

The Olive Tree

📖 Romans 11:16-24

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Before we get into Romans 11:16-24 there was one question last week. Did Saul have faith *prior* to his conversion directly by Christ? I had mentioned Paul in Rom 11:13 where he stated that he magnified his ministry to the Gentiles. So to find the origin of his ministry to the Gentiles we briefly mentioned his conversion on the Road to Damascus in Acts 9. So the question is about the order of faith and conversion, whether faith precedes conversion or conversion precedes faith.

Q: Did Saul have faith prior to his conversion directly by Christ?

A: The short answer is that faith precedes conversion. Nobody has ever been directly converted by Christ before faith. Everybody has been converted by Christ after faith. But you do see these two orders float around in theology circles. The order that places conversion before faith is referred to as regeneration precedes faith. That is the view of Lordship Salvation. The other order places faith before conversion and is referred to as faith precedes regeneration. This is the view of Scripture. Unanimously Scripture testifies that faith precedes regeneration. Paul said in Acts 16:31, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved..." The order is believe and be saved. He did not say "be saved and you will believe in the Lord Jesus." Saul definitely had faith on the Damascus Road prior to his conversion. His faith and conversion are reported in Acts 9, Acts 22 and Acts 26. Together these reports are a harmony. Together the picture is that Saul was on his way to Damascus with a group of men, letters in hand to arrest Jewish believers. About mid-day a bright light, brighter than the sun shone around him and all who were with him. They all fell to the ground and they all heard a voice but only Saul understood the voice. The voice spoke in the Hebrew dialect saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads." Saul then asked, "Who are you, Sir?" and the Sir said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting." In Jewish theology this was a divine correction from heaven. Saul understood from the statement that he was being rebuked for resisting God. The expression "It is hard for you to kick against the goads" was a common rural metaphor for kicking against God. Just as a cattle's continued kicking would bring harm to itself so Paul's continued kicking against God would bring harm to himself. Saul understood that he was being corrected by God and he accepted the correction and believed in Jesus of Nazareth. It was at the moment he believed that he was converted or regenerated. Faith always precedes conversion or regeneration. Afterward

Saul was told to go into Damascus where he would be appointed to his task of apostleship and being blinded he was led in by the hand. So the answer is that Saul did have faith prior to his conversion.

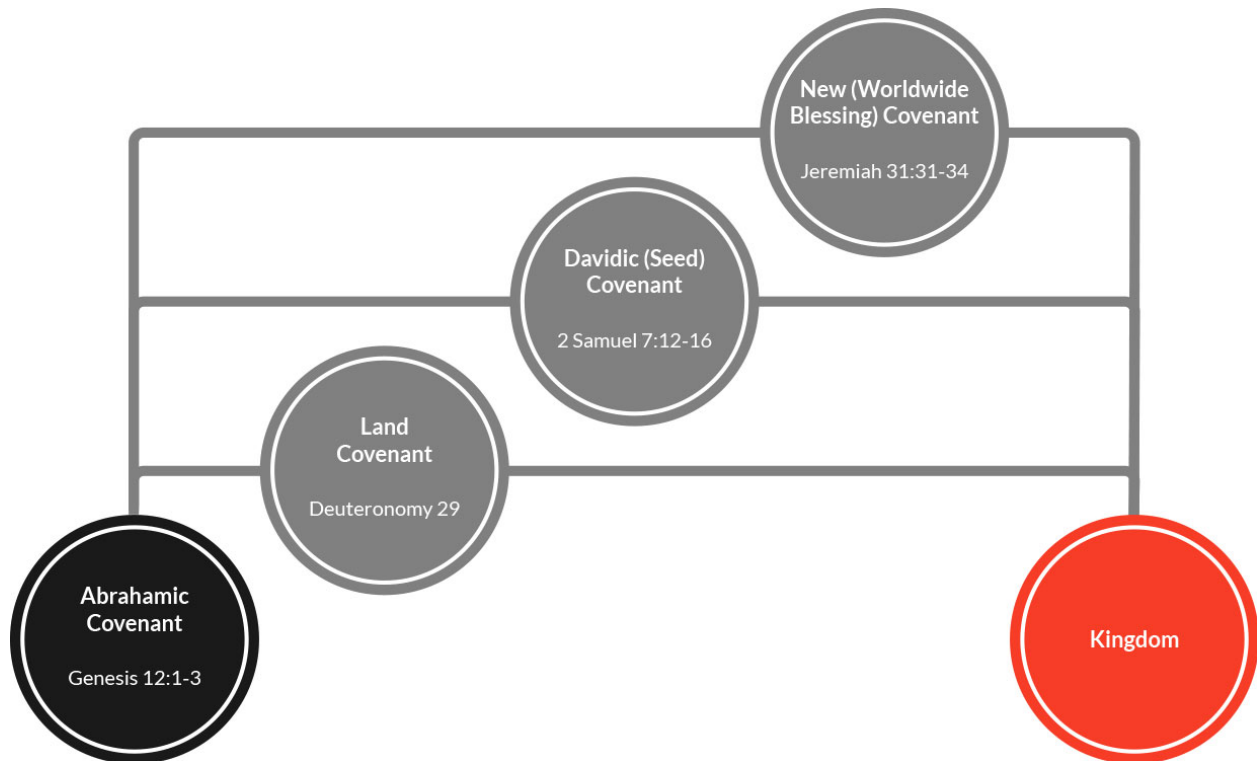
If it is wondered why someone comes to faith, one comes to faith due to hearing the proclaimed word of the gospel (Rom 10:17) in conjunction with the work of the Spirit who convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment (John 16:8-11). The proclaimed gospel is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe (Rom 1:16). Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the proclaimed word of Christ (Rom 10:17). As people hear the gospel they can resist it because of stubborn, rebellious hearts or they can consider it, learn and come to faith (John 6:45). But all that is necessary is that the word of the gospel be proclaimed and the Spirit convicts and the person hears it proclaimed and considers it and believes. It is not necessary to appeal to a mysterious work of God that is unspeakable because it is beyond history. Nor is it necessary to appeal to an eternal decree of God because it does not have explanatory power. What is necessary and does have explanatory power is it is the spoken word of God in conjunction with the Spirit of God which brings a person to faith in Jesus Christ. In that way Saul hearing Christ's voice on the Damascus Road is no different than our hearing Christ's voice in the Scriptures when it is read or proclaimed. The voice of Jesus on the Damascus Road is the same voice of Scripture and that voice is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe. No one can be saved before they believe.

Last time we introduced Romans 11:11-15 and Paul will expand upon these verses in the analogy with the dough and the lump and the olive tree and the branches in 11:16-24 but before we do let's work our way up to speed by reviewing. In 11:11 Paul is asking if the purpose of Israel stumbling over their Messiah was so that they would fall from their position as the covenant people of God. The fact that Israel is the covenant people of God is a key to what follows when identifying the first pieces and the root so we will need to understand a few things about the covenants. Paul's answer to the question, was the purpose of Israel stumbling over their Messiah that they would fall from their position as the covenant people of God is answered with "Perish the thought!" Israel has not lost their position as the covenant people of God. Nor was that the purpose of their stumbling. Instead, the purpose of their stumbling was so that salvation would come to the Gentiles and in turn the purpose of Gentile salvation is that Jews will be provoked to jealousy so that they come to salvation in the present age and become a part of the remnant. In 11:12 if the Jews rejection resulted in riches of salvation for the world and Israel's loss resulted in riches of salvation for the Gentiles, how much more riches will Israel's gain be when they receive their Messiah. In 11:13 Paul clarifies that he is speaking to those who are Gentiles. This is key because the olive tree analogy is spoken mainly to Gentiles and the main principle of the olive tree is that Gentile believers should not get arrogant against Israel. In other words, it's warning Gentile believers against anti-Semitism and the consequences of that in the present Church age. Incipient in the NT are all the doctrinal heresies that would be developed in the Church age and one of those heresies is replacement theology or supercessionism, the idea that the Church has replaced Israel. This heresy was already beginning to develop among the Gentile believers at Rome. It later developed in the 160's AD through the writings of Justin Martyr. Then with the allegorical method of interpretation propagated by Origen and later Augustine Israel was completely replaced by the Church and

the Roman Catholic Church enshrined the Church as a kingdom on earth.¹ Romans 11 has been here all along to highlight this very dangerous heresy that breeds anti-Semitism. So the words in verse 13, "I am speaking to you who are Gentiles" is a key to taking to heart the warning that follows. Paul continues in verse 13, "inasmuch as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry..." Paul magnified his ministry to Gentiles because as more and more Gentiles came to salvation in the Jewish Messiah more and more Gentiles would be out in the world to provoke Jews to jealousy so that they too might come to salvation in the Jewish Messiah. In 11:14 Paul states this explicitly, if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. In 11:15 Paul concluded much like verse 12, "For if Israel's rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?" Ultimately the nation Israel will accept Jesus as their Messiah and when they do the nation will be restored to her covenant blessings.

Now we come to 11:16 where we find two different analogies that relate to Israel and her covenants. We have to talk about the covenants because by 11:26-27 note that the new covenant is fulfilled to Israel. Well, how did we ever get to there? That's the kingdom and we live before the kingdom, we're Gentile believers and presently we are being blessed. So how do we relate to Israel's covenants? Evidently we haven't overtaken them. Somehow Israel is ultimately brought into the bond of the new covenant. Before we get too far into it let's understand a covenant. What's a covenant? A covenant isn't a religious word it's a legal word. It refers to a legal contract. Just like a contract has parties, terms and a signature so biblical covenants have parties, terms, a sign and additionally, a founding blood sacrifice. The contracts we're talking about are the Abrahamic, the Land, the Davidic and the New. God made these four covenants with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (who was renamed Israel) and David. They are all unilateral, eternal, unconditional covenants meaning that they are one-way covenants that once given are set in motion and remain in motion until they are ultimately fulfilled by God alone. The big question is, "Have Israel's covenants been transferred to the Church because they rejected their Messiah so that the Church has replaced Israel? And we already know from verse 1 that they have not, "God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be!" So what is the relationship of Gentiles to Israel's covenants? The short answer is we are partakers not over-takers. That's an important expression to get down; *we are partakers of blessings under the covenants, not over-takers.*

Now the first one is the Abrahamic and it is the basis for the other three. The Abrahamic is made in Gen 12:1-3 and it promised three basic things; a land, a seed (or offspring) and worldwide blessing. The Land covenant is made in Deut 29 and it elaborates on the Promised Land. The Davidic covenant is made in 2 Sam 7:12-16 and it elaborates on the promised seed and the new covenant is made in Jer 31:31-34 and it elaborates on the promised worldwide blessing. So the relationship looks like this:



So the original is the Abrahamic and the three latter covenants simply elaborate on its promises by specifying more detail about the promises. Each is in operation from the moment it was given but each is not fulfilled until Israel receives Jesus as her King. Then He will return and establish the Kingdom. So all of the covenants are fulfilled in the Kingdom. Now what that means is that there is no fulfillment of these covenants to Gentiles in any sense; they are not being fulfilled already to the Church—not yet to Israel, they are not partially fulfilled to the Church, not one iota of any of these covenants have been or can be fulfilled to Gentiles. And that’s because all these covenants can only be fulfilled by God to their original recipients. Who are the recipients? There are six direct recipients; Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the twelve tribes, David and Jesus, and these covenants can only be fulfilled to those six recipients. We’re not one of those six recipients. We are Gentiles and that’s why I say like Paul says, we are not over-takers of Israel’s covenants but we are partakers of blessings under these covenants because once given a covenant is in effect, it is in operation. But the fulfillment is entirely in the future to the original six direct recipients and nobody else.

Now let’s look at 11:16 and see if we can get these analogies in place. Paul says, **if the first piece is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too.** Two analogies, somewhat vague but reveal the same basic truth. The first analogy says that **if the first piece of dough is holy** then **the lump of dough** is also holy. The second analogy says that **if the root is holy** then **the branches** are holy too. These analogies mean the same thing but only the second analogy is taken further and built on in vv 17-24 with the olive tree, the branches and so forth. But basically both analogies are saying that if the first of something is **holy** then

everything that derives from it is also **holy**. What do we mean by **holy**? Something “set apart unto God.” So if the first thing is set apart unto God then that which comes from it is also set apart unto God. That’s the basic truth and then in vv 17-24 Paul expands on this basic truth.

Now I’ve alluded heavily to what all this refers to but it’s important to go through the interpretive steps. We observe in 11:16 the first analogy. The first analogy of the **first piece of dough** and **the lump** comes from Numbers 15:18ff. This is where the nation Israel was commanded to take the first fruits of their harvest and bake them into a cake to present before the Lord as a wave offering. Numbers 15:20-21 says, “Of the first of your dough you shall lift up a cake as an offering; as the offering of the threshing floor, so you shall lift it up. From the first of your dough you shall give to the LORD an offering throughout your generations.” By doing this they were giving thanks to God and thus ensuring a plentiful harvest. If the first fruits were good then the rest of the harvest would be good. From the rest of the analogy it seems that the first fruits represent the first piece of the nation Israel. Who is the first piece of the nation Israel? Abraham. What set Abraham apart unto God? The Abrahamic Covenant. Then from him came **the lump**. Who’s **the lump** that came from Abraham? Isaac, Jacob and the nation Israel. What set them apart? God confirmed the Abrahamic Covenant to them. And again, the principle is that if the first piece is holy, set apart unto God, then everything that stems from the first piece is also holy. Therefore Abraham is holy because God set him apart by the Abrahamic Covenant, and Isaac and Jacob and the nation Israel are also set apart because the Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed to them.

- **First piece** = Abraham = holy (set apart to God) by the Abrahamic Covenant
- **Lump** = Isaac, Jacob and the nation Israel = holy (set apart to God) by the Abrahamic Covenant

The second metaphor is teaching the same thing as the first. The **root** is parallel to **the first piece of dough** and the **branches** are parallel to **the lump**. So the **root** is Abraham. The Abrahamic Covenant is what set him apart. The **branches** are Isaac, Jacob and the nation Israel since the Abrahamic Covenant was confirmed to them.

- **Root** = Abraham = holy (set apart to God) by the Abrahamic Covenant
- **Branches** = Isaac, Jacob and the nation Israel (or individual Israelites) = holy (set apart to God) by the Abrahamic Covenant

So the **root** is Abraham and he is holy because the Abrahamic Covenant set him apart as holy. The **branches** that stem from him are Isaac, Jacob and the nation Israel (i.e. individual Israelites) and they are holy because the Abrahamic Covenant was also confirmed to them. Both metaphors are defining the nation Israel as holy by tracing their origins to Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant which was confirmed to Isaac, Jacob and the nation Israel.

In 11:17 Paul elaborates saying, **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, 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.** The clear teaching is not to be **arrogant toward the branches** and **the branches**

have already been defined as the nation Israel (or individual Israelites). Some of the details are more difficult. Paul says in 11:17, **But if some of the branches were broken off** is a 1st class condition and so assumes for the sake of argument that it is true. Contextually it is true, **some**, but not all, of the branches of the nation Israel **were broken off**. Why were they broken off? Verse 20 answers, "they were broken off for their unbelief." They were supposed to believe in Jesus as the Messiah. Some of the nation Israel did not believe in Jesus as the Messiah and consequently were **broken off** of the olive tree. What does this mean? This means that they were under discipline and no longer receiving blessing under the Abrahamic Covenant. It is unfortunate because they didn't follow in the footsteps of their father Abraham by believing. **And you, being a wild olive, were grafted in.** Since in verse 13 Paul is turning to speak to the Gentiles then the **wild olive** branches are believing Gentiles.

- **Wild olive branches** = believing Gentiles

And the believing Gentiles **were grafted in among them**. The ones they were **grafted in among** are the believing Jews, the remnant. It should be pointed out that horticulturally, it is not normal to graft wild branches into a cultivated olive tree. It is usually done the other way around, cultivated branches are grafted into a wild olive tree. So what happens here is supposed to be viewed as contrary to a normal practice. And what is contrary is that Gentiles are **grafted in among** believing Jews. The reason, of course, is because they believed in the Jewish Messiah. So you now have believing Gentiles being **grafted in** among believing Jews and this is to be viewed as something contrary to normal custom.

Now we want to note that the believing Gentiles are not being grafted into Israel. Instead they are being grafted into the olive tree along with believing Jews. And together they are enjoying blessings that come from a single source; namely the covenants.

As Paul says **you** Gentile believers **became partakers with them**. See, we are not over-takers but **partakers**. We share in something with Jewish believers during this present age. And what is it that we share in? **The rich root of the olive tree**. So **the rich root of the olive tree** is the single source of blessing for Gentile and Jewish believers in the present age. And what is the **root of the olive tree**? It's Abrahamic Covenant. That is the source of blessing. The reason it is called **rich** is because all spiritual nourishment comes up from the Abrahamic Covenant to the branches of the olive tree.

And how is it that Gentiles can receive spiritual blessing from the Abrahamic Covenant? I'm separating out the spiritual blessings from the physical blessings. We can receive spiritual blessings not physical blessings. The physical blessing relates to physical prosperity in the land and are for Israel only. But what we are eligible to receive are spiritual blessings. And which of the three covenants that grew out of the Abrahamic covenant promised spiritual blessing to the world? The New Covenant. We partake of spiritual blessings because of our spiritual connection with Jesus Christ through faith. And through Him we access the spiritual blessings of the New Covenant such as the forgiveness of sins and the indwelling Spirit. How can all this happen? How can

Gentiles receive blessing via a Jewish covenant? The New Covenant is made with Israel. First, because one provision of the Abrahamic Covenant was blessing to all the nations of the earth. Gen 12:3 says, "I will bless those who bless you...And in you all the nations of the earth will be blessed." The promise was made to Abraham and the blessing to all nations comes through Abraham. Even in Abraham's own life, those who blessed him, such as Abimelech, were blessed through Abraham. This is what I mean when I say that the covenant made with Abraham went into effect immediately when it was given to Abraham. I do not mean that it was fulfilled, that would require all the provisions to be met entirely and to remain forever. But what I mean is that it was in effect such that blessing could be enjoyed by Gentiles who blessed Abraham. Second, because Jesus Christ died for the sins of the whole world. He did not just die for the sins of all Israel. He died for the sins of all men. And third, because the ultimate blessing to all the nations of the earth would be through faith in Abraham's seed, Jesus Christ. Gal 3:8, "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU." "So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer." And through faith we access this blessing through Christ; Gal 3:14, "in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." So incipient in the Abrahamic Covenant was the provision that Gentiles could experience blessing from the Abrahamic Covenant from the moment it was put into effect and that ultimate spiritual blessing could come from believing in the seed who came from Abraham, that is, Christ. Fourth, now we are **partakers with** believing Jews of these great spiritual blessings. Eph 3:6, "...to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel." Believing Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body. Note that we are members of the body which is the body of Christ, the Church. We are not Israel. Believing Gentiles are still Gentiles and believing Jews are still Jews; together we constitute the body of Christ, the Church. The Church is not Israel. If the Church were Israel then it would say that believing Gentiles are grafted into the natural branches, which are Israel, but believing Gentiles are not grafted into the natural branches but among the natural branches into the **rich root of the olive tree** so that both Jews and Gentiles are being nourished by the same spiritual root of the Abrahamic Covenant.

The picture emerges that the root is Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant, the natural branches are Israel but when Messiah came some of them were broken off for their unbelief, and wild olive branches are grafted in among them through faith in the Messiah so that we receive spiritual blessing from the Abrahamic Covenant.

Then in 11:18 we see the chief application; **do not be arrogant toward the branches**, that is, Gentile believers should not become **arrogant toward** that part of the nation Israel that was broken off for their unbelief. The principle was very important to remember as it was becoming a tendency in the Church at Rome for the Gentile believers to **be arrogant** against the unbelieving Jews. It appeared to them that God was sick and tired of unbelieving Israel as He replaced them with the Gentile dominated Church. But this was not the case. God did not purpose to save Gentiles to replace Israel but instead to evangelize Israel. We do that by provoking them to

jealousy. We have their Messiah and that should cause them to be jealous and want to have Him too. This is the chief way the Jewish remnant is formed in the present age. Since there is always a believing Jewish remnant it is evident that God had not rejected unbelieving Israel and therefore if God had not rejected them then we as Gentile believers should not be **arrogant toward** them.

Paul says, **but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you.** If one was already arrogant against the nation Israel he should remember that the **root**, Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant **supports** Gentile believers. That is where we get blessing from. Abraham was set apart by the Abrahamic Covenant and blessing came through him. Gen 12:3, "I will bless those who bless you..." "You" ultimately looked to Abraham's seed, that is Messiah, and Gentile believers are now receiving spiritual blessings from the covenant through Jesus the Messiah. But it's not our covenant. It's their covenant, they are the natural recipients of the blessing. So we are getting blessing through something that does not belong to us, "salvation is from the Jews" (John 4:22). All that we have and all that we are ultimately goes back to Abraham and the Abrahamic Covenant that set him apart. The covenant that was confirmed to Isaac, Jacob and the nation Israel and can only be fulfilled to them. So for us to forget these things could lead to us becoming arrogant against the Jews. But that would be a great tragedy because **it is not you who supports the root but the root supports you.** We're being supported and blessed under a Jewish covenant.

11:19, **You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in."** Paul is projecting the kind of argument a persistent Gentile believer might make. In other words, they rejected and I accepted so that's the end of it. In 11:20 Paul says, "That is quite right!" It's true. The purpose of unbelieving Israel being broken off was Gentile salvation. Paul already said as much in 11:11, "I say then, they did not stumble over the Messiah so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous." But the purpose of Gentile salvation was not to permanently replace Israel but to provoke Israel to jealousy so they might be grafted back in. So Paul agrees then that some of the **branches were broken off for their** unbelief but what place does that leave for arrogance? None because he says, **you stand by your faith**, or literally, "you have come to stand firm by faith" in Jesus as the Messiah. And you can't boast in faith because faith is without merit. Faith is the opposite of merit. The only thing one can boast in is Jesus Christ and Him crucified. Faith is simply an instrument through which we receive salvation which is of the Jews.

Paul then gives the proper attitude to the situation. **Do not be conceited, but fear.** The Greek literally says, "Do not develop an attitude of arrogance, but fear." **Fear** of God is the proper attitude in the situation. Why? Verse 21, **For if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either.** The word **spare** means "save from trouble, discomfort."² Paul is saying God did not spare the natural branches from trouble and discomfort because of their unbelief. The nation Israel is under divine discipline. God did not leave them without discipline and this has been very discomfoting for the nation Israel. Church history is a continuous struggle for the Jews. No matter where they have gone, no matter where they have tried to rest their head they have never been able

to escape the accusations of blood libel, the forced pogroms, the charges of starting a world war and any number of other propaganda. This is the evidence that God did not spare them, it is their divine discipline and it remains to this day even though God is currently setting the stage to restore them by re-gathering them out of the fires of the Holocaust in unbelief.

But we should fear because **if God** disciplined them, **He will not spare you, either.** That is, He will not “save us from trouble.” He will discipline us if we become arrogant against the nation Israel. And here’s where you see that it is a very dangerous thing for Gentile believers to turn against the nation Israel. I would say this is a very strict warning against the idea that the Church has replaced Israel. To even say that God has a future for Israel is not saying enough. One must affirm that God has a future for national Israel in the land regenerate and enjoying the fulfillment of all their covenants is the only thing that is enough. And when a seminary like Covenant Theology Seminaries that are Amill or Postmill or even Premill come along and the Amill’s say the Church has replaced Israel and the Postmill’s say there will be a Jewish revival at the end of history as we bring the kingdom in but there is no national future for Israel or the premill which says that many Jews will come into the one people of God in the end times, all this is far short of what Scripture teaches. Even what most at Dallas Theological Seminary now teaches, that Jesus is now on David’s throne in heaven ruling over the kingdom already but not yet is mixing things that God has kept so sacredly separate. You cannot mix Israel and God’s covenant purposes for Israel with the Church. And if you do you are playing with fire. God has made it perfectly clear that He has a covenant purpose for Israel that He alone will fulfill and He alone will establish His people in the land and no one will ever cast them out again. And so we should beware of any kind of degradation of Israel now as if we are something special that God will not discipline.

In 11:22 Paul says, **Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity,** referring to the divine discipline toward Israel, **but to you, Gentiles, God’s kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off,** that is, we will be cut off by coming under divine discipline. **And 11:23, they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in.** The nation Israel, if they believe that Jesus is the Messiah will come out from under the divine discipline and come back into the place of blessing so that they are once again partaking of the rich spiritual root of the Abrahamic Covenant. **For God is able to graft them in again. God** has the power **to graft them** back into the olive tree that they were originally a part of. The Abrahamic Covenant belongs to them in the first place. It’s not too hard for Him. Don’t doubt Him and don’t think that the Church has fared much better than Israel. We haven’t!

11:24 explains, **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?** I mentioned earlier that in horticulture it is odd to graft something wild into something that is cultivated. Yet that is what God did by grafting Gentiles into the tree to enjoy the rich spiritual blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant. So **how much more,** an argument from the lesser to the greater, how

much more will God graft Israel back into their own tree? God has already done the greater thing of grafting us wild olive branches into a cultivated olive tree so how much more will He do the lesser thing of grafting Israel back into their own tree? It is a sure thing that God will graft them back in. So we should not be arrogant against the nation Israel today. It is very dangerous to get arrogant against the Jews. I'd say it's satanic. Don't forget, it's the root that supports you, not you that supports the root. You can start to think that Israel was so bad, they crucified their Messiah and because of that we Gentiles are getting saved. But Gentile salvation is not an end in itself, it's a means to an end, and that end is provoking Israel to jealousy so that they will be saved in 11:26-27, brought into the bond of the New Covenant and all the physical and spiritual blessings of all the covenants God made with them fulfilled directly to them.

So the big idea is that the covenants belong to Israel and can only be fulfilled to Israel and the Gentiles relationship to the covenants is that we can be blessed through them as we bless Israel, as we believe in Israel's Messiah. We are partakers of spiritual blessings, not over-takers...If you go any other way with this text such as you say that God did not spare Israel means God is done with Israel then what's to stop God from being done with you? You get into loss of salvation and all kinds of other ideas that are not in the text. Israel is under divine discipline and we can come under divine discipline. That's what's in view. So we should love Israel.

¹ John Hannah, *Our Legacy: The History of Christian Doctrine*, p 309.

² BDAG, p 1051.