

WE ARE NOT GRAFTED BRANCHES

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE WILD OLIVE BRANCH OF ROMANS 11

*“For if God spared not the natural branches,
take heed lest he also spare not thee.”*

~ Romans 11:21

1. Partaking of Israel's Promises

- a. Romans 11 speaks of Israel's fall, what takes its place, and Israel's fulness.
- b. 11:17-24 – pictures this through two olive trees, broken branches, and a wild graft.
- c. Since the church exists now, the most popular identification of the graft is you.
- d. This is the primary justification for identifying the church as Israel, spiritual Israel, etc.
- e. Much doctrinal confusion come from failing to rightly divide Prophecy and Mystery.
- f. Romans 11 is where prophecy and mystery touch (see Rom 11:25-26), but...
 - i. *Do we partake of Israel's tree? Do we fit the description of the wild graft?*

2. Wild and Broken Israel

- a. Israel fell because of unbelief, they rejected Christ – Rom 11:20 (9:32, 10:2-3)
- b. Peter speaks of unbelieving Israel and a people coming out of darkness - 1 Pet 2:6-10
- c. Hebrews speaks to Israel in disbelief, and a people in the wilderness - Heb 3:12-4:2
- d. John spoke of Israel not receiving, but some did receive grace/truth – John 1:11-14
- e. Jesus spoke of being the vine, branches abiding in him, others broken – John 15:1-6
- f. Jesus said the kingdom would be removed from blind Israel, given to... Matt 21:33-43
- g. Hosea – Israel becomes 'not my people', then receives mercy – Hos 1:9-10
- h. Jeremiah wrote of Judah becoming a degenerate plant – Jer 11:16, 2:21
- i. Isaiah spoke of God's fruitful plant becoming wild – Isaiah 5:2-4
- j. Isaiah also spoke of a root and light coming to Gentiles – Isa 11:10, 42:6, 49:6
- k. Ezekiel spoke of grafting branches of Judah and Israel together – Eze 37:16-20
- l. Paul spoke already of Israel's two vessels of wrath & remnant - Rom 9:21-24, 11:5-7
- m. If you struggle with the New Covenant, Hebrews, John, 'not my people', Calvinism, two houses of Israel, MMLJ you will end up thinking we are the grafted in branches.

3. Looking Closer at the Graft

- a. To get an understanding of the passage, people tend to summarize or tell stories.
 - i. Jews had God's blessing, but now Gentiles which leads to Israel's salvation.
- b. Summarizing is good, unless it overlooks important details.
 - i. The roots/trees/branches already existed before the graft (prophesied) 11:18
 - ii. The graft is personal: "and thou" "if thou boast" "... fear" – 11:18-19
 - iii. The graft stands by faith (the same faith that the broken refused) 11:20
 - iv. The graft could be cut off just as the broken (conditional, covenantal) 11:21-22
 - v. The graft does NOT constitute 'all Israel' (but a part) – 11:24-26
- c. Do these details fit: 1) All Gentiles 2) dispensational position, 3) church 4) remnant
 - i. If we do not fit the context, we must quit forcing ourselves in.

4. Who Are We

- a. Don't fail to appreciate the similarities we have to the graft, though we are not a tree.
- b. In some ways we are like the graft... BUT in important ways we are not.
- c. We are brought together as one,...
 - i. BUT a new creature, mystery body, kept secret - Eph 2:15
- d. We are saved by grace and faith,
 - i. BUT our faith is in the free and finished work, not faith that can be dead.
- e. We partake of promises in Christ,
 - i. BUT we are members of His Body not branches – 1 Cor 12:13, Eph 5:30
- f. We ought not boast of our blessings and should do good works, ...
 - i. BUT we are complete in Christ not in a covenant - Col 2:10
- g. We are Abraham's seed by faith, heirs of promise, (Gal 3:28)
 - i. BUT we are put into the fellowship of the mystery of Christ, not Israel's tree.
- h. If you still struggle w/graft, know who you are in Christ. Then, you'll know who it isn't.