

August 11th – Grafted Into the Covenant

“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, do not boast against the branches.” (Romans 11:17)

The Apostle dedicated three chapters of his Roman epistle to explaining God’s covenant of salvation with the nation of Israel. An honest reading of the New Testament reveals that God is not done with His people Israel, and that the church has not replaced the nation of Israel. The church and Israel are two separate entities, and while it’s true that some Israelites are part of the church, not all Jews are a part of the Body of Christ. And yet, there are some things we can be sure of.

Paul makes one thing clear – salvation came first to the nation of Israel. He said in chapter 1 that the Gospel is the power of God to salvation for all who believe – “for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” The Jews were the first to enter into a covenant of salvation with the Lord – a covenant that has always been based on faith in Jehovah (Rom. 4:3). And while many Jews have rejected God’s offer of salvation by rejecting Christ, it doesn’t negate the fact that salvation came to us through the Jews.

So then, speaking to Gentiles (non-Jews), Paul said that “some of the branches were broken off” – that is, not every person born Jewish is saved. And likewise, “a wild olive tree” (Gentiles) were “grafted in among them.” Though Gentiles were born outside the Jewish heritage, through faith in Jesus we have been grafted into the covenant of salvation. Now we have become partakers “of the root and fatness of the olive tree.” That should not make us prideful – rather it should cause us to boast about Jesus!