

CHAPTER 11

WHY BEING GRAFTED IN MATTERS SO MUCH!

*You are no longer aliens to Israel and strangers to
her covenants ~Sha'ul*

Sha'ul the apostle taught one of the reasons for Messiah shedding His blood for all of mankind was to tear down the wall of division between Jews (Hebrews) and those who are not Jews. This passage bears great value and relevance to this topic – but it reveals so much more!

Eph 2:11-12

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.

Sha'ul said of the Gentiles, "...you were without Christ being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel".

The Christ (anointed Messiah) was the promised Messiah for the House of Israel. Being an alien from Israel also meant being cut off from Messiah. People with a low understand of the Tanach (Old Testament) do not realize that the promises of the coming Messiah were made to Israel. Messiah Himself is a Jew. Notice I did not say, Messiah *was* a Jew while in the flesh, for the Bible proclaims loudly that Yeshua Messiah is a Jew today, for He remains a Jew even in heaven.

Rev 5:5

But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

Sha'ul was explaining to the Ephesians Gentiles that being an alien from Israel and her covenant promises is being an alien from Messiah and without hope. Being an alien from Israel was also the state Esau found himself in, through hate and a rejection of God's blessings upon Jacob.

Notice the verbiage that goes along with being an alien to Messiah and Israel; "*you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God...*(Eph 2:12)."

It's important to realize that the promises and covenants were made to Israel, because it is God's plan to bless the world through Israel. God wants to share the promises with every man, woman and child – both Jew and non-Jew alike. But notice how:

Eph 2:13-15

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity...

There is no justification for anti-Semitism, or any form of racism. Messiah died to make the Jew and non-Jew one in Messiah. There should be no more separation, no more enmity, for the Gentiles have been made near to Israel and to her Savior through the blood of Messiah (Eph 2:13).

Are you comfortable with the Hebrew roots of your faith? If you are not a Jew, do you have any Jewish friends? If not, why not? Are you comfortable with Biblical Judaism? (I'm not talking about rabbinical Judaism or oral commentary).

The definition of Judaism is: ***The religion given to the ancient Hebrews that stresses belief in the one true***

God, whose name is Yahweh (YHVH), adherence to His word (Torah) and the words of the prophets, belief in the covenants and the promised redemption through HaMashiach (Messiah). That religion is markedly Jewish in its appearance and practice, because the Jews (Hebrews) are the ones God gave it too. The word of the Lord shall go forth from Jerusalem – not Rome!

Paul's message of unity between the two (Israelites and Gentiles) has great importance. Chiefly, because it means that the Gentiles are no longer foreigners to the saints – the House of Israel. They are fellow citizens – fellow saints – *with* (not in place of) Israel. Through Messiah, Gentiles are no longer cut off from the hope and the promises made in the Tanach (Old Testament) to Israel. They are now fellow citizens – for the foundation of God's temple is based upon the foundation of both the apostles (New Testament) and prophets (Old Testament), with Messiah as the cornerstone.

Eph 2:19 – 20

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,

This was the teaching of Sha'ul (Paul) the apostle to the Gentiles. He used equally colorful and concise language when teaching the Romans. The reader may want to familiarize himself with the whole of Rom 11, but we'll hit the highlights.

ISRAEL IS GOD'S LOVELY GREEN OLIVE TREE

Jer 11:16

The LORD called your name, Green Olive Tree,
Lovely *and* of Good Fruit...

King David said, "I am like a green olive tree in the House of God (Ps 52:8)." This was a lovely and personal name that God gave to Israel. So when Sha'ul told the Congregation at Rome that Israel was God's natural olive tree, he was not making that up.

Rom 11:16-18

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. (emphasis mine)

The natural olive tree is Israel. The Gentiles are the wild olive tree that is grafted in among the olive tree that is Israel. Notice also Paul's duplicitous use of certain words for emphasis: "grafted in among them" *and* "with them."

I know we all understand what the words "among them" and "with them" mean. It forbids a separation. Are you comfortable with that? Jew or Gentile, is your faith Hebrew rooted?

This then is the Biblical way God is bringing salvation hope and the beautiful covenants promised to Israel, to the Gentiles. He does it by making the Gentiles fellow citizens with Israel so they can share in Israel's covenant promises. He does it by grafting the Gentiles into the olive tree that is Israel – not apart from Israel – with, in and among Israel. Not two trees – one tree! That tree is Israel.

WHY BEING GRAFTED IN MATTERS SO MUCH

One may wonder why all this matters, along as we accept Jesus. Accepting Messiah is crucial, but listening to Messiah's message of salvation is also important – very important. It all goes back to Jacob – the father of Israel – and to Esau Jacob's brother. Remember, Messiah said, "Do not think I came to destroy Torah or the prophets (Matt 5:17)." He did not

come to change even the slightest point of punctuation (Matt 5:18). God's words do not fail. Understanding the law concerning blessings and how they apply is critical in understanding why being grafted into Israel is so important for each and every Gentile. Before we review the blessing bestowed upon Jacob and how it applies today and forever, we need to understand God's laws regarding masters and servants. For without the foundational understanding of Torah, only a very limited understanding of the New Testament is possible.

Gen 16:2

So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing *children*. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.

How could Sarai obtain children from her maid servant? This seems foreign to many today. God said that the master owns everything that belongs to his servant. It is written in the divine Torah. Therefore, the children born by Sarai's hand maid would actually belong to Sarai.

Ex 21:2-4

If you buy a Hebrew servant, he shall serve six years; and in the seventh he shall go out free and pay nothing.

3 If he comes in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he *comes in* married, then his wife shall go out with him.

4 If his master has given him a wife, and she has borne him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. (emphasis mine)

This is why there was not an independent blessing available to Esau, for Jacob was made Esau's master. Notice:

Gen 27:37

Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?"

God, through Isaac, had given Jacob an incredible blessing. Part of that blessing was that he would be the master of all his brethren. Esau is a type of the world here, for Jacob's blessing included the verbiage "Let peoples serve, let nations bow down to you (Gen 27:29)." Since Esau was Jacob's servant, any blessing Esau obtained, would automatically become Jacob's. Let's see the blessing God bestowed upon Jacob as an unconditional covenant.

Gen 27:28-29

Therefore may God give you Of the dew of heaven, Of the fatness of the earth, And plenty of grain and wine.

29 Let peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you. Be master over your brethren, And let your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed *be* everyone who curses you, And blessed *be* those who bless you!"

Inherent in this amazing blessing, which is a birth right for the Jew, is the key to also being blessed if you are not a Jew (Israelite)? It is found in verse 29; “blessed be those who bless you.”

Esau protested to his father Isaac and claimed that Jacob had stolen his birth right. But the truth is that Esau sold his birth right to Jacob for a bowl of stew, and was now lying about it (Gen 25:29 – 34). But the bigger truth is that, God foretold that the older would serve the younger, from before the lads were even born (Gen 25:21 – 28).

There was nothing more Isaac could give his son Esau, other than to encourage him to love his brother and to bless him, so that he too could be blessed.

Gen 27:37

Then Isaac answered and said to Esau, "Indeed I have made him your master, and all his brethren

I have given to him as servants; with grain and wine I have sustained him. What shall I do now for you, my son?"

When Esau persisted, Isaac gave him a “blessing” which was a play on words, for in Esau’s “blessing” there is a partitive in the text meaning Esau’s land would be “away from” the blessed fertile land. Many study bibles make this point in their notes.

Gen 27:39

So his father said: "Your home will be far from that fertile land, where dew comes down from the heavens. CEV

Gen 27:39

So his father Isaac said to him, "Indeed, your home will be away from the richness of the earth, and away from the dew of the sky above. (from The NET Bible®)

Gen 27:39

Then Isaac his father answered and said to him, "Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling, And away from the dew of heaven from above. NASB

So Esau hated his brother. How things would be different today, if instead of hating his brother and seeking to kill him, Esau instead blessed his brother?

What if he said; “My brother Jacob is a good man blessed of the Lord. I am proud to be Jacob’s brother.” Then God would have blessed Esau too, for it is God Himself who said to Jacob; *I will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you* (Gen 27:29).

Everything that belonged to Esau would become the property and blessings of Jacob. All the wealth of the peoples and nations that were to bow down to Israel would become the treasures of Israel. That is God’s judgment.

So why does it matter if the Gentiles are grafted into the olive tree that is Israel? Better to be a joint heir and inheritor of God’s divine blessings than miss out and be as a son of Esau. Why does it matter if the Gentiles are made near and become fellow citizens with Israel? So they can inherit much greater promises and superior blessings with their fellow saints Israel! For God’s promise to Abraham long ago was that through his seed, all the nations of the world would be blessed:

Gen 12:3

I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

God repeated this blessing for Isaac (Gen 26:4). And again for Jacob – showing that these blessings went only through Isaac and Jacob – God’s line of promise:

Gen 28:14

14 Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Let's briefly consider a few other blessings and covenants that are made available to those who are grafted into Israel. For example, consider how many blessing and covenants God made to and through Abram before he was even circumcised (see Genesis chapters 12 – 17:10). God said righteousness was imputed to Abraham for his faith, while he was uncircumcised. God said that Abraham would be a father of the faithful – a father of many nations. Those who want to claim that Torah (that old law) has been done away do not understand that they, in effect, toss aside God's promises and covenants that God intends to bless all the faithful through. Even the promises of Messiah and all that God will accomplish through Him are promises contained within Torah and Tanach. But remember, Yeshua said those who are children of Abraham will do the works that Abraham did (John 8:39). Abraham was a Hebrew. Are you comfortable around Hebrews? Are you comfortable with a "Hebrew rooted religion?" Do you avoid Biblical Judaism? Are we for what God is for and the way He has chosen?

Here are a few other blessings that God wants to share with the Gentiles that are rooted in Biblical Judaism:

Isa 56:3-7

³ Do not let the son of the foreigner who has joined himself to the LORD Speak, saying, "The LORD has utterly separated me from His people"; Nor let the eunuch say, "Here I am, a dry tree."

⁴ For thus says the LORD: "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant,

⁵ Even to them I will give in My house And within My walls a place and a name Better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.

⁶ "Also the sons of the foreigner who join themselves to the LORD, to serve Him, And to love the name of the LORD, to be His servants — everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, and holds fast My covenant —

⁷ Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices *will be* accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."

Notice the foreigner who keeps God's Sabbath is *not* to say, "The LORD (*YAHWEH*) has utterly separated me from His people (verse 3)." Through holding fast to God's covenants and keeping His Sabbaths, the foreigner will no longer be separated from God's people – He will be brought right into God's Temple – for His Temple is to be a house of prayer for all nations! The Sabbath is not just for the Jew – though they did preserve it for us – Shabbat is a blessing for all mankind.

Now let's see what God tells us about these foreigners who are joined to Yah in the next verse:

Isa 56:8

The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, says, "Yet I will gather to him *Others* besides those who are gathered to him."

Notice, God will gather to Israel *others*. The "others" refers to the Gentiles who are no longer separated from Israel. It is not good to remain separate from God's people Israel! Those who are uncomfortable with Biblical Judaism in their congregation (I'm not referring to rabbinical Judaism) are building up the wall that Messiah bleed to tear down. In doing so, they may cut themselves off from many blessings. God wants the converted Gentiles to be "gathered to" converted Israelites (Isa 56:8) so they can learn from

them and be blessed together. There is a lot the Church can learn and benefit from their Messianic brethren!

THE BLESSING OF BEING FIRSTBORN

Those who are the first-fruits unto God are in a special relationship with Him. Remember, there is the double portion that is given to the firstborn. Isaac was Abraham's firstborn through Sarah – by promise. God did not count Ishmael as the firstborn. This special position and blessing was promised to Israel. That's why God took all the firstborn in Egypt just prior to the Exodus, because they were holding God's firstborn in slavery.

Ex 4:22

Then you shall say to Pharaoh, "Thus says the LORD: "Israel *is* My son, My firstborn.

Jer 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."

Israel has the right of the firstborn. They are firstfruits unto God. That's just the way it is. God made it so. God has also granted that many people from other nations can be grafted into the firstborn relationship with God. In addition to the immense blessings the firstborn have over those who are not firstborn, there is

the fact that the Prince will marry the firstborn! Scripture does not say that Messiah will marry those who are not firstborn. This may be a blessing reserved only for the firstborn.

Hos 2:14-16

Therefore, behold, I will allure her (Israel), I will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her.

15 I will give her her vineyards from there, And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; She shall sing there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.

16 "And it shall be, in that day," Says the LORD ,
"That you will call Me 'My Husband,' And no longer call Me 'My Master,'

God continues His promises of betrothal to Israel:

19 "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me In righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy;

20 I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, And you shall know the LORD.

That is such an incredibly great promise, that it actually boggles the mind to think that God would desire to marry Israel – and all the firstfruits! Hallelujah!

This will happen, because as Sha'ul put it when He was explaining to the Roman Gentiles about the promises God made to Israel, “the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable (Rom 11:29).”

God is offering this gift to those Gentiles who are grafted in among Israel to share in the extra blessing of being firstborn – firstfruits unto God.

James 1:18

Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

Heb 12:23

²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,

This is the will of Yah. This is His plan for each of us – Jew and Gentile together in the Jewish Savior, Yeshua HaMashiach. This is why Sha'ul (Apostle Paul) said Israel had a significant advantage.

Rom 3:1-4

1 What advantage then has the Jew, or what *is* the profit of circumcision?

² Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.

Again, there is much the churches could benefit from through a closer relationship with their Messianic counterparts – the natural olive tree.

Some have thought that God transferred His promises away from Israel because so many of them sinned or because some do not yet recognize Messiah as having come. Notice Paul’s words about this in the very next verse:

³ For what if some did not believe? Will their unbelief make the faithfulness of God without effect?

⁴ Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar...

God’s word will stand. There is an advantage to being a Jew – a Hebrew. The Bible states this fact plainly. But non-Jews can be brought near to Israel and grafted in to God’s Lovely Green Olive Tree of Good Fruit. Foreigners can learn to love God’s covenants and Sabbaths too and be “gathered to” Israel.

What advantage has the Jew? Why be grafted into Israel?

Rom 9:4-5

⁴ who are Israelites, to whom *pertain* the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service *of God*, and the promises;
⁵ of whom *are* the fathers and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, *the* eternally blessed God. Amen.

Through the blood of Messiah, the Gentiles are no longer foreigners to Israel and her covenants, her promised glory, her son-ship (Eph 2:12 – 20). The Jews have faithfully preserved Torah, Tanach, the Psalms, the Biblical Calendar and the unique method of worship and service that God desires. As Messiah told the woman at the well, “We (Jews) know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews (John 4:22).”

Those Gentiles, who are grafted in as firstfruits, can even share in the blessing of being the bride of Messiah with those converted and believing of Israel, and they too can be blessed as firstborn unto God with and among them. Hallelujah.

Why is it important that the Gentiles be grafted into the natural olive tree that is Israel? Because that is how God desires to bless them – in union with Messiah. Praise Yah, for revealing the mysteries of His merciful plan (Rom 11:33). Don't let any feelings of anti-Semitism or anti-Judaism keep you from the abundant

blessings that God wants to bestow upon you – through Israel.

Gal 3:8

And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, *saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."*