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Amen. Well, we're continuing with our four part series in the Book of Romans, Chapter 11. And this morning the title of the message is "Israel's Rejection is Not Final". Israel's rejection is not final. We'll be looking at verses 11 through 24. We'll spend a little time on 11 through 15. I've preached on this particular section of scripture many times before. I just want to look at it quickly, but I want to spend a lot of time on verses 16 through 24 this morning.

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So take out your Bibles, take out your smartphones. You might want to have a piece of paper and a pen. I'm hoping that I'll be bringing out some things in this scripture passage that maybe you've not seen before. Abba Father, just give me words to speak that people will understand. Give me your voice, not mine. And made the message this morning touch people's hearts. I pray this in Yeshua's name. Amen. Romans 11, beginning in verse 11.

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And I'll be adding some commentary as I go along. I say then, have they, Israel, stumbled (that is lost their way) that they should fall. In other words, miss out on salvation. And Paul answers his own question. Certainly Not! May never be, God forbid. But through their fall or through their trespass, to provoke them Israel to jealousy, salvation has come to the nations. To the Gentiles. Now, if their fall is riches for the world and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry.

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If by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. For if they're being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be? But life from the dead. You know, you've heard the saying that God's ways are higher than our ways. Boy, if this passage doesn't prove that nothing does. I mean, think of God's plan. He takes a people group, creates a people group through covenantal promises to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob.

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He leads that people group out of Egypt, he leads that people group through the desert, he leads that people group into the promised land, he gives them his law, he gives them his commandments. He gives them a holy way of living just so they can mess up time and time again. And the final mess up. Is the national rejection on the part of the Jewish people of their very own messiah. Now please do not hear me saying that every Jewish person two thousand years ago rejected him.

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Quite the contrary. As we've read in the past and spoken of in the past, there always was a remnant of Jewish people who believed in God and his messiah. There currently is a remnant of Jewish people who believe in God and his messiah, and there always will be. But at that time they stumbled. They lost their way. And they missed out at that point on salvation. But the rejection was not final and God had a purpose for the rejection.

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God had a purpose for the rejection. What was the purpose? So that salvation... Yeshua. Could now come to the nations, could now come to the gentiles. And the gentiles now have a responsibility, and that is to provoke the Jewish people, to provoke my people to jealousy. Go figure. God's plan. He creates a people group, he gives them the Torah service, the sacrificial system, he brings the Messiah through them only for them to reject the Messiah so that the Messiah could now come to the nations.

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What an amazing and sometimes ununderstandable God we have. And how do they make them what's the purpose of of the gentile salvation? Now it's to provoke the Jewish people to jealousy. How many of you have ever been jealous? Of course, we've all been jealous. But you must be jealous of something or someone that you once had that you've now lost. And that's exactly what the gentile nations are supposed to do for the Jewish people they're to make them jealous for who they have now, the messiah who first came to the Jewish people.

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And so, Paul continues that if the rejection of the Messiah on the part of the Jewish people some two thousand years ago was riches for the nations, how much more their fullness? He goes on and says he speaks to the gentiles, that he magnifies his ministry if by any means he may provoke to "jealousy" (there is that word again) any of his people. And they would come to faith because if they are casting, being cast away was the reconciling of the world.

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If they're being cast away, brought the world with the possibility of an intimate relationship with the God of creation and his son of salvation. What will their acceptance be? But life from the dead. Well, that's part of the purpose of Israel's rejection, but I want to continue on now and read to you verses 16 through the verse 24. For the first fruit is holy, the lump is also holy, and if the root is holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches were broken off and you, the Gentiles, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them.

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And with them, the Jewish people became a partaker of the root. And the fatness of the olive tree. Do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. You'll say then, well, branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. well said, because of unbelief they were broken off. And you stand by faith. However, do not be haughty, but fear for if God did not spare the natural branches

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He may not spare you either. Therefore, consider the goodness and severity of God. On those who fell: severity. But toward you: Goodness. If you continue in his goodness. Otherwise you will also be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. For if you are cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

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You know, sometimes what people think is impossible becomes a reality, doesn't it? For instance, I want to read to you an actual editorial from a Boston newspaper that was written over one hundred and twenty years ago. Quote, A man about 46 years of age giving the name of Joshua Cooper Smith has been arrested in New York for attempting to extort funds from ignorant and superstitious people by exhibiting a device which he says will convey the human voice any distance over metallic wires so that it will be heard by the listener at the other end.

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The article continues. He calls the instrument a "telephone", which is obviously intended to imitate the word "telegraph" and win the confidence of those who know the success and the long term benefits of the Telegraph. Well-informed people know that it is impossible to transmit the human voice over the wires and that were it possible to do so, the thing would be of no practical value. Really? If you've ever talked on a telephone, which I'm sure you have, that editorial was just totally off base, wasn't it? A hundred years ago, just one hundred years ago or even seventy five years ago, Romans, 11, and talking about the nation of Israel would have made no sense to people.

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Why? Well, some of the great Bible expositors of the last century just basically skipped over Romans 11. Maybe even Romans 9, 10, and 11. Or maybe they would have to explain it away because there was no nation of Israel. Since 1948 there is a nation of Israel. These scriptures are being fulfilled and they will be fulfilled. Since 1967, the nation of Israel has had control of most of the city of Jerusalem, the holy city.

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Dear ones, we are seeing God take his people back to Israel and to restore the land and rebuild. God is

doing something and we need to pay attention to it. And as we look here in Romans Chapter 11, let's begin with verse 16. Paul is going to introduce two word pictures and I'm going to just skip one and then talk about the other one that he develops. He writes, If part of the dough off, if the part of the dough offered as first fruits is holy, then the whole batch is full is holy.

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You must understand, from a Hebraic concept, that what he is saying is that it was a Jewish custom to offer a first fruits offering. And when you took the first part of the crop or the first part of the dough of bread and you committed it to the Lord, well, it was declared to be holy. That meant that the whole lump was holy. Now, of course, he's talking about the nation of Israel here. But in the last part of verse 16, here's the other picture.

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If the root is holy, so are the branches. The apostle Paul is going to use an allegory based on an olive tree. So let's look at it and let's learn from it. Verse 17, if some of the branches have been broken off and you (meaning the Gentiles), though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others, and now share in the nourishing sap (some translations say fatness from the olive root) do not boast over these branches.

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If you do, he writes, consider this. You don't support the root. The root supports you. You will say then, branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in. Granted, but they were broken off because of unbelief. And you stand by Faith. Don't be arrogant. Be afraid. For if God didn't spare the natural branches, well, he will not spare you either. And verse twenty two is a very important verse.

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Consider therefore. the kindness and sternness or severity of God. Now everyone believes in the kindness and the love of God, but there's also a part of his character that is called severity or sternness. Sternness to those who fell. But kindness to you provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you'll also be cut off. And then verse 23. And if they (meaning the Jewish people) do not persist in unbelief, they'll be grafted back in, for God is able to graft them in again.

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After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree, that's wild by nature and contrary to nature, you're grafted into a cultivated olive tree. How much more readily, how much more easily will these the natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree? You know, any time there's an allegory in scripture or a parable in scripture, I think you need to understand what what each component represents. I call the first point of this God's tree of life. God's tree of life.

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It's described as an olive tree, but it says Tree of life. And that's an allegory. And we're going to look at each component of this allegory to look at what it means. The first is the root. The root, which is not Israel. It's God's promises to Israel. First, in this allegory, you have a root. And what's the root representing? As I said, it represents God's promises to Israel. Thousands of years ago, God made a promise to Abraham.

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And that promise God made to Abraham is the root of our faith today. It's not like you have the Jewish faith over here and then you have another tree over there planted that's called "Christianity". The roots go back to the promises God made to the patriarchs, to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. Look at Galatians 3:9. To me, this says an amazing thing about the character of the Scriptures, the Bible, the word of God.

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It says this, quote, The scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and announce the gospel in advance to Abraham. All nations will be blessed through you, he said. That was his promise. And so those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. And the first

thing we need to understand is that all of our roots go all the way back to the promise of God made to Abraham. All of the Hebrew scripture promises are the root of our belief.

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Do you remember when Yeshua was walking on the road to Emmaus the Bible says, starting with Moses and all of the prophets, he showed them the things concerning himself. And if you read Tanach the Hebrew scriptures and you don't find Yeshua. Well, you better read it again because he's found in every page of the Old Testament. That's our roots. All of the promise God made to the patriarchs. So that's point number one. Point number two is the sap or the fatness.

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It's God's power to produce fruit. It mentions the sap now what is the sap? Well, I believe that that represents God's power to produce fruit. The life giving flow of God's power. Look again at verse 17. It says, We now share the nourishing sap or fatness from the olive root. Now, the King James says "fat", I like the word "sap" better. I like it because fat isn't exactly something I like to think about as being Life-Giving. But anyway, I love olive trees.

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Israel's filled with olive trees. If you've been to the Garden of Gethsemane, you may remember that there are some very old olive trees there. And when olive trees get older, they don't grow taller, they grow wider. Can any of you relate to that? I mean, they spread out and there are some olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane that at least some of them have shoots that are connected to roots that were there two thousand years ago. The very night Yeshua was in that garden.

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We're talking about a long term commitment. Olive roots grow hundreds of feet underground. They search for moisture because that's how olive trees survive in such a dry and harsh climate like the desert areas in and around Jerusalem. Those roots go deep. They absorb moisture, they absorb nutrients from the soil and they bring them up. And that's the sap. That's the sap that goes out into the branches and that's what gives it life. So the sap in this analogy is God's power flowing through us.

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The B'rit HaDashah the messianic writings example of that were of that would be the life of the Holy Spirit released in and through us. Third, there are the natural branches. This allegory mentions natural branches. This good olive tree, the promises of God already had some natural branches on it. Do you know who that represents? Well, obviously, the Jewish people. It's talking about the Israelites. And it says some were broken off and the word literally means chopped off.

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And it doesn't say all of them were. God hasn't totally rejected his people. As I said before, God has always had a remnant. But the natural branches, many of them rejected Yeshua. And so they were cut off. Now, obviously, Yeshua stood outside Jerusalem before his crucifixion and he said this: Because you have not recognized me. An army is going to camp around you and there's going to be death in the whole city of Jerusalem because you rejected God's message to you.

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Fast forward a few years, about 40 years to 70 A.D., that's exactly what happened to the city of Jerusalem. Titus and his Roman army, cruelly and viciously destroyed them. And if you want to know how vicious it was, just read Josephus. Although he was a Jew, he watched it from the outside. Josephus is careful. Somebody must have been counting because he said there were a hundred and fifteen thousand eight hundred and eighty bodies in the streets of Jerusalem after 70 A.D..

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Jewish people are the natural branches in God's olive tree. Now we've all known Jewish people who have become believers. I like what C.S. Lewis wrote about them, quote, In a sense, the converted Jew (by the way, I hate that term, but I'm quoting correctly) is the only normal human being in the world. All

the rest of us, from one point of view, are a special case dealt with under emergency conditions. You see, the only real natural branches in the olive tree are the Jewish people who trusted in Messiah.

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There are also newer other branches. This picture also talks about new branches. Who does that represent? Well, it represents the Gentiles. And it says that some, not all, have been grafted into the trunk. Now, I don't want to give you a long spiel on horticulture. You can go to a local nursery for that. But I've been studying a little bit about grafting. What you do is you take a good stock like a trunk with a root that's intact and you can take branches, and they don't have to be great branches, and you can graft the branches into that stock and it'll produce fruit.

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And you know how that's done? Listen to this. You cut off a branch, then you make an incision into the good stock. Then you attach the branch to it and you make sure that it adheres. It's bound and with perhaps some type of adhesive and the two will connect. If it takes, then life flows into these new branches. And I learned some stuff I didn't know about grafting. For instance, if you take a nectarine branch and graft it into a peach tree, will it grow nectarines or peaches?

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It'll grow nectarines because that's the nature of the branch. In California in fact, they have some trees that they call fruit cocktail trees. Why? Because it's a citrus trunk that they've grafted in an orange branch over here and a branch over there and a grapefruit branch over here. And each branch produces different fruit. It's absolutely amazing what can be done with grafting. And this was known centuries ago. Now, Paul says there was some old wild root over there.

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The gentiles. No hope of producing any good fruit, just nothing. And God has graciously taken many and grafted them into the side of that good tree. The natural olive tree. Now, do you remember I said there had to be an incision? Well, some have said just as Eve was born out of the side of Adam, so was the Church born out of the wound in the side of Messiah. We know for sure that by his wounds we're healed.

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And so we're attached to suffering into the incision on Messiah. If we stay connected, then great things will happen. But what about the purpose of all of this? You know what the purpose is? Olives. Fruit. It's the outward expression of our inward nature. There's one other thing in this picture I want you to see before we get to the point, because I hear you saying, well, what's the purpose? Well, this may be so simple that it may be just escapes you.

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But the whole point of this picture is olives. Fruit. An olive tree without olives is worthless. They don't grow olives for firewood. They don't grow olive trees for shade. They grow olive trees for olives. In Bible times, and even today, olive oil was very valuable. Olives were a delicacy. As they are even today. And so an olive tree or a branch that doesn't produce olives is dead wood. It's just not any good. The point I'm trying to get to is that as believers, you and I need to make sure that our lives are producing fruit.

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You might say, well, what is fruit? Well, let me give you a definition of what fruit is. Fruit is the outward expression of an inward nature. It is the outward expression of an inner nature. And when there is fruit in your life, what you're expressing outwardly is the inner character and nature of Yeshua himself. That's what the fruit of the spirit is. And you say, well, I thought this fruit of the spirit, according Galatians 5:22 was love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, meekness, goodness, faith and self-control.

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Well, that is the nature of messiah. Yeshua is love. Yeshua is joy. Yeshua is peace. And when I see olives hanging on a tree or under a tree, that's an olive tree. And when I see a person with some

spiritual attributes in those live in their lives, those outward signs let me know that that person has the inward nature. Nature of Yeshua. In Matthew 7 our Messiah said by their fruits you will know them.

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He said a good fruit, a good fruit won't produce bad fruit and a bad tree won't produce good fruit. Now, that's the allegory. That's setting us up for the meaning of the whole point of this section. And it's God's truth for us today. So what is God's truth for us? What's the application? What is it saying to us? What is this picture of an olive tree? And there's a branch that's been grafted in. What is it saying?

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Well, there are three things I believe, that we need to consider. First, sternness. Don't boast about your fruit. You know what God's warning is? You might be cut off from usefulness. Verse 22 says that word "consider" or "therefore." The word "consider" means to stare out, to study, to ponder. First of all, consider God severity, God sternness. Don't brag about your fruit. It says don't be arrogant. Don't brag about anything in your life.

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Because here's what he says. He says you don't support the root. The root supports you. And anything good in your life as a believer doesn't come from who you are. It comes from the life of God. That Life-Giving sap and fatness that runs through you. The fruit in your life is not something you've done, God is the one who gets the glory. Be careful you don't brag. Three times, he says. Don't boast, don't be arrogant. Don't be conceited.

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It produces humility to realize that God is the source of every good thing in your life. And here's God's warning. He says, if you're not careful. You may just be cut off from your usefulness. Did you read in that passage that it talks about how even these grafted branches could be cut off? God says, if I cut off those natural branches, don't you think I will cut off these that have been grafted in? I know that sometimes people read that and they say, hey, wait a minute.

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I thought once saved, always saved. I thought that once you were a believer, you could never use your lose your salvation. Well, listen, I don't think it's talking here about losing your salvation. I think it's talking about losing your effectiveness. Losing your usefulness. Becoming unfruitful. I like Eugene's paraphrase of this particular section, please remember that the message that he wrote is not a translation, it's just a paraphrase. And this is how he paraphrases verse twenty to listen carefully.

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Be sure you stay alert to these qualities of gentle kindness and ruthless severity that exist side by side in God, ruthless with the dead wood, but gentle with the grafted shoot. But don't presume on God. The moment you become dead wood, you are out of here. Pretty blunt, isn't it? I think it's possible for a believer to be so rebellious and so disobedient to their father in heaven that he removes them from a place of fruitfulness and usefulness.

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But they're still part of the family of God. And I'll give you examples of that. Do you remember in the Hebrew scriptures the people of God, the children of Israel wandering in the wilderness after they refused to go into Kaddish Bernau. For 40 years, they wandered in the wilderness. They were out of God's will in the desert until one by one they died. But the amazing thing is, for every day of those 40 years, God was still feeding them with manna.

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I think they were still his children. They had just lost their usefulness. They had lost their fruitfulness, they were just miserable. And listen to me. I'm convinced that the most miserable person on the on the planet Earth is not a lost person. I believe that the most miserable person on the planet Earth is a believer out of the will of God. A backslidden, fruitless believer. Why? Because you have a sense of being cut off from God's fruitfulness.

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I mean, just look around. Don't you know a lot of people? I know I do. Who at one time were serving God. Who at one time were faithful to God, who at one time were on fire for God. And now they're just chopped off. And they're absolutely miserable. God says, you'd better be careful that it doesn't happen to you. That's his warning. Secondly, he says, consider God's kindness. Now, here's the point, don't neglect your attachment to the root.

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Don't neglect your attachment to the root. God's "hello" is permit my life to flow through you. Remember I said the sap was the power of God to produce fruit. Dear ones, the key to fruitfulness in the believers life is to allow the Holy Spirit to flow out of the vine, out of the root, and the trunk, and in and through us. Look what Yeshua says in John 15:4. It's the same horticultural analogy he says Remain in me and I remain in you.

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No branch can bear fruit by itself. It must stick tightly to the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you stick tightly or remain in me. Now, what is the fruit of the Holy Spirit? Love, joy, peace. Let's just start with those three. The way you don't live the believers life is this way. "I'm going to try to be loving today." "I'm going to try to be joyful today." "I'm going to try to have peace today."

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That's not the way you live the believers life. The Bible says very clearly, without me, you can do nothing. Do you know what you do? You make sure you're closely attached to Yeshua and to that connection. That's what true worship is when that connection is so firm, then the life, the character and the intonation of our Messiah flows right out through you. And point number three is God's plan, and here's God's plan. It's really important to hear it in this day and age. Don't despair about the future.

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God has a plan. We'll talk more about it next week, but his plan is perfect and his plan, well, to me, it's just amazing. It's wonderful. And here's God's wonder. There was God's warning and then there was God's welcome. And now here's God's wonder. He is able to graft them back in. He's able to graft them back in. Who? The Jewish people. And if you don't believe that, just look at what it says in verse 23.

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If they do not persist in unbelief, they'll be grafted in. Why? Because God's able to graft them in again. And then it says down there in verse 25 about this mystery and this wonder, he says right now they're experiencing a "pirosis", a "Pirois". The word "Pirois" means a hardening almost like a callus. It was sometimes used as a word that they they gave it to a white stone that people would put over their eyes to sometimes cool off their eyes.

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But that stone obviously would cut off their vision. And the picture is that right now, partially, not completely, because there's a remnant of Jews who are believers. But right now, partially, many of them have their eyes blinded. They've been blinded by unbelief. Do you remember what happened to the apostle Paul, by the way? His name is also "Shaul", Saul. When he got saved, he was a good Jewish zealot. He was going around killing believers, denying the divinity of Yeshua. And suddenly he meets Yeshua on the road to Damascus.

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And boom, there's a pretty life changing experience that he goes through. And the Bible says he was blinded. He went into Damascus and there was a disciple by the name of Ananas who came and laid hands on him and told him to receive the Holy Spirit. And this is what happened. The Bible says there were scales that fell from his eyes. "Pirois" fell from his eyes. And suddenly he said, Do you know what I've been missing all along?

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Well, I can see clearly now God is able to graft my people back in. So the question I ask you today is this: what kind of branch are you? Have you been grafted in to the trunk of the olive tree, which is the promises of God. Have you been grafted or re-grafted back in? Are you producing spiritual fruit? Are you feeding off of God's olive tree? God's tree of life. That's the question we all must ask ourselves.

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Why? Because there is a tree of life. There is a root which is God's promises, there is sap, which is God's power to produce fruit, there are natural branches who can be grafted back in. There are new branches who can be grafted in. And the purpose of it all is to produce fruit, The outward expression of an inner nature. And what is God's truth for us? What is God's application? We need to remember his sternness.

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We need to remember his kindness. But we also need to remember his plan. Don't despair about the future, God's wonder is wonderful> He is able to graft them back in. Close with this from Zachariah, 12 verse 10. And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only son, an only child. And grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.

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Let's pray. Avinu Malkeinu, thank you for this lesson in horticulture. Thank you for the understanding that only in you can we be fruitful. And Lord, if there was ever a time in the world today that we need to be fruitful, it is today. May our fruitfulness be a blessing to everyone around us. I pray in Yeshua's name. Amen. Amen.