

Romans 9-11

Sunday 11/1/2009

We have been coming through Romans, really chapters 9, 10, and 11. We have seen how important it is that anything God devotes three chapters to in the Bible, you better look at it as far as some really great potential to see how God is dealing with His chosen people. I want to read for you Romans chapter 11. Let's pick it up in verse 16. It says this:

For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Now, Father, we thank You and praise You again for the Lord Jesus. We thank You for the events already today. We thank You, Father, for Roy and his great song. Lord, I always look for the person that sings before I preach to pave the way and prepare the hearts, and Lord, I thank You for that today. I thank You for Andrea, Lord. I thank You again for her faithfulness. Lord, we will miss her, but Lord, we know that You are going to do in her life what You have for her to do. We will continue to pray for her and wish her all the luck and the success in the world.

Lord, I pray now as we turn our attention to the Bible that You will give us those things. Help us to learn the book of Romans. Lord, there is no other book in the world for You and us as Christians that we need to understand as far as our own relationship with God more than the book of Romans. Lord, we painstakingly, verse by verse, lay this out as we have come through, that these folks may be able to get a running commentary in their Bible of this great book. Help us yet today, Father, to take this passage and to open it up. Help me to make it clear. Help them to leave today understanding this passage better, Lord, than they already do. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

I. Understanding Israel Through Biblical Study

Now, when we come to this passage, as I said yet again, we see another aspect of how God views the nation of Israel in contrast to where we are at. That is a lot of what Paul is doing in the book of Romans. He is contrasting God's dealing with the nation of Israel and putting it into a perspective so we, as the church, by contrast, can understand it. What we are doing here in Romans chapter 9, 10, and 11, and we have talked about this almost every week, is taking a biblical study of the nation of Israel. There is probably no other place in the Bible that you can get more of a concentrated, intense study of the Bible.

I work with many of you in learning your Bible. My week is filled with people who come over and we talk about the Bible, and many of you are in programs coming through the Bible. You know as well as I do that there are many ways to study the Bible. In my own personal life, I have never just stayed with one way of studying the Bible. I am the kind of guy that I have got to move it around. I have got to be able to come at things from a different angle. I have learned that I never study the same way twice or all the time, anyhow.

I know that you can study the Bible by taking a book and setting the context of that book, and basically, that is what we have done in Institute. We laid out three basic books that are the key books: Matthew, Acts, and Hebrews. We have left no stone unturned in those, and we are in Hebrews right now. So, you can study books of the Bible. You can study chapters of the Bible. Chapters within each book obviously hold some tremendous material, and you can go at it that way.

I think one of the greatest ways to study the Bible, and I encourage everybody to do this at some point in your life, is character studies. Characters being individuals. Taking a man in the Bible or a woman in the Bible. There was a guy, I think he is probably dead now, but he wrote a series of books that I think are probably some of the greatest reference study helps that you will ever find. His name was Herbert Lockyer. I do not think we have his books back there at this point in time, but we probably need to get some of them. He did a whole series, and his books were called the "All Series." In one book, it was "All the Women in the Bible." He went through and characterized every woman in the Bible and gave you a short paragraph, told you where she was, who she was, where she was from. There was another one, "All the Men in the Bible." There was even one, "All the Children in the Bible." Then he did one, "All the Kings and the Queens in the Bible." Then he did one, "All of the Holy Days in the Bible."

They were incredible books because what it allowed somebody to do is be able to take a subject, and this is what I want to talk about today in how to study the Bible. We can talk about all kinds of different ways, but taking a subject of the Bible and breaking it down into its pieces, basically isolating it from the rest of the Bible, and then studying that section helps you to get it into a better perspective. So, when you put it all back together in the Bible, you have a better understanding of how it all works.

I want to show you a great example of that today out of Romans chapter 11. I not only want this to be informative for you as far as being able to put this in your running commentary on Romans, but I want you to see a model here of a great way to study your Bible. I call it isolation. I call it taking a particular subject out of the Bible, completely removing it from all the other Bible, and then just focusing on that piece and really getting it down and learning it well. At some point in your life, you are going to have to do that with most every subject in the Bible. I have found that that is really my way of approach in teaching the Bible.

A number of years ago, I did a biblical study of Satan, and I realized that there was more written in the Bible about the devil than any other man in the Bible outside of the Lord Jesus Christ. So, I did a biblical study of Satan, and when I did that, I was immediately faced with all of the material. The thing we had to deal with is, how do I organize that material? Yet, I found a very

simple, systematic way, and I use it in the concept of isolation. I looked at the devil and I looked at all that he did in the Bible, and I found out basically that the basic, fundamental, lowest common denominator aspect of the devil was simply this: throughout your Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, the devil was kicked out of heaven three times. Now, that is very significant because everything about the devil then can be put into those three categories. So, I broke down a biblical study of Satan based on the three places in the Bible that he is kicked out of heaven.

1. In one place, he is kicked out positionally.
2. In another place, he is kicked out bodily.
3. In another place, he is kicked out eternally.

Now, what I just did is took a massive subject in the Bible and I broke it down into three basic sessions. You know what I did? I isolated that study, and then I broke that study down into three concepts, studied each concept thoroughly, and then what did I do? I lifted it back up, put it back into my Bible, and now I understood the perspective in a better way.

I did this last week or the week before last when I talked about the rapture, the concept of the rapture. Now, there is another case. What did I do? I broke the rapture down into three aspects: the Old Testament saints, the church age, and the tribulation saints. That is taking a subject and isolating it.

I think another great study is the study of the twelve apostles, and I am just talking about things that I have done here. I mean, there are hundreds of them today. I am trying to set the stage for where we are going to go here in Romans 11. The twelve apostles are an incredible study, and every pastor ought to understand the concept, at least from an inspirational application, of the twelve apostles. How do you break those down? Well, they represent, the twelve apostles really represent what you have in any church. In fact, they are a church. They are a called-out assembly. They are not empowered with the Holy Spirit of God, but there are, do not get deceived, there are four or five different churches in the Bible. You have got to understand what a church means. It means "called out," and those twelve are called out. Yes, it is before the empowering of the church, the spiritual body, but they are a called out. Abraham is a church. He is called out, but he is not the same kind of church that you and I are.

Now, it is a model. When He calls out those twelve, what do you have? You have one that is a phony. You know what that tells me? That every church, every church you are going to have, you are going to have people who say they are Christians but are probably not. Then you have three who are basically found every time some great event takes place. So, we know who those are, do not we? Peter, James, and John. That shows me that out of any church, the majority of the work is going to get done by the minority. So, you have everything laying itself out. You have one, you have twelve of them. One is a phony, three get it, and the rest are along for the ride, you see. Then, within that twelve, you have one who goes all the way. That is a model. You isolate that. You study it, you look at it, and you find where you are at in your own personal life.

I think another great study is the tabernacle. The tabernacle probably, I am not kidding you. If you want a good book on the tabernacle, get Arthur W. Pink's "Gleanings in Exodus." I mean, it does not get any better than that, and yet, at that, it is going to overwhelm you; there is so much

material in it. But when I studied the tabernacle, you know what I did? I isolated it. I took the tabernacle and I broke it down. I pulled it out of the Bible and I broke it down into three sections.

4. The tabernacle has an outer section.
5. It has an inner section.
6. Then it has what we know as the Holy of Holies.

You study it and you break it down, and then you learn about it, and then you put it back into your Bible, and the whole thing makes sense.

Now, you talk about, you want to study God? All right. In the Old Testament, there are fourteen titles of God. You want to study God? Isolate Him in the Old Testament. Take those fourteen titles that He has, and those titles come in three forms.

7. Some of them are what we call primary names. That will be the ones that talk about God as Lord or God in the uppercase letters.
8. You will find some that are compounds with the Hebrew name. That will be the ones that have "El" in front of them, like El Shaddai, and those names.
9. Then you will find some that are compounds with what we call the Tetragrammaton, and that will be the ones that are connected with Jehovah. They will be the ones that are connected with in that sense.

So, the way to learn your Bible, or one of the great ways to learn your Bible, is to be able to isolate subjects, bring it together and take it apart, look at all the pieces, identify all the pieces, and then put the pieces back together and put them into your Bible.

Now, most people will not do that, and the reason why most people will not do that in its very basic form is most people are not disciplined enough to do that. One of the things that you have got to deal with with young Christians, young Christians have a zeal, but it is not always according to knowledge. One of the things that you have got to deal with with young Christians is kind of keeping the hammer on them so they do not get way out in left field when it comes to the Bible. In other words, they want to, all of us have one desire, and that is the fact that we want to learn the Bible today. Young Christians who get on fire for God, they have that burning passion, and they want to learn it all today. Unfortunately, you do not learn it all today.

When I was working in the secular world a while back, I had to get a chauffeur's license, and they were training us where we were, and they said, "Now, this is Friday, and we are going to let you off at noon today, and you need to show up Monday with a chauffeur's license." I did not even know what a chauffeur's license was. They said, "You have to go to, you have to take a test." They actually passed out the material, and so I said, "Well, I am going to get this thing done right now." So, I am driving to the motor vehicle place, studying my paper, and I got there, and I went in there, and I said, "I want to take my chauffeur's license test." So, what happened was that they gave me the test, and I flunked it the first time, and she said, "Well, you had this one wrong, this one wrong, this one wrong, and this one wrong, so you go ahead and take it again right now." Well, she just told me what I did wrong and told me the answer, so I went back in and I got my chauffeur's license just like that. In less than a day, in an hour, I had studied the

thing, got it down, did not quite make it the first time, got a second shot, made it. I went out, and they are pretty proud that here I am. I took that book, did not even know what it was two hours ago, now I studied the book, memorized the stuff, went in and took the test, and I got it. I felt pretty proud of myself, but you know what? You can do that with a chauffeur's license, but you will never do that with that Bible. You never will, never will.

You know, people many times, learning your Bible, you have to do it one piece at a time, and then as you put it back together, it takes a while, but it is the only real way to get it done. Most young Christians try to learn way too much, way too fast, and then they do not get anything done right. Do you ever try to do ten different things at one time? I do not particularly like Obama, or I do not particularly care for the president, but I have nothing personal against him. His views on life are not my views on life, and this is not a slam to him, but the bottom line is this, you know why? You have got to remember, he is probably one of the youngest presidents we have ever had, and he also, he is probably one of the least experienced presidents we ever had. The only thing his claim to fame is, I mean, you take guys like Reagan, I mean, what was his claim to fame? Well, anybody twenty years on Death Valley Days on TV had to be a good president. I mean, that is all there is to it. They had experience.

I remember when John F. Kennedy became president of the United States, everybody, he was at that time the youngest president we ever had, and everybody said the same thing, that he had absolutely no experience, and he turned out, I mean, obviously, he got his life cut short, but he turned out being a pretty good president. Being president of the United States takes a tremendous lot of experience. I think Eisenhower made a good president simply because of the fact that he was a four-star general, been through World War II, he understood organizational skills, he had a great grasp of the world, and you cannot be a four-star general and try to hold all the allies together without being somewhat political. So, he had a good foundation.

Barack Obama's problem is he has no experience. I mean, he was a community organizer. What is that? I mean, on Friday night, you get a bunch of people together to make sure the pizzas get there at eight o'clock. I mean, that is where you are at with it. You know what his problem was? And I do not have anything personal against him, but you know what his problem is? He is so young, new in experience, and now he is trying to get twenty major things going at the same time. He is trying to fight the war in Iraq, the war in Iran, the war in a deal with Iran. He is going to North Korea. He is trying to solve the health care problems. He is trying to do all of these things that a normal president would look at and say, "You cannot do that that fast and that quickly," because you know what? It is the same way with you and me. When you do a lot of things that are complicated things, you know what you wind up? You wind up not doing any of them well. But if you take them one at a time, focus on it one piece at a time, but you see, it takes discipline to do that. It takes putting down your desires of wanting to grasp it all and thinking you can. Nobody can do that. If you notice, when we come through our Bible Basics class, that is one of the things that we did. We took it and broke it apart in pieces.

II. Israel as an Olive Tree

Now, I said all that to say this: in Romans chapter 11, verses 16 through 21, what we just read, we have another aspect of the nation of Israel and to learn it. If you notice over the times, if you have been coming to Thursday night Bible study or even on Sunday mornings, we have shown you that there are many, many different ways to study the nation of Israel. Here is a case where the nation of Israel is connected to an olive tree. We see now another way to study the nation of Israel. This is a very good example today of what I am talking about in an isolated study.

So, we are going to do a couple of things today.

10. We are going to learn this section so you can get it into your Bibles.

11. I am going to use this to give you an incredible example of what it means or how you do an isolated study in the Bible at breaking the pieces down.

You heard me say many, many times, and it is in my book on how to study the Bible, that a way to learn your Bible is by association. You look at things that associate with other things, and many times there will be an incredible picture of what God wants you to see, and understanding what you have there really comes out.

For instance, I will give you a quick example. You have heard me say this many, many times. At the first coming of Christ, you have four books: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. You have heard me say this before, but allow me to use it in a reference so we can put it in a context. At the first coming of Christ, you have got Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Anybody who has read your Bible through, or at least read the New Testament, you know that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John do not line up exactly. You might read an account here, and it talks about one person. Then you might read the exact same account in another Gospel, and it tells you there are two persons. Then you may read another account and find out that there are three people. You may read one thing and find out there is an account here, and then you read the next one, and it is not even found in that book.

Now, that has led people to believe who do not believe the Bible, and their basis is education and trying to find fault with the Bible. That has led a lot of people to believe that the Gospels are really, well, they have a big word for it, it is called synoptic. That has led people to believe that the Gospels were written at different times, and they do not all match up. The truth of the matter is, when you understand how God does things in the Bible, the four Gospels give you four different aspects of the same event, and He puts a different emphasis every time He comes through one of those Gospel books. Of course, the main event is the first coming of Christ. So, in one book, you see the first coming of Christ this way; in the other book, He puts the emphasis on another aspect. My point is this: you have got to see those four books, take all four sections, and then you have got to blend them together to get the whole account of what has taken place. You cannot rely on just one of the Gospels to understand the complete first coming of Christ. You have got to get all four of them together. But you have got to isolate them first, see why it is saying what it is saying, then put them all together.

Obviously, tribulation period is the same way. The Bible talks about the fact that at the second coming of Christ in the book of Revelation, just like God gave you four accounts of the first coming of Christ, from Revelation chapter 5 to Revelation chapter 19, you get four accounts of

the second coming of Christ. It is the same thing. Each one of them focuses on, and to break down, I have given it to you many times in Revelation, each one of them focuses on a different aspect of the second coming from a different angle. You cannot, and here again, many people make the mistake of thinking that that section of the Bible, tribulation, is just happening one after the other, and that is not the case. The Bible is consistent where God gave you four different aspects of the first coming of Christ. He is going to give you four different aspects of the second coming of Christ. The way you learn it is to isolate those four things and then you put it back together.

III. Israel Likened to Trees

Now, learning by isolation. We are talking about the nation of Israel. Have you ever counted, and I am just going to give you the major ones, have you ever counted how many different ways you study the nation of Israel? Somebody says, "Bob, what can I do to really understand the nation of Israel in all aspects?" Well, just like to understand the first coming of Christ, there are four accounts. Just like to understand the second coming of Christ, there are four accounts. Then, if you are going to understand Israel, and this is true of any subject, if you are going to understand the nation of Israel, then you are going to have to understand it in all the different aspects by which God teaches you about the nation of Israel.

For instance, you can study the nation of Israel as being God's son, all the way back in Exodus chapter 4, all the way back in Exodus, before they come out of Egypt. In Exodus 4:22, what did God say? He said, "Israel is my firstborn son." Now, there is a place where Israel as a nation can be studied as God's son. You realize all the different ways, if I may just digress for a moment, you realize all the different ways you can study you as a Christian. You also are a son. Some of the greatest parallel material, inspirational material you will ever get to understand about your own life is to look at Israel as God's son, and then study the inspirational, practical lessons of that nation, and then apply them to you and me as God's son.

I will tell you another one, the church is likened to a bride. I will tell you another one, the church is likened to a virgin. I will tell you another one, the church is likened to a servant. I will tell you another one, the church is likened to a steward. I could go on and on and on, and you are going to find that if you want to learn any subject in the Bible, what you have to do is isolate that subject and then break that subject down into individual concepts that God shows you different aspects of that particular subject.

When it comes to the nation of Israel, we can study Israel as God's son. You know why that is important? Because over there in Matthew, he makes a tremendous statement about the birth of Christ in Matthew 2:15. He makes a tremendous statement, and maybe this is above most of you, I do not know, but you are going to find that when you ever remember Jesus' early life, when Joseph and them, and they go down into Egypt, and then in Matthew 2:15, he says, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." Well, up to that point, that was Israel as God's son, but now we see there is a parallel between the nation of Israel and the Lord Jesus Christ. You know why? Because the Lord Jesus Christ was a son of the nation of Israel, and it is a double application, and maybe that is over your head at this particular point, but that is okay. You need to understand

that there are different aspects, and for us to learn a subject in the Bible like Israel, like in Romans chapter 9, 10, and 11, we have to see all these.

Another one is Israel is likened to God's wife, the book of Hosea. Here is what God says in that aspect. God says, "You know what? I found Me a wife out there in the world, and that wife was Israel, and I betrothed her to Me. I took her to Me, and I did everything for her. I became her husband, and she became My wife, and I did everything for her that a husband should do for his wife. I did everything, and what did she do? She found other gods. She found other nations." Boy, the Bible is specific in those things, and she then, as a wife to a husband, she left her first husband and committed adultery with another husband and took another husband, and that is the example that He uses. That is why many times this makes the Old Testament make sense.

Remember the book of Hosea? The book of Hosea. What is Hosea told to do? He is told to take a wife of whoredoms, is he not? Now, you know, if you know anything about your Bible, you know that is a violation of the law. In other words, what I am saying is, God just told him to violate His own scriptures. I mean, I cannot imagine coming down and telling me or you, "Go get drunk." I mean, I know we like to find justification for what we do. I was telling somebody this week, I found a new parallel to somebody wanting to rationalize what they are doing, and the only thing that you would not believe this story if I did not have five or six of you that were standing around hearing this story when it was told to me. So, if you know the story, please do not say who it was. It was nobody in our church, but it was a person that, like so many Christians, they claim to have a relationship with God, do not go to church anywhere, and they claim to always have a communication with God, but I guarantee it is always on their side. They do not ever spend any time in the Bible, very nice person, but never get to the place where they ever, ever get into the Bible in any way, shape, or form, in any scenario. No church, no Bible, no Bible study, but they want to think in their mind, and maybe they are, I do not know, that they are a Christian, and them and God have a relationship, but if they do, it is a relationship outside of church, outside of the Bible, and outside of the biblical principles, if that can happen.

So, this person is talking to us, and she, he is talking about the fact that they had a major decision to make in life, and they said, "You know what? Me and," this is their words, "me and the Man were always close, and I never want to make any bad choices that I do not run by Him." He said, "So, it was a situation where I had this major thing in my life, and I went ahead and made this decision, and I was really struggling in my heart because this decision could backfire on me, and it was a crucial decision." So, that person told me that, "I was just struggling, and I said to God," and I was driving through Lee's Summit, "I said to God, 'Give me the answer and the peace of my heart that what I just did was okay and You are part of it.'" That person said, and this is not, this is into, you were standing there, this is not true, that person said, "You are not going to believe it. I drove around the corner behind the main aspect of Lee's Summit, and you know where the Dairy Queen is, Bob?" And I said, "Yeah, I know exactly where Dairy Queen is. We have eaten there many, many times with the kids." That person said to me, "You are not going to believe this. Just as I spoke into my heart to God that I needed to have confirmed in my heart that the decision I made, there in front of me was a billboard that said, 'It's all cool at Dairy Queen.'" Now, you are laughing. You are laughing. That person was as serious as a heart attack. They

thought that that billboard at the time in their life, when they drove around that town with the thing they had to answer, they did not see "All is cool at Dairy Queen with our big treats." All they saw was, "It's all cool," and that, for them, was the confirmation in their heart that God, they had made the right decision, and now they had peace. Man, you could answer any problem you have in your heart if you just kept driving around town long enough. "Lord, I am thirsty. Lord, I need something to drink. I am so thirsty." Big billboard, "Try Schlitz Light." Thank you, Jesus. Where do you end with that?

This is my point: you can make it say whatever you want to say, however you want to do it. The bottom line is, and this is why I hold you to the feet of the fire so many times about biblical principles, ways to make decisions in your life that you have to make, you have to make. Of course, again, we see that Israel is likened to God's wife. Hosea was told to take a wife of whoredoms because God had stepped out on Him and went after all the other gods. So, we study that as God's wife.

Then we study the nation of Israel, we talked about this last week, as the first fruits, and that is another way to study it. In these lies, some of the greatest practical lessons you will ever see. You will see that God violated His own principles with the Hosea, and the reason why He did is because Israel has thrown God's Word right out the window and are doing whatever they want to do, just like the person who, and many of other God's people who make their decisions on life based on the visuals that they see instead of the principles of the Word of God. That is my connecting point. When you understand that these things are in there, and God says, "Israel has completely thrown out My Word, so you know what? As an object lesson, as an illustration, I am going to have you break My law, take a wife of whoredoms, and when the leaders of Israel come up and say, 'How come you broke the law and you took a wife of whoredoms?' you are going to say, 'Because that is exactly what you did with God, going after the other gods.'" You see how that works? Some great material in here.

Now, also, and this is where we are going to tie it into Romans chapter 11 today, and this is probably one of the greatest studies that you will ever take of learning how to do this, but then also the material is Israel as you are going to find that Israel in the Bible is likened to trees. Trees are one of the greatest studies you are ever going to take in the Bible, and it opens up so much other material and so much other truth that it is hard to believe.

The Old Testament to me, I like museums. I like going and seeing things that have a lot of age to them, that are very old, that have character, that have stories behind them. I love history, and I love to walk back. The only way you can, you cannot go back in time, but the only way you can go back in time in some respect is to go someplace that is still maintained the way it was many, many years ago. To me, the Old Testament is a lot like a museum that is filled with historical treasures. I, you know, if I had my, if I had, if somebody would say to me, "You have one, I will give you one month to do whatever you want to do and let you go through whatever you want to go through and just spend whatever time you want to do whenever you want to do, where would you like to go?" My, I would not have to think about it. It would be to Washington D.C. and go through the Smithsonian Institute, go through the Museum of Natural History, and I would not want to necessarily see the stuff they have on display. I want to see the stuff that they have down

in the basement. I want to see the stuff that nobody ever gets to see. I want to see them alien bodies out of Area 51. I am just kidding, they would not be there, they would be at Wright-Patterson, but anyway, maybe we will go there second, we have four weeks.

But anyway, I would just go through there, and I would look at every piece. I just marvel at the Wright Brothers' airplane. I would marvel at the Spirit of St. Louis, the actual plane that Lindbergh flew across the Atlantic. I have not seen it yet, but I want to go see the movie, and you had to go see it too, Amelia Earhart. Amelia Earhart, when no people even know who she is, she, she was not, unless she was from Kansas, and she was a lady that, that, that disappeared over the Pacific. She had, she was an aviator, and she was a lady aviator, and she was setting world records, and she wanted to fly around the world. She had flown across the Atlantic, she had flown across the United States, and now she was ready for the flight around the world. Somewhere over the Pacific, in what, 1939, 1938, someplace over there, over by Howland Island, she just disappeared. Oh, the mystery that surrounded her. I have heard stories that, and I, and I followed the story, I have, I have been, things like that just, and I mean, I cannot put, let it go. I mean, there were stories circling around at the, that she was on a secret mission by the American government because of the Japanese buildup over there in the Pacific, and so she was really a spy plane, and that she crashed, and the Japanese took her into internment. She died in captivity. There are places over there where they found, one guy did a whole study on it based on the technology we have today to find out where, how she could have crashed, and how much gas she had, took the last radio transmission that they got from it, and actually plotted a course from it. He says she ran out of gas and died in the sea and drowned. You know, and all, and all of those things, to me, those things are absolutely incredible. I would walk through there, and I would just look at all that stuff, and I would say to myself, "Wow, you are living in the middle of history." To me, the mysteries of history have always intrigued me. I mean, what happened to Amelia Earhart? You know, I used to wonder about what happened to Glenn Miller. You know, they solved that mystery a couple of years ago. What happened to Glenn Miller? Remember him? He flew from England over to Europe to put a last show on, and then he disappeared, and for what, forty, forty, fifty years, and then they finally found out what happened to Glenn Miller. Incredible stuff. I love things like it. To me, the Old Testament is just like that. It is like a museum where you walk from room to room, and every door connects to another room, and the ability to learn your Bible is nothing more than understanding what it is, isolating the subjects like the room, and then stop and look at everything in that room. Wow. Then move it on to the next room. Wow. When you leave at the end of the day, you have got a complete understanding of what is in that museum because you have seen the pieces. Learning the Bible or trying to learn the Bible without identifying the pieces, it just will not work.

Israel in the Bible is likened to trees. Israel is likened to five trees, at least, in the Bible, and we are going to work our way back to the olive tree, but I want you to see this thing. Israel is likened to five trees in your Bible, and this is absolutely the key to understanding God's concept in the nation of Israel, and this is why God put it in and connected with the olive tree. Now, let me say this to you, this is a piece of information you want to keep: trees in the New Testament always represent people. When you want to find your genealogy, you can find your family tree. In the Old Testament, trees, and this is the difference now, trees in the New Testament will always

represent people, but trees in the Old Testament will always represent kings and nations. You want to remember that because those are two keys to unlocking the scriptures.

I think two of the premier places, and probably where I would designate these as a definitive passage, is Ezekiel chapter 31 and Judges chapter 9. Now, I do not, I am not going to get into those two passages today. That is certainly a Thursday night Bible study question. But the bottom line is this: you are told in those two passages that, that, that it talks about seven trees, and you find four in Judges 9, and you find the rest of them in Ezekiel chapter 31. It says in Judges 9 that there was a day, see, here is the key, it is a very mysterious passage, and I love mysteries. When I see something in the Bible that has got a roar of a smoke around it, I am there, man. I want to solve that mystery. I maybe cannot, but boy, I am going to try to crack it. I am going to take all my investigating skills that I have learned from the Bible and try to penetrate that mystery. Judges 9 is a mysterious passage because it says, "There was the day when the trees went forth to anoint a king over them." Whoa, that is spooky. If I had to put that on the front of the verse, in the front of my door last night, I would not have had any Halloween. They would be scared to death to come up my house. "There was a day when the trees went forth." There is a place in the Bible that talked about the trees, when the Lord comes back, the trees clap their hands. No, trees have hands, guys. Better be careful being up in those deer stands in those trees if you know it is dark. What you have got is Judges chapter 9. It is incredible. It shows you that there is, bottom line, it says this: when you put the two passages together, you have got seven trees in the Garden of Eden. Seven trees. Now, you may have more, but you have seven trees in the Garden of Eden. In Judges chapter 9, there are four trees, and they are the four primary trees, and you know what you find? You find those same trees in Genesis with Adam and Eve, and then you, with who is called the first Adam, and then you find those same four trees at the second, in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, where the second Adam. They are some keys, folks. There are some keys in there. I do not have time to get into all that this morning, but you have got four trees with the first Adam, you have got the same four trees with the second Adam.

Israel is likened to five trees in your Bible, and this is called isolating a subject, breaking it down, and then going back and putting the pieces together.

1.) The Fir Tree Let us talk about now the first tree you are going to find Israel likened to, and I am going to, I am going to help you put this much of it together. It is called a fir tree, F-I-R, fir, fir in the sense of a pine tree as you know it, or an evergreen. Hosea 14:8 says:

Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him: I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.

Over here in Isaiah 41:19, you find it talking about different trees that God plants in the wilderness, and lo and behold, one of them is a fir tree, and the context will be the second coming of Christ in the Millennium in that passage. Now, what are we going to do with that? All right, here is what you need to know: every one of these trees is a different aspect by which you are going to study the nation of Israel. A fir tree represents Israel's ability to bear fruit. Now, you say, "Why a fir tree?" Because it is an evergreen. Evergreen bears fruit 24/7. There is no barren season to an evergreen. So, when God called out the nation of Israel, one of the aspects that He

had designated them as, as a fir tree, because a fir tree is a tree that always ought to be bearing fruit. It always should be green, and God's plan for Israel was for Israel never to be barren. So, He chose a fir tree. We know it as an evergreen, hence it is forever green. He chose a fir tree to represent Israel's fruitfulness.

Here again, remember we come through our Bible Basics, and we basically built the Old Testament around the nation of Israel, did we not? All the way up to the New Testament into Acts, and what we did without even telling you we did it, is we followed our study of isolation. We took Israel and we broke Israel down, and if you want to study Israel in aspect of its fruit bearing, you find five aspects, and it is the same five aspects that I have given you.

12. You find the formulation, that would be early Genesis.
13. The calling out, that would be Exodus chapter 12 up through their forty years.
14. The establishment, that would be 1st and 2nd Samuel, 1st and 2nd Kings.
15. Their demise, that is 606 when they all crashed together.
16. Then the fifth aspect would be what we are studying right now in Romans chapter 9, 10, 11, the restoration.

Now, you see what I just did? I just took what, 3,000 years, 4,000 years, 5,000 years, excuse me. I just took 5,000 years of history and broke it down in five increments. You study those increments, you come away saying, "I got it. I got it. I understand now Israel." Then you do the same thing with every other thing in the Bible. But now you can always begin to see, to get this done, you have got to watch off over and turn that boob tube off. You know what that takes? That takes discipline. You know what you have got to do to do that? You have got to set up, you cannot do that. See, you cannot do that driving your car, and I appreciate the people that like to listen to the Bible and listen to my sermons, and you learn a lot that way, but if you want to really learn your Bible, you have got to do it piece by piece, and you have got to designate some time. This gets tougher the older you get, the more kids you have, especially if the little kids, they demand a lot of time, but it is beside the point. I mean, life is life. You have got to, there are plenty of people in this church under the sound of my voice right now who have little kids who get it done, and somebody else says, "Why have little kids and cannot get it done?" Let me just tell you here, let me play a Johnny Carson, "Here is the question, I will give you the answer: Why cannot I get it done?" Johnny says, "Self-discipline, structure, discipline in your life. Do your kids run your life, or do you run your life?" A bad question, I am sorry I even asked that. You have to find time in your life to be alone with God. You have to, and if you do not do it, you are not going to make it. You do not get saved and then just do whatever you want to do and think that you are the devil. It may be, there was, I do not even know if this is true, maybe there was a day eighty, hundred years ago when you could do that and survive, but you certainly cannot today. There are too many pressures out there. There are too many pressures, and you, it is a thing where you have got to understand that you have to be able to break that time down. So, it is likened to a fir tree, and obviously the inspirational application is for Christians. You and me as Christians, we ought to be, we ought to be bearing fruit all the time. What did Paul say over there in Timothy? He said, "Preach the word." What did he say? "In season, out of season." Now, we all have bad days. I have bad days, but you know, there is nothing that will pull you out of a

bad day faster than saying something to somebody about God or doing something for God when you really do not want to. I mean, there is just something about that because the Holy Spirit of God, do you realize that in Christ's presence, in a Gospel, in Christ's presence, nobody ever stayed dead? Nobody. Do you realize in His presence nobody ever stayed sick in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John? Because the presence, the very presence of God demands healing. The very presence of God demands life. Over to John chapter 11, when He raised Lazarus, do you know why He said, "Lazarus, come forth?" If He had just said, "Come forth," everybody in the graveyard would have come forth. He limited it to what He wanted to do, but in His presence, there is no death and there is no sickness.

Now, maybe you have never identified with this, but I have. I do not believe in healing in the sense of the apostolic goofball stuff that goes on in most charismatic churches, but I do believe the Holy Spirit of God heals, no question about it. I have been healed. My healings have been temporary. There have been times on Thursday night or even Sunday morning that I have been really sick, and I had not felt good. There are times that I had a head cold that I felt like my head was in a block of ice. I could not breathe, I could not hear, I could not smell anything. My throat was sore, I could not talk. Yet, you know, I am going to say to myself, you know, it takes a lot for me not to go to the Bible, and one of the reasons was is because, and this is honest, honest, this is true, when I step into that pulpit, whether it is Thursday night or whenever, even when some of you come over, there are times that I have not felt good, but you never know it because I have an obligation. But I am telling you this, when I open up that Bible, start to teach, for the moment and the time that I am teaching, I am better. I am better. My head clears up, my ears clear up. You know why? I am telling you why: because when you get filled with the Holy Spirit of God to do the job that God calls you to do, it kind of goes back to that thing that there is no sickness and there is no death. Now, in a church age, it does not work like it did there, and as soon as you are done, you feel terrible again by the time you get home, and obviously the thing to do is just keep teaching the Bible till you feel better. I, you know, it, but, but I am just saying, Holy Spirit of God, we had to bear fruit no matter what spiritual condition we are in. He said, "In season and out of season," when you feel like it and when you do not feel like it. That is the practical side of it.

Do you remember that story I told you over there in that great parable in Matthew chapter 21? It talked about how God called out Israel, did everything, and then it says this in verse 34: "And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen," the leaders of Israel, and says, "Where is the fruit? Where is your fruit? You are supposed to be a fir tree. You are not supposed to be off your fruit gate. You are supposed to be always bearing fruit, an evergreen." Great study, great study.

2.) The Fig Tree Now, the next tree we need to be familiar with, and we should be pretty well clear up on this one because we were through this a couple of weeks ago, was Israel as a fig tree. Remember that in Matthew 24:32-35, where He said:

Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

Now, a fig tree in the Bible, Israel as a fig tree, or a fig tree in the Bible, always represents self-righteousness. Remember Adam and Eve? They were in fellowship with God, and they were doing everything with God, and then one day they fell, and where they were excited to see God, now they were not excited to see. Where they ran to God, now they run from God. Ever been there? Now, what does the Bible say they do? Now they know that they are naked, and now what they did was that they went and got fig leaves and sewed them together to cover their nakedness. God comes down, He says, "What is that? Get them off." You know what the Bible says? The Bible says that He went out and killed something innocent and made them coverings of skin. First place in your Bible where something innocent died by the shedding of blood to cover somebody's nakedness. You know why? Because fig leaves will not cut it. Fig leaves will not cut it.

So, you have Jeremiah chapter 24. He says, "And again the Word of God, Word of the Lord came into me saying, 'Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, the like these good figs, so will I acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place and to the land of the Chaldeans for their good. I will set Mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them again to this land, and I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and I will not pick them up, and I will give them a heart to know Me that I am the Lord, and they will be My people and shall return unto Me their whole heart.'" All right, God, there from verse 4 down to verse 7, He is talking about what He is going to do with Israel in the future when they become a good fig tree.

Have a look at verse 8, back to the reality:

And as the evil figs, which cannot be eaten, they are so evil, surely thus saith the LORD, I will give them up to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them.

That is Israel now. "Then which cannot be eaten, they are so evil, surely thus saith the Lord, I will give them Zedekiah." Who is Zedekiah? He is the last king that Israel has. Remember Zedekiah, the last king that, that when, when Babylon comes down, Nebuchadnezzar puts up a puppet king so he will kind of keep Israel in control, and it is Zedekiah. What does Zedekiah do? Zedekiah tries to lead a revolt against Nebuchadnezzar. What does Nebuchadnezzar do? He comes down and he puts him in chains. He stands him there. He kills his sons right in front of him, and then he takes two hot poker and puts his eyes out. He said, "I will take Zedekiah." Zedekiah is representing the bad figs here. "So, I will give Zedekiah the king of Judah and his princes and the residue of Jerusalem that remain in this land, and they shall dwell in Egypt." He gives them, and that starts the captivity when they go into the captivity. Oh, there are great parallels.

We saw this Mark 11:13. The New Testament says:

And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:

And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.

Did that thing. Now, I love this. This is what I love about the Bible. Look at verse 13. Look at verse 12 and 13 again. You want to see Israel's condition? This whole story right here is a picture of Israel who are now in their self-righteous mode. Look what He says. Hey, you know what? I have learned something. It does not matter what you say about yourself, or it does not matter what I say about myself. It does not matter how I pretend I am right with God when I am not, any more than it matters if you pretend you are right with God when you are not. All that really matters is what God says, and I love passages like this because Israel is in their self-righteous mode. You know how we get in our self-righteous mode? Well, Israel is in that self-righteous mode, and they are pretending they are right. They are pretending they are spiritual. They are pretending they are everything, but look what God said. I love it. I love it. Right between the lines, He puts it. Look at verse 12: "And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry." And seeing a fig tree, type of the nation of Israel, "afar off." You know where Israel is with God? Right there in that passage. They are afar off. You see everything in the box? You think it is just coincidence that He saw it afar off and said, "It is afar off"? Once you understand that fig tree is a picture of Israel in her self-righteousness, everything makes sense. He came out, and He simply said, "I see this fig tree afar off," because bottom line is, Israel is that fig tree, and they are afar off from where I am at. Incredible stuff in there, absolutely incredible.

Then He says, "For the time of the figs was not yet." Now, let me put this in a biblical order for you. He says in Matthew chapter 24, studying Israel as a fig tree, I am going to give you this one, it is real easy, but boy, it is quite profound. He said in Matthew 24:32, "Now learn the parable of the fig tree; when his branch is yet tender, and put forth leaves, you know that the summer is nigh." Then He goes on and He says, "And when you see all these things, know it is near, even at the door." That door is an incredible study out of John chapter 10. We do not have time to get into this morning, but here is what you have got. You have got, going back to Jeremiah chapter 24, you have got Israel in the Old Testament, and they are now producing bad figs. Zedekiah is their last king, and the figs, the fruit they put out here, is bad fruit. Now, that is another great practical application. I do not even have time to get on all of these. If you are saved here this morning, or you are an, if you are saved here this morning, you put out good fruit, just like you put out bad fruit. Everybody puts out fruit. When you are right with God and on fire, hitting on all cylinders, you put out good fruit. When you are not hitting on all cylinders, you are not right with God, you produce bad fruit. That is Israel. It does not matter if you are a Christian or just like in the Old Testament, they put out bad figs that nobody could eat, but when God comes back, they are going to put out good figs. It is where we are at. Well, you can develop that. What a sermon that would be.

But in Jeremiah chapter 24, they got bad figs under King Zedekiah. What happens? He puts Zedekiah, He puts Zedekiah's eyes out, turns him over to Babylon in 606 BC or thereabouts, and now the context will be the next 400 years where Israel is absolutely barren, no fruit whatsoever.

Now, here is the timeline, and you want to see this. This is an isolated study of Israel's restoration, and you have got to put the timeline together.

17. Jeremiah 24:4-7: Bad figs from 606 BC up to the first coming of Christ. He is absolutely barren.
18. Mark 11:13: The first coming of Christ. Christ comes over and He looks at that fig tree, and at the first coming of Christ, He says, "You know what? It is not time for the figs yet. No figs on it."
19. Matthew chapter 24: He gives a prophecy, and a prophecy is not about the first coming of Christ because He knows now that Israel is not going to get restored now. The prophecy is down the line in Matthew chapter 24, and it is talking about the second coming of Christ, and it is talking about the time of 1918 and 1948, that God is going to gather them back, bring them back, put them in the land, and that generation is going to see the budding of the fig tree when it puts forth its leaves. That will be 1918, 1948.
20. Moving on through our timeline, Song of Solomon chapter 2: At the rapture of the church, which will take place in the next few years, those leaves in Matthew chapter 24 have now become green figs, but they are not ripe yet.
21. In the tribulation period, Nahum 3:12: Israel now gets her act together, and my, my, my, look what happens in Nahum 3:12. In the context here is the tribulation period:

All thy strong holds shall be like fig trees with the firstripe figs: if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater.

There is how that thing works. Zedekiah, Jeremiah chapter 24, bad figs. 606 BC, the first coming of Christ, no figs, barren. Mark 11, Jesus looked at it and He says, "Hey, that time is not yet," but He makes a prophecy that future in 1918, 1948, and then at that point, she will put forth her leaves. She becomes a nation. Then Song of Solomon chapter 2 says at the rapture of the church, they are not ripe yet, but they are green figs. But in the tribulation period in Nahum chapter 3, now we have got the first ripe figs, the second coming of Christ, and going into the Millennium, Israel now bears the fruit that she was never able to bear in history. We studied this last week, remember? Remember we talked about the fullness of Israel? The fullness of Israel was what? Like somebody coming back from the dead. I took you back to Ezekiel chapter 36 and Ezekiel chapter 37. So, you have a timeline from Zedekiah, the last king, up through Babylon, up through the first coming, up through the, up through the 20th century, the 1918, 1948, up to the rapture, up through the tribulation period, up through the second coming of Christ into the Millennium, all based on isolating Israel as a fig tree. Incredible stuff, and I have not even cracked the top of it.

3.) The Vine Tree Now, the next one will be the vine tree, and Israel being likened to a vineyard. Remember now, we studied this last Thursday night, did we not? Somebody asked the question about new wine and old wine, and we talked about in Deuteronomy chapter 32, the two types of wine grapes in your Bible. Grape juice is likened to blood. We have got all the connecting pieces. We found out why you should not have fermented wine in the Lord's Supper, why it should be grape juice.

Now, look at Isaiah 5:1-7, or just listen to it, whatever you want to do.

Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:

And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.

What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?

And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:

And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no more upon it.

For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

It brings forth wild grapes. Ah, see, she figs, bad figs. Now, this is another way to study Israel as a vineyard, and of course, the, the, it brings forth wild grapes. Now, let me just say this to you before we finish reading this: Israel as a, as a vineyard or as grapes will always be in reference to God's destruction of the world at the second coming of Christ, and you want to remember that. So, you are going to find, we are going to come back to this in a moment, but I wanted to give you that before we read the rest of this.

Verse 3: "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judea, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it?" God is saying, "What else could I have done?" You know, I bet He says that about me sometimes. I bet He looks at me and my stupidity and the dumb things that I do, and I bet He says, "What could I do for that boy? I have saved him. I have given him My Holy Spirit of God. I gave him My Bible. Why does he continue to do the stupid things that he does? What more could I do?" Of course, the answer is, there is not much more God could do. You know, there comes a time that God cannot do anymore. You have got to pick it up and do it yourself. I do not want to tell you, it is the difference between some making it and some not making it.

"And now all what happens of Jerusalem and the men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked as it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes. And now go to, and I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up." It all took place in 606 BC. "And it will break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down. And I will lay it waste. It shall not be pruned nor digged, but there shall

come up briars and thorns, and I will command the clouds that they rain no more there." There is the tribulation period.

Now, look at verse 7:

For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

See that thing? Now, Israel as grapes will always be in reference to God's wrath, God's judgment, particularly at the second coming of Christ. Grapes is a picture of blood. Deuteronomy chapter 32 talked about the pure blood of the grape. When you start coming through the Bible, you are going to find out that God has a something called a winepress of Almighty God at the second coming of Christ. You know that Revelation 14:18 talks about God gathering all the grapes and casting those grapes into the great winepress of the wrath of God, and then He stomps those grapes, and that takes place down in the Valley of Armageddon. I have told you this before, the Valley of Armageddon is a valley that there were more battles fought off down in history than any other place on the planet. The Valley of Armageddon over there, Revelation chapter 14, where the final battle takes place. The nation of Israel is trapped down in the Valley of Armageddon. All the Antichrist guys come around, some hundred million guys, and they are going to wipe out Israel. That valley is about 160 miles around, and it is shaped like an oval, and it is about 160 miles around, and it is mountains all the way around that with one pass in and one pass out. Down there, you get Israel down in the middle, and all of the millions of the Antichrist under the devil, and finally they are going to wipe them out. What happens? God comes back, raptures them out. They are all stuck down in there, and then the picture is the winepress of Almighty God, those people being like grapes being thrown into that winepress, and God coming down and likened to stamping grapes and sprinkling the blood, type of grape juice, all over His garments. Now, He obviously does not come down and do that literally, but that is the picture of the second coming of Christ. You find it throughout the Old Testament. You find it many, many places throughout the whole Old Testament: Isaiah 63, Revelation 19:11, Revelation 14:20, Joel chapter 3, Psalms 83, Psalms 91, Psalms 104, Psalm 110. Israel is the vineyard, and those grapes get pulled out. The first gleaned grapes get taken up. So, you have Israel as a fig tree, you have Israel as a fir tree, you have Israel as a vine tree, and the vine tree will always represent the wrath of God being poured out on this earth, and the grape juice being a type of blood.

At the end of the Civil War, well, it was probably during the Civil War, but around the end of the Civil War, who knows who Julia Ward Howe is? Anybody know who she is? Who is John? No, that was, she was the right, that was a key, the wrong start, man. But Julia Ward Howe, she wrote "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." Have you ever, you know, and there are a lot of preachers that do not like "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." They think it is not biblical, especially down South, and that is because the South is mad because they got their rear end kicked during the Civil War. Many guys, many pastors down there still think they are fighting the Civil War, but the bottom line is, it goes to show me how that back then they knew their Bibles in a way that you and I can only get to. Did you ever read the words of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic?" I am not going to read them all to you, but she starts out saying this: "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord." That is the second coming of Christ for those of you that are

tuned into it. "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord." That is a reference to the second coming of Christ. "He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored." That is a reference to those Old Testament passages. When she wrote that, given the time that she lived in, I guarantee you, I am not saying that they thought that Civil War was a battle of the second coming of Christ, but you talk about the most brutal bloodbath war where in the most primitive sense, we lost on both sides hundreds and hundreds of thousands of soldiers from the Confederate to the Union. I mean, in one battle, it was nothing for 80,000 young men to be slain, and there were places where they said that the, the brook and the rivers running through that land where the battle was actually ran red with the blood of those young soldiers. When she saw that and she wrote about the deliverance in the end of that war, she likened it to the second coming of Christ. Whether she knew what she was doing or about it or not, it is immaterial. It shows that she understood and they understood back then the doctrinal input of the Bible. I would like to see somebody in the government today write us, write a second song about "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." We are not even, and most people do not even know the Republic is versus a democracy. They understood that a republic was not something that you get the majority rule. A republic was shut up based on the principles of the Word of God, and the principles of the Word of God are found throughout that song. The reason why you find grapes in the Bible when Israel is a vine tree, it will always be a picture, it will always be a picture of the wrath of God coming down. Isaiah 17:6, Isaiah 24:13 talks about Israel as gleaning grapes being cleaned in the last part of the harvest. Revelation 14:18 says God gathers the clusters of the vine that makes Israel the gleaning grapes before He comes down and throws all the Antichrist under that grape winepress. So, there is another one for you.

4.) The Palm Tree Now, the next tree will be a palm tree, and that will be Psalms 92:12-13, and it says in that passage that:

The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.

Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.

They shall still bring forth fruit in old age, and they shall be fat and flourishing. Now, when you find a palm tree, it will be Israel always in the aspect of the Millennial reign of Christ. Wherever you find it, wherever you find it, Israel as a palm tree will always deal with Israel in the Millennium. Notice, "the righteous," that is Israel, "shall flourish like a palm tree." Here it comes, "He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God." That is the Millennium.

Of course, this goes back to Mark chapter 11, one week before His crucifixion. We call it Palm Sunday in our, in our, in our world today. This is where, this is where Jesus goes into Jerusalem in what is known as His triumphal entry, and this is where, if you know your Bible in Mark chapter 11, that He tells His, He tells His, He tells His disciples to go get Him a colt and an ass. Now, the colt was the foal of an ass, the ass being as we know it, a jackass, and the foal being her colt. Here is another tremendous thing. I, I do not even know how to get into all this today, and you do not get this without putting all four Gospels together. You realize that there is a reason why Jesus told His disciples, "There is an ass and the ass's colt tied up over here. Go bring Me

both of them." Then when they go get the ass, that is His mother, and the foal of the ass, that is the colt. They bring Him over to Jesus. When Jesus rides in His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, He does not ride on the mother ass. He rides on the foal, the colt. Now, you read that in your Bible, and you just scratch your head and say, "What is the big deal?" Some of you might say, "Well, maybe there is something to that." There is something to it. You know what is to it? Because when you go back to Jeremiah chapter 2, that ass is a picture of the nation of Israel. I even got into the animals that picture Israel, yet we are just dealing with the tree. Oh, I am not going through today, breathe easy. Israel is the ass. Israel is the ass. So, He says over there, "Tied up is an ass and its colt. Bring Me both of them." Then He rides on the ass's colt and not the ass. Anybody want to know why? I will tell you why: because the ass pictures Israel was unrideable. So, He rides on the foal of the ass, the colt, which is the picture of you and me because we are going to move into the church age, and the ass who represents Israel was unrideable. He has been trying to ride that ass for the last 3,000 years, and it is unrideable. So, He said, "Bring them both, but I am going to ride on the ass of the colt." You know what the bottom line is simply this: the colt came out of the ass. She is part of it, but it is its own identity. You and I as the church, we come out of Israel. We are part of her, but we are our own identity. Oh, you get into Israel as animals, man, you are going on forever, go on forever. But that is why that takes place, and that is why when He walks down there, when He goes into Jerusalem, what do they cry? "Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!" What does Hosanna mean? Somebody raise your hand and tell me, what does Hosanna mean? Anybody know? What does it mean? What? "Save us now." "Save us now." That is exactly right. "Save us now." You know why? Because the Jews understood that the Christ going into Jerusalem on the foal of an ass fulfilled the Old Testament prophecy out of Jeremiah, and they knew, and they say, and the kingdom of David is coming. In John, they say the kingdom of heaven is coming, and they know. So, what do they do? What do they do? They go out and they cut off pine boughs, I am excuse me, a palm tree leaves, palm tree boughs, and they line the road with palm trees. Why? Because it represents the Millennial reign of Christ. So, whenever you find, whenever you find palm trees in your Bible, it is going to be Israel in that sense.

Now, there is another tree in here. I am just going to give you this so we do not have to get confusing on it, and that is the cedar tree. Now, I just throw this out to keep it clean for you so you can. A cedar tree, cedar wood in the Bible, will always represent the house of God. That is the wood that was used to make the temple, and we talk about the cedars of Lebanon, and that was what they used in building that temple. So, you want to remember that. Of course, the Bible says in Mark chapter 11 that they spread their garments in the way, and others cut down branches off the trees. John 12:13 tells you they are palm branches and strewed them in the way, and they went before and they followed, cried, "Hosanna! Save us now! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" Of course, in John 12:13, He is called the King of Israel, Millennium.

IV. The Olive Tree and Its Significance

Now, we come back to Romans, the last tree, the olive tree. Wow. I will tell you what, Israel is likened to the branches on an olive tree. The olive tree in the Bible will always represent the tree of life. I could go one step further and tell you the olive tree in the Bible always represents the tree of life. We are going back to Judges chapter 9, Ezekiel chapter 31. There is the great key to the olive tree: four trees in the garden mentioned specifically at the time of the Adam and Eve, and then four trees mentioned specifically in the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and they are the same four trees, and boy, the definition of those trees are quite incredible.

Now, olive, olive trees in the Bible always represent, always represent Christ and the eternal life sense, and actually, and that is what you are finding over here in Romans chapter 11. We are going to talk about it. Deuteronomy 30:24 in the Old Testament, olive oil is a type of the Holy Spirit of God. In Deuteronomy 6:11, the light of the lamps in the tabernacle was lit with olive oil, a picture of the Holy Spirit of God. When they wanted to anoint a king in the Old Testament, what did they do? They went and got a vial of oil, olive oil, and, and put it on his head, a picture of him being anointed by the Holy Spirit of God to do the job.

Of course, when you go back to Romans chapter, Romans chapter 11, back here, it says this:

For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

All right, here is what he is saying. The first fruits will be Israel in the Old Testament sense. The root will be, the root will be God Himself. This tree has its roots in God, and God is holy. The lump will be all the aspects of this tree that are, that are the branches, and the branches grafted in, and they will be holy too. Verse 16 and 17 says that this branch, when he comes down through here, this branch is the nation of Israel. This root grows into an olive tree, and this olive tree, which is Christ, which comes from God, the root becomes, puts out branches, and those branches are called natural branches in verse 21. You know what you have got a picture of? You have got a picture of God being the root, and from that root comes the Lord Jesus Christ and salvation for you and for me and the nation of Israel. From that tree comes out the branches. They are called natural branches.

Then what happens? Christ does the olive tree. Some of those branches got broken off. How did they get broken off? They get broken off in verse 17 by coming to the point where they disobeyed God. They, they turned their back on God in 606 BC. They did not bear fruit with God. So, what did God do? He comes on and He breaks off some, some, not all, some. Why not all? Because God has a remnant, and He breaks off some of those natural branches.

One of the greatest studies you will ever take in your life is to study Christ as the olive tree. In my mind, there is no question about it. When you have been in the Bible for a while and you learn the things in the Bible the way the Bible lays out, there are certain things that are there that maybe it does not say they are there, and I may not teach them out publicly, but for me, in my mind, in my heart, I mean, it is, there is no question about it. I will tell you right now, if you want to know what the, somebody said, "Well, Adam and Eve ate an apple." They did not eat an apple

in any way, shape, or form. That tree that they took off is very clearly defined in the Bible. Somebody says, "What was the, what was the tree of life? What was the tree of life?" Well, let me tell you something, after all we have been through, if you do not figure out the tree of life had to be an olive tree, then you better be careful crossing the street. That tree of life was an olive tree.

When you have the first Adam down there in the garden, what happened? He is in a garden. He is in a garden, and he is in a garden, and he is tempted in a garden, and when he is tempted in the garden, he fails in that garden. The second Adam is in the same garden in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It is in, it is, you know what that garden? You know where He is at? He is in the Mount of what? Olives. That is where the, that is where the, that is where the temple will be built. That is where the Eastern Gate is. It is right to the east side where you go in. He is on the Mount of Olives, and He is in what? Where does He have His great temptation? Where is, what is it called? What is it we say real loud? Gethsemane. Gethsemane, where He prayed through His temptation, where He prayed through His, His desire not to go to the cross in Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives. Somebody please tell me what Gethsemane means. Olive press. It is where He was pressed by the weight of the decision.

Let me ask you a question. When you take a grape and put it in a grape press and screw it down, and it squirts out, what is it squirt out? Grape juice. When you take an olive and you put it in an olive press and you screw it down, what comes out of the olive when it finally pops? Olive oil. In Gethsemane, the olive press on the Mount of Olives, outside the temple, where the first Adam failed in that garden, the second Adam prayed through in the garden. He was in the olive press. The olive press pressed Him, and when He popped on Calvary's Cross, you know what came out? Olive oil, Holy Spirit of God, Church Age. You cannot beat the book. You cannot beat it. You cannot beat it. Where the first Adam was denied the tree of life because it was unbelief and his failure in the garden, the second Adam was faced with the same temptations, prayed through in the garden, and where the first Adam was denied the tree of life, the second Adam became the tree of life that you and I could get back in. Why do you think in Titus chapter 2 or 3 and verse 5, it is called about washing of, washing of regeneration? Why is it regeneration? Why is it not just get generated? Why does it say when you get saved, you get regenerated? I will tell you why: because we had it once in Adam, and we lost it in Adam, and then we get it back in Christ at the olive press. Oh, man. Now, those kind of things are why I love the Bible. I cannot speak for you, man. You give me that stuff, and I will take the rest of my life going through that thing.

Then the Bible says, because He was the olive press, because the, the natural branches got broken off, the Bible says a wild olive tree, a wild olive branch got grafted in. That is you and me. Where the natural branches got broken off, that is Israel. Where the wild olive tree got grafted in, that is you and me. We were once part of the olive tree in Adam, but we went wild. You can get on TV and watch all these smutty movies on air, and on the commercials, are saying, "Buy this video, 'Girls Gone Wild,' 'Co-ed Gone Wild.'" They had to put one on, "Olive Tree Gone Wild." That is us. That is the mess we are in, and God took us and He grafted us into Christ.

Then look what happens, verse 17:

And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

That is you and me, Gentiles, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them partakers of the root, God, and the fatness of the olive tree. That is all the blessings you have in Christ Jesus. Now, I know we ought to keep our spiritual, keep our physical bodies under control, and I know that we only have one body to serve God with, and we ought to try to keep it in some kind of shape. I understand all that. But as far as your spiritual relationship should be with God this morning, your inside person, your soul, ought to be six thousand pounds. You ought to be basking in the fatness of the Holy Spirit of God. You ought to be basking and enjoying all the fruitfulness of the Holy Spirit of God. It ought to be just the thing. When you got grafted in, you just did not get grafted in and stick there. You got grafted in to the root, God, and you got the fatness of the olive tree. Now, if that olive tree is God's son, and the root is God, then that simply means that what, and you got saved when you got grafted in, when I got grafted in, whatever God has, you and I have. Then why are we living in defeat today? Why do we struggle with the issue? Why is it so hard to do what is right? Why is it so hard to keep our focus? You are part of the root. You should be enjoying the fatness of the olive tree, regenerated.

V. Warnings and Application

Now, look at verse 18:

Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

That is kind of a confusing little phrase there, but let me explain it to you. He is saying, in other words, you cannot be part of the olive tree, truly part of the olive tree, and take a different position than God does on the nation of Israel. That is what He is saying. That old English phrase, "to root thee," we talk about rooting somebody out. Somebody says, "Well, there is a, there is somebody in this group that is a bad apple. We are going to root them out." You got your drain all plugged up. Who do you call? Roto-Rooter. He gets down in your, so your sewer system, and he roots it out, and that is exactly what he is talking about, rooting somebody out. You will know who people really are when you understand their position on the nation of Israel, and that is what he is talking about.

He says in verse 19 and 20:

Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.

Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

Now, that is a, that is a great, that is a great verse. In other words, he is saying this: you better get it straight. Yes, God broke off some of the natural branches for unbelief. Yes, He did. And yes, we Gentiles got in through their fall, but do not get high-minded about it because God is not done with the nation of Israel. He said, "Be not high-minded, but fear."

Now, this is not my message today, but I like to throw a lot of little things out, and I have thrown so many other little things out, I will just throw this one out. One of the greatest studies you will ever take in the Bible, one of the greatest studies you will have taken in the Bible, is to make a catalog for yourself of the warnings in the Bible for you and for me. I do not know how anybody missed it. I could take you through the Bible and I could show you a warning in the beginning of the Bible and a warning in the middle of the Bible and a warning at the end of the Bible where God warns against anybody changing one word in that book, and yet people missed that warning. They missed that warning. I could take you over the book of Revelation and show you where you were warned that no man steals the crown that God has to you with the judgment seat of Christ, and you know what? Yet some people will let somebody steal that crown, ignore that warning. Here we have a warning against the nation of Israel. In the Bible, there are warnings against forgetting God. There are warnings against not being, having a forgiving spirit. There are warnings against having a judgmental attitude. Of course, all of this stuff comes back to the point that warnings in the Bible are there to be heeded, and here he is talking about Israel when he says, "Yeah, you got in because they fell, and God broke off some of the branches, but because, but do not get high-minded, but fear, because God is not finished with them."

Verse 21, to me, this is one of the most negative passages anywhere in the Bible, and the Bible is filled with negative passages. He says in verse 21:

For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Now, you better mark that little "take heed" in red, yellow, purple, and chartreuse and everything else, and put blinking lights on it. In fact, you do well to mark every "take heed" in the Bible because there lies usually one of the warnings. But this is not only about our position on Israel, but it is about our relationship with Christ.

Did you ever stop and think of this? Did you ever stop and think that Israel goes through the tribulation period in a physical sense because of their leaving God and going after and doing their own thing? We talk about the tribulation is a seven-year period that Israel is going to go through to come back with God, and sometimes I think we forget that God is like the Son of God, and you and I are called the Son of God. Do you realize that many of God's people go through their own tribulation period on this earth because they do not do what is right with God? Do you realize the parallels are so clear that just as Israel is going through a tribulation period because they disobeyed God, that God's people, you and me, will go through a tribulation period time in our own life where things will not go right? Every problem in the world happens, and maybe you go through life and everything does happen, but when you get to the judgment seat of Christ, it is all going to come crashing down.

Do you realize that there are some people in the nation of Israel, when God looks at Israel right now, He sees them dead? They are so far out of fellowship with God that God equates them to being dead, but they are dead temporarily, are they not? You know why? Because He is going to resurrect them down here and restore them. Do you realize He has told you over and over again in the Bible, there are some of God's people that will get so far out in left field, get so far out of touch with God, that God will come down, take them home, and they are dead temporarily till

they get resurrected? I am telling you, I am telling you. You know, in my ministry, that I even hesitate to say this, in my ministry, which almost spans forty years now, I know of three people in those forty years' time who I believe with everything within me that God killed them. I say that fully knowing that I do not know the circumstances within their heart. I understand that. I am going based off the principle. I will put the two over here. I know one, one situation where this person was the worst enemy of the Word of God I have ever met in my life. This whole person's one job all day life was to discredit the Bible, discredit anybody who believed the Bible. This person took enjoyment and great luxury in coming to the point where anybody who believed the Bible is the Word of God, they took great enjoyment in destroying them and laughing at them and making fun of them. I have got to tell you, Proverbs 13:18 says, "Whoso despises the word shall be destroyed." When I look at something like that, or I see people, God's people, whether I am right or not, when I see people, God's people, who have come to the place that God's hand looks like it has come down and taken them out because God had a purpose for them, and He decided not to do that. Maybe God gave them two or three wake-up calls, and it just blew right by it. At some point, God says, "I have had enough."

When I see that, and I have to, and I preached one of the funerals of that, and I never, never said a word. I never, I never, and I have never spoken to this with anybody, and I would never give anybody the particulars because there is something that God showed me. But I want you to know this: when I see that, when I understand what God does, and I understand the hand of God and the chastisement of God, and the truth be known, we all ought to be dead today. But the bottom line is, in some cases, God has enough, and God comes down, and He says, it is the greatest warning in the Bible. He said, "Hey, look, if I do not spare Israel, what makes you think I am going to spare you?" When I saw those things in my life, one in particular, the Holy Spirit of God brought me back and reminded me of things that I have seen over the years. I am not someone that stands there and says, "Well, they got what they deserve, did they not?" I am not someone who says, "Well, praise the Lord, God, God did what He had to do. Praise the Lord." That is not me, brother. When I see that, and I even suspect that, and I even feel that, it puts a fear in me, brother. I do not feel good about it because I know that I am just a half a step away from being in that same boat, and I am telling you, I am telling you that last verse there to you and me as the church is probably one of the most solemn things anywhere in the Bible to you and me: "If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee."

I have seen every scenario in this world, brother, in forty years. I have seen parents come in and, and who were saved, and, and, and try to get, you know, the boys and the girls were not saved, and they want to get them right, and the kids do not want to necessarily get right, and mom and dad come in and they go for a little while, and then they punch out, bail out, go someplace else, and they, and they think, "Well, you know what?" They do not keep up with it. The kids do not think of it, and they think, "Well, I am saved," but the bottom line is, their kids are not saved, and they go through a false security all their life, and then the devil sneaks in the back door, and someday, because mom and dad could not hold the line and do what they need to do, those kids die, go to hell. I have seen it all. I have seen it all. That warning is one of the most common warnings anywhere in the Bible: "If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare thee not."

The absolute insanity of getting saved and then going back to the world. The absolute insanity of taking the free gift of God. I know to you and me it is no big deal. We take it, we get a better deal, off we go. But let me tell you something, it is a big deal to Him. It would be a lot like you, be a lot like you having a child, and your child, you had a dear friend who had a child, and that child had kidney failure, and you were, you were impressed to give one of your child's kidneys to that child because you were so close to that family, and you said that, that mother, "I will give, I will give, I will give one of my girls." It had to be a perfect match, and a doctor went in, took that kidney, and put it in that other little kid's kidney. How would you feel? How would you feel that person you gave that kidney to? How would you feel that person that you took out of your own daughter and put that kidney in there so their kid with it, because their kid was going to die without a kidney? How would you feel that person come back and, and slandered you, got mad at you, and said everything about you there was to say, and reject, and went on having nothing to do with you? When you feel foolish? When you be angry? When you feel like an absolute fool that you put your own daughter's life in jeopardy, that took out that kidney to put it in somebody else, and now the person you gave it to wants nothing to do with you and will not even speak to you, and all the things they do say about you are terrible things? Well, let me tell you something, when He died on the cross, God took His Son and put Him in your place. He basically took His kidney, His heart, and wanted to put a heart transplant in you. You take that heart, and then you talk about Him the way you do. You take that heart and use His name in vain. You take that heart and you take it back out in the world, and everything that you do. My warning is this, and I am finished: "If God spared not the natural branches, take heed unless he also spare not." One of the greatest warnings in the Bible.

Remember, there is a physical damnation and there is a spiritual damnation. There is a physical condemnation and there is a spiritual condemnation. One of them deals with your soul, and the other one deals with your body. I am telling you, when I see God come down and hammer somebody or drop the hammer, it does not, it is not enough. It is, the Bible thinks it very clear, "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay." I do not look at somebody, but following somebody and saying, "They got what they deserve." No, no. Let me tell you something, brother, God knows my heart. If I got what I deserved, I would not even be standing here, neither would you. It is not done where you can, you can enjoy it. It is not done where you can say, "Well, they got theirs." It is done so you will fear and realize that you are only a half a step away from that, and that is what he is talking about. Greatest warning in the Bible.

Well, there is the, there is the concept of Israel. There is an isolated study and a great example of it. You have got enough information there. You can go on and break that thing down and do that thing whatever you need to do, but it is an incredible layout. As we are dismissed this morning, and those of you that want to get part of that Bible study thing that was here last Thursday night, and we talked about how we were going to do it, Dan, you will be right up here. Come up and get them, and we will get it all divided up, and then I will help you all Thursday night. I will have my information, and I will find out who is doing what, and I will give you all that stuff, and I will let you know how our lunch goes this week at Wednesday, and we will go from there. Let us pray.