

The Israel Story

Chapter 11 – The Root

“The root of the cultivated olive tree of Israel supports followers of Yeshua in their faith, whether they know it or not (Romans 11:17–18). Yeshua spoke about this clearly when he declared to the Samaritan woman at the well, “salvation is of the Jews,” speaking ultimately of Himself. He gave further insight about it when He described the blessing His Gentile followers would have to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (the Jewish patriarchs) in heaven (Matthew 8:11). Yeshua's sacrificial death made it possible for the blessing of Abraham to come upon the Gentiles (Galatians 3:13–14), and the New Covenant, into which all followers of Yeshua enter, was a covenant first promised to and made with Israel (Jeremiah 31:31–34). If you are a follower of Yeshua, these are all examples of the root system that supports you in your faith.” (Myers)

1. Last week (episode 10), we learned that Paul referred the Jews as the “cultivated branches” and us, the Gentiles as the “wild branches”. Before God sent His Son to save all mankind, He chose Abraham and his descendants to be His people. He cultivated them for several millennia. Cultivation in the sense that Paul is speaking of, is God trying to teach the Jews His ways and His expectations. It is teaching them how to develop a personal relationship with Him.
2. We have read how they rebelled against God, so God made His salvation through Jesus available to the Gentiles. When Terry and I traveled through Israel there were olive trees almost everywhere. In Romans 11, Paul used something that at that time and in that region everyone was familiar with, olive trees.
3. In Galatians 3, Paul spoke about why we get to be grafted on to the olive tree that he wrote about in Romans 11. Galatians 3: 7-9 says, “*Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. 8 Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” 9 So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.*” So the root is Israel or Abraham and just like Abraham, if we have faith in God through Jesus then we can be grafted on the tree or we can become children of Abraham. We are blessed because of God’s promise to Abraham. Genesis 12:2b says, “*I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.*”

Abraham was blessed because one of his descendants, Jesus, brought salvation to the world. We are blessed because we have salvation through Jesus.

“God’s oath to Abraham is part of the root system of the cultivated olive tree of Israel, into which followers of Yeshua have been grafted.” (Myers)

“There are essentially two types of righteousness: righteousness we *accomplish* by our own efforts and righteousness *accounted* to us by the work of God when we believe. Since none of us can be good enough to accomplish perfect righteousness, we must have God’s righteousness accounted to us by doing just what Abram did: Abraham believed God.” (Guzik)

4. Our faith does not make us righteous but God credits us righteousness because we have faith in Jesus as the Messiah. It is still all about Him and not about us. We benefit from His mercy and grace.

5. John 4:1–26 records Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus shocks her by telling her about how she has lived her life, her five husbands and the man that she was living with but not married to. In verse 20, she asks Jesus about the proper place to worship God. She says, “*Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.*” In His response to her, Jesus says, “*You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews.*”

“What did Yeshua mean when He said that salvation is of the Jews? That subject could fill a library, so let's keep it very simple. God chose the Jewish people that through them salvation would come to all mankind. This is what God meant when God promised Abraham that all nations would be blessed through him. Blessing has come to mankind in many ways through the Jewish people, but salvation has come to mankind through one Jew, the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua. Yeshua’s name in Hebrew means ‘salvation’. When Yeshua said that salvation is of the Jews, He was speaking of Himself. The central and most important element of the cultivated olive tree’s root is Yeshua Himself.” (Myers)

6. Read Matthew 8:5–13. How much faith did the centurion have? Jesus said the centurion’s faith was greater than anyone that He has encountered in Israel. What is the significance of the people from the east and the west? These are Gentiles. Jesus even tells us about Heaven in these verses. He says that we

will sit down at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Myers says, “If you don’t like Jews, get over it, or you won’t like heaven!” Which feast do you think that is? Wedding Supper of the Lamb?

7. We forget that faith in God is us believing and trusting that what God has said He will do. It is not us saying, “I like the God of the New Testament, He is loving and forgiving.” It is us believing that the Bible is God’s Word and what He has said, then He will do. It is the good and the bad. Punishment for bad and blessings for the good. We cannot be selective in what we want to believe. He put it in His Word and it all crumbles without us believing or having faith.
8. The God of the OT is the God of the NT. One of the key attributes of God is immutability. He is unchanging. There is only one God. Did Abraham live a perfect life? No. Remember when he went into Egypt and he tells his wife, Sarah to tell them that she was his sister. Not too righteous. He may have failed or made mistakes but he believed God. He put his faith in God and this allowed him to develop a personal relationship with God.
9. When Jesus and His disciples were in the upper room for the “Last Supper”, Jesus took the cup and said, “*This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.*” Which cup was it? The third one, the cup of redemption. This was a seder meal or Passover meal.
10. There were four cups according to Exodus 6:6-7. 6 “*Therefore, say to the Israelites: ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. (Sanctification) I will free you from being slaves to them, (Deliverance) and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. (Redemption) 7 I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians.’*” (Praise)
11. For Jews it was a new covenant but for Gentiles, it is the only one that we have. “What is the new covenant all about? It is about an inner transformation, that cleanses us from all sin: “*For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more*” (Jeremiah 31:34). It is about God’s Word and will in

us: *"I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts"* (Jeremiah 31:33). It is about a new, close, relationship with God: *I will be their God, and they shall be My people* (Jeremiah 31:33). Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we can have a new covenant relationship with God. But many Christians live as if there is no inner transformation. They live as if there is no cleansing from sin. They live as if there is no word and will of God in our hearts. They live as if there is no new and close relationship with God." (Guzik)

12. We couldn't have this covenant until Jesus was crucified. Before the crucifixion of Jesus, only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies. Matthew 27:51 says, *"At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom."* This action gives us full access to God through Jesus. Through Jesus work on the cross, we can have an intimate relationship with God.
13. Before Jesus went to the cross, we had the Law but afterwards God is going to write His laws and statutes on our heart as Jeremiah wrote. We will know sin because we have the Holy Spirit living in us. We can have intimate fellowship with God because our sin has been washed away by Jesus work on the cross. And that's why he said, "take and drink this cup". It is the new covenant in Jesus' blood.
14. As a Gentile believer in Jesus, this is our covenant with God through Jesus. It is a blood covenant based on Jesus work on the cross. Jeremiah 31:31 says, *"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah."* Who does it say the covenant is made? the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

"Now think about that. *Behold the days are coming says the Lord. I'll make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.*" This is that cultivated olive tree. This is that covenant that the Jews who don't believe in Yeshua have been broken off of. This is the covenant when you believed in the Jewish Messiah, Yeshua you have been grafted into. This is the root system that's supporting you and your faith therefore don't boast against those branches because remember you don't support the root. What? The root supports you." (Myers)