


The Book of Romans

The Gospel of God

Christmas reminds us as Christians of our Jewish roots



¹⁶ If the first piece of *dough* is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too.

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

¹⁸ do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, *remember that* it is not you who supports the root, but the root *supports* you.

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

²⁰ True, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;

²¹ for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither He will not spare you.

²² Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

²³ And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

²⁴ For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural *branches* be grafted into their own olive tree?

(Romans 11:16-24)



Olive Tree and Branches

1. Hope for Israel

- the “holiness” that characterized the beginning of Israel (the patriarchs) has a continuing significance for the whole of Israel
- Israel continues to have a unique, “elect” status before God

Olive Tree and Branches

2. “Unnatural” Riches for Gentiles

- Gentiles are made partakers of the Abrahamic promise and blessing – we are Abraham’s “seed”
- Gentiles are “grafted in” by faith alone in Christ

²⁶ For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
²⁷ For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise.

(Galatians 3:26-29)

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3. Danger for Gentile Christians

- spiritual pride and a sense of superiority over the Jewish people

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➤ Reasons NOT to Boast:

1. The root supports you, not vice-versa
2. Your standing is only by faith
3. The danger of being “cut off” by God

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➤ The root supports you

- Gentile Christians depend on Jewish heritage for their standing and spiritual nourishment

What is your attitude toward unbelievers?
Compassion or Conceit?