Paul’s assertion that even broken off branches can be grafted back in.

**20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear.**

Saints, the real reason some of the branches of the tree, some of the nation of Israel, were broken off was because of their stubborn unbelief.

The Gentiles that were grafted in are only there by their faith and by God’s grace.

Thus they are warned, Don’t think highly of yourself, but fear what could happen.

Those who are arrogant cherish proud thoughts about themselves; they do not have a proper fear and respect for God.

Our relationship with God is to be one of humble dependence.

Jesus used many of these images to explain his own role as the vine.

**John 15:1-8**

1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

He spoke of his Father, the Gardener who cuts off every branch that is unproductive.

He also reminded the disciples that a branch cannot survive on its own, but is entirely dependent on the vine for its survival and nourishment.

The branches serve their purpose in bearing fruit.

Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray! Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**