

The Significance of the Olive Tree

Today there are Olive trees growing in the Garden of Gethsemane that have been carbon dated to around 1100 A.D – the gnarled trunks preclude ring counting. Olive trees are most remarkable in that it is said that they can grow for up to two thousand years. They symbolise longevity, peace, fruitfulness and prosperity – God’s blessings. The Garden of Gethsemane, where there is an Olive grove, is located in a valley at the foot of the Mount of Olives, where significant events notated throughout the Bible have already taken place, not all of which are mentioned here, and where a momentous event will occur in the future – Jesus will return to the same place where He was taken up into heaven – but more of that later.

The first mention of the Olive was when the dove, released after the flood, returned to the ark with an Olive leaf in her mouth and Noah knew the flood had abated. Peace had been restored to the previously God forsaken, downright evil, of the corrupt and violent earth.

- [Genesis 8:11](#) Then the dove came to him in the evening, and behold, a freshly plucked OLIVE LEAF was in her mouth; and Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth.

Jesus said that when He returns, conditions on earth will be similar to those as when God destroyed the earth with a flood – does it seem to you that WE ACTUALLY ARE in those corrupt and violent days?

- [Matthew 24:37](#) But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Olive Oil

Olive oil has many uses, and in biblical times, throughout the Middle East, nutritious Olive oil was, and still is, a staple of life. Today, who among us has not enjoyed Olive oil mixed with balsamic vinegar as a simple meal or starter? Or who has not cooked with it? Or added it to salad dressing, cakes, and bread etc. Olives, many varieties of which are found preserved in every supermarket are also a very popular addition to accompany cheeses, salads and pizzas.

In the hot Mediterranean climate, Olive oil is used to supple the skin from the dry heat of the summer; and in pre-electricity times, it was used to give light in the house, when placed in a receptacle with a wick. The ‘Good Samaritan’ poured Olive oil onto the wounds of the man, who had been robbed and left for dead on the Jericho road. The oil soothed the wounds and the wine cleansed and disinfected them.

- [Luke 10:33-34](#) But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, POURING ON OIL and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

The Lord God assured blessings and prosperity to the Israelites when they came into the Promised Land; it was to be a land of Olive oil.

- Deuteronomy 8:7-8 For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, that flow out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, A LAND OF OLIVE OIL and honey.

The psalmist extols the blessings of obedience to the Lord – a fruitful life and family.

- Psalms 128:3 Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house, YOUR CHILDREN LIKE OLIVE PLANTS all around your table.

The prophet, Hosea, exhorts Israel to return unto the Lord their God and to forsake their idols, for then shall their beauty become like that of the olive tree.

- Hosea 14:6 His branches shall spread; HIS BEAUTY SHALL BE LIKE AN OLIVE TREE, and his fragrance like Lebanon.

Jeremiah, when talking of Judah, reminisced of the time when the tribe was a Green Olive Tree, lovely and of good fruit before God, but now sadly, God has kindled a fire upon it and broken their branches because of sin.

- Jeremiah 11:16 The LORD called your name, GREEN OLIVE TREE, lovely and of good fruit. With the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, and its branches are broken.

King David, a man after God's own heart, also described himself as a Green Olive Tree.

- Psalms 52:8 But I am like a GREEN OLIVE TREE in the house of God; I trust in the mercy of God forever and ever.

A new use of Olive oil

In Exodus chapter 29, when after the erecting of the Tabernacle, the use of Olive oil took on an altogether different purpose than of oil for light, presenting as an offering, cooking or rubbing on the skin. Olive oil became the spiritual emblem of the Israelites, signifying peace, prosperity, longevity, fruitfulness and representing the source of spiritual light and blessing. The Tabernacle or tent of meeting was a way, acceptable to God, in which sinful man could approach without incurring God's wrath and present offerings and sacrifices to atone for sin and trespass. This was built and erected strictly according to the pattern shown to Moses on the mountain.

The instructions that God gave to Moses were that Aaron and his sons must be consecrated to minister before God, not only by being washed with water and wearing clean linen garments, but also, they were TO BE ANOINTED WITH OIL. This was no ordinary oil, but especially made by skilled perfumers, with pure Olive oil and spices, for exclusive use in the Tabernacle; it was not for the profane. The anointing oil was poured on the head of the priest, first of all on Aaron (the high priest), where it ran down on his garments to set him apart for service. He was made holy, consecrated for God's use – marked as a servant of God.

- Exodus 29:7 And you shall take the anointing oil, pour it on his head, and anoint him.

The psalmist said how good and pleasant it is for men to dwell together in unity.

- Psalms 133:2 It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments.

Neither could anyone enter into the tabernacle unless they were appointed and anointed to do so.

A seven branch lampstand in the Tabernacle was kept burning day and night; the lamps were lit using only pure Olive oil and NOT the anointing oil.

- Leviticus 24:2 Command the children of Israel that they bring to you PURE OIL OF PRESSED OLIVES FOR THE LIGHT, to make the lamps burn continually.

The meaning of the oil for the light, and the anointing oil for consecration was as a foreshadowing of the New Testament where the Holy Spirit was given to indwell and come upon us and flow and work through us. God is the light that removes all spiritual darkness, and the indwelling Holy Spirit is our teacher and guide – our inner witness to salvation.

King David knew that spiritual illumination was his salvation.

- Psalms 27:1 THE LORD IS MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

The Israelites first had the Tabernacle, and then later, at David's desire but ultimately through Solomon, the Temple was built in which God could dwell and be among His people. Today, we have this treasure – which is God's indwelling presence in us – in vessels of clay, our earthly bodies!

- 2 Corinthians 4:7 BUT WE HAVE THIS TREASURE IN EARTHEN VESSELS that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

When viewed alongside the passage in Revelation 2:5¹, in which Jesus threatened to remove the lampstand from the church at Ephesus, the Tabernacle lampstand was a past echo that showed that God's spiritual light, power and presence was among them, and for them at that time.

The Oil and the Spirit

This is the difference between the Old and the New Testaments; the old was signified by anointing oil and the burning of olive oil in lamps for illumination in the Tabernacle or Temple, whereas the New is signified by the Holy Spirit our spiritual illumination – the Word being a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalms 119:105²). The Lord is the one who lights our inner lamp; in other words, He is our Saviour and brings us into the light.

- Psalms 18:28 For You will light my lamp; the LORD my God will enlighten my darkness.

The natural man cannot understand the things of the Spirit for they are spiritually discerned.

¹ Revelation 2:5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place – unless you repent.

² Psalms 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

- 1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

The Holy Spirit is given to empower us to witness for Christ.

- Acts 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

The Holy Spirit comes upon us, and dwells within us, so enabling us to abide in Christ, and directs us in our increasing sanctification for service to God, and thereby gives us spiritual illumination and the ability to understand God's Word and purposes.

- 1 John 2:27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

The indwelling Holy Spirit

In the Old Testament, we see David and King Saul on separate occasions, being anointed with oil poured from a horn by the prophet Samuel. After which both men were changed by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Saul was changed into another man after he was 'sanctified' by the oil – consecrated, set apart for God's use.

- 1 Samuel 10:6 THEN THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD WILL COME UPON YOU and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.

David also was consecrated with oil, and emboldened by the Spirit of the Lord to kill the Philistine champion Goliath.

- 1 Samuel 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; AND THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD CAME UPON DAVID FROM THAT DAY FORWARD. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

It is a simple fact; if we do not have the Holy Spirit then we do not belong to God. Our connection to God is solely spirit to Spirit; it is nothing to do with knowledge or following religious rituals. This is one of the most important facts that modern Christianity needs to re-learn. It is not head-knowledge that matters, but relationship, a relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Romans 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. NOW IF ANYONE DOES NOT HAVE THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST, HE IS NOT HIS.

Jesus told the woman at the well;

- John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH.

In Spirit; we must be born again from above;

- John 3:6-8 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and THAT WHICH IS BORN OF THE SPIRIT IS SPIRIT. Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again. The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.

In truth; God's word is truth – as Jesus spoke to His Father.

- John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

In the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, we see the terrible effect of the five foolish virgins not having oil in their lamps – the meaning of which is, that they were LACKING the spiritual connection to God. The door to the heavenly marriage feast with the Bridegroom was closed against those foolish virgins, and it was declared – I do not know you!

- Matthew 25:10-12 And while they (the foolish virgins) went to buy (oil), the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us! But he answered and said, assuredly, I say to you, I DO NOT KNOW YOU.

Jesus knows His sheep.

- John 10:14 I am the good shepherd; AND I KNOW MY SHEEP, and am known by My own.

The Lord gives us 'illuminating knowledge' by first removing our darkness; He translates us into His Kingdom, and so we are delivered from the power of darkness, and then we can partake of the inheritance of the saints in light.

- Colossians 1:12-13 ...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,

All God's chosen people are anointed for service, for we can do nothing in our own power or might except by the Spirit of God.

- 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and HAS ANOINTED US [is] God, who also has sealed us and GIVEN US THE SPIRIT in our hearts as a guarantee.
- Zechariah 4:6 So he answered and said to me: This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: NOT BY MIGHT NOR BY POWER, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, says the LORD of hosts.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke of us being like a city that is set on a hill, and to let our light shine before men.

- Matthew 5:14-15 YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.
- Matthew 5:16 LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

The effect of the Holy Spirit, our illuminator, means we can give spiritual light and understanding to those around us; those who are in deepest darkness and despair as are the Jewish nation at this time of whom Paul speaks.

Paul, the Olive tree and Romans chapter 11

The Apostle Paul has some very significant teaching on the Olive tree.

His theme is the casting away of Israel, because of their unbelief in Christ, and their eventual restoration. Paul warns us, as Gentiles, that although we have been grafted into the Olive tree as wild Olive branches, we should not boast against Israel, who are the natural branches; for God's goodness only extends to us as long as we continue in His goodness! Otherwise, we Gentile branches will be broken off in the same way that Israel is at present. Is this the fate of the foolish virgins? Their lamps went out, and only God can relight them.

- **Romans 11:17-27** And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree, do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, 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 also will 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 were 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 natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. AND SO ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED, as it is written: The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.

This word from Paul firmly establishes a greater spiritual connection between the Olive tree, Israel and ourselves, the Gentiles. Ultimately, there is only one Sheepfold, one flock and one Shepherd; one God and Father of all, who is in all, above all and through all who believe.

The Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane

We cannot fail to recall that Jesus was accustomed to pray, walk, and teach from the Mount of Olives.

- **John 7:53-8:1** And everyone went to his own house, but Jesus went to the MOUNT OF OLIVES.

Bethany was by way of the Mount of Olives, where Jesus visited Martha and Mary and where He raised up Lazarus from the dead.

Jesus taught His disciples about latter day events from the Mount of Olives, which is known as the 'Olivet discourse' as detailed in Matthew 24.

- Matthew 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?

After the Passover meal, and the establishment of the New Covenant in Jesus' blood, by the breaking of the bread and drinking of the cup of blessing they went out to the Mount of Olives.

- Mark 14:26 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the MOUNT OF OLIVES.

Jesus was taken up into heaven from the Mount of Olives after He had told His disciples of their witness, which was to be to the ends of the earth. The angels also told them that it would be the place of His return.

- Acts 1:9-11 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.

In the book of Zechariah, chapter 14, we read that the Day of the Lord is imminent, and on that day when He returns, Jesus will stand again on the Mount of Olives ready to prevail against His enemies.

- Zechariah 14:3-4 Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as He fights in the day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the MOUNT OF OLIVES, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the MOUNT OF OLIVES shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south.
- Isaiah 42:13 The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man; He shall stir up His zeal like a man of war. He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud; He shall prevail against His enemies.

The Olive Press

The Garden of Gethsemane, the name of which means the place of the Olive press, is where Jesus sweat, as it were, great drops of blood whilst in anguished prayer over the impending horror that was before Him – a cruel and painful death by crucifixion. Jesus was crushed spiritually, mentally and physically by the darkness of abuse and crucifixion to take place on the following day. Yet, His disciples could not even watch and pray with Him one hour; they fell asleep (Luke 22:39-46³). But

³ Luke 22:39-46 And he came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the

Jesus had to depart from this world so that we could have salvation and the Holy Spirit, who is probably the greatest of gifts to mankind from the Father. A person who has been washed in the blood of the Lamb, and thus saved, would not be able to function in accordance with the plans of Almighty God – without the Holy Spirit; He is that important to a believer!

- John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

I must mention the prophecy of Isaiah

- Isaiah 53:4-5 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

Jesus was hard pressed, crushed beyond all measure both in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the Cross of Calvary so that we could have that precious oil that came forth – the comforting, indwelling Holy Spirit.

Jesus was betrayed on the Mount just after He had finished His prayers and roused His disciples from their sleep, when the crowd arrived to arrest Him after the treachery of Judas Iscariot.

- Matthew 26:46-47 Rise, let us be going; see, my betrayer is at hand. While he was still speaking, Judas came, one of the twelve, and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people.

All this was done that the scriptures of the prophets should be fulfilled.

The Two Olive Trees and the Two Anointed Ones

In these two scriptures, Zechariah four and Revelation 11, there is a vision of two olive trees, and the two anointed ones standing before the God of all the earth.

- Zechariah 4:11-14 Then I answered and said to him, what are these two olive trees – at the right of THE LAMPSTAND and at its left? And I further answered and said to him, what are these two olive branches that drip into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden oil drains? Then he answered me and said, do you not know what these are? And I said, no, my lord. So he said, these are THE TWO ANOINTED ONES, WHO STAND BESIDE THE LORD OF THE WHOLE EARTH.
- Revelation 11:3-4 And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are THE TWO OLIVE TREES AND THE TWO LAMPSTANDS STANDING BEFORE THE GOD OF THE EARTH.

ground. And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow, and he said to them, “Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation.”

You may take note that in the scripture from Zechariah, there is only ONE lampstand, but in Revelation we find there are TWO lampstands.

The identity of the witnesses

In the New Testament, we have a most certain clue given to us showing the identity of the two witnesses.

- Matthew 17:1-3 Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light. And behold, MOSES AND ELIJAH APPEARED TO THEM, talking with Him.

God spoke from within an overshadowing cloud – proclaiming that Jesus was His Son, in whom He was well pleased, and Peter also identified MOSES and ELIJAH by name.

- Matthew 17:4 And Peter said to Jesus, Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you and one FOR MOSES AND ONE FOR ELIJAH.

Moses and Elijah can also be recognised through the Old Testament miracles that God accomplished by their hands, which are mirrored in the Revelation scripture.

- Revelation 11:5-6 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies (Elijah). And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy (Elijah); and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire (Moses).

Moses represents the Law

The law was given to Moses by God on the top of Mount Sinai. Moses was also a great prophet of God with whom God spoke face to face.

- Exodus 34:29 And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the TWO TABLES OF TESTIMONY in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses knew not that the skin of his face shone while he talked with him.

Moses was also the one whom God used to pronounce plagues on the Egyptians, even to the killing of their first born and by turning their water to blood.

- Exodus 11:1 And the LORD said unto Moses yet will I BRING ONE PLAGUE MORE upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt; afterwards he will let you go hence: when he shall let you go, he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether.

Elijah represents the prophets

Elijah prophesied there would be no rain for three years – and he also called down fire from heaven on more than one occasion.

- 1 Kings 17:1 And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand; there shall NOT BE DEW NOR RAIN THESE YEARS, but according to my word.

- 1 Kings 18:36-38 And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then THE FIRE OF THE LORD FELL, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.
- 2 Kings 1:10 And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, if I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And THERE CAME DOWN FIRE FROM HEAVEN, and consumed him and his fifty.

The Law and the Prophets – represented by Moses and Elijah

The Law and the prophets were the means by which God directed His people Israel; revealing His will and guiding them by the prophets. The Law and the Prophets were until John the Baptist, who, Jesus said, was Elijah, and whom the Jews still expect to appear before the time of the end.

- Luke 16:16 THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS WERE UNTIL JOHN: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.
- Matthew 11:13-14 For all the PROPHETS AND THE LAW PROPHESED until John. And if you are willing to receive it, HE IS ELIJAH WHO IS TO COME.

Malachi also prophesied that Elijah would come again.

- Malachi 4:5-6 Behold, I WILL SEND YOU ELIJAH THE PROPHET before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

But now, in this Gospel dispensation, Jesus' magnificent sacrifice on the Cross has given us eternal life and this wonderful grace, whereby we have obtained the righteousness of Christ without having to fulfil the Law, because Jesus fulfilled it for us – since all our curses were taken by Him on the Cross.

- Galatians 3:13 CHRIST REDEEMED US FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”—
- Romans 3:21 But now the righteousness of God WITHOUT THE LAW is manifested, being witnessed by THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS.

The Mosaic Law is still in operation for those who are NOT presently under grace; that is the Jews and unbelieving Gentiles. Those who have sinned without the law, perish without the law, and those who have sinned within the law shall be judged by the law (Romans 2:12⁴).

⁴ Romans 2:12 For all who have sinned without the law will also perish without the law, and all who have sinned under the law will be judged by the law.

- [Matthew 5:18](#) For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle SHALL IN NO WISE PASS FROM THE LAW, till all be fulfilled.

The Sons of Oil

So what can we glean from those similar descriptions in Zechariah and Revelation of the two witnesses? The “two anointed ones” is translated as “sons of oil”, and they are a picture of the Law and the Prophets, represented by Moses and Elijah, the two olive trees which stand before the God of all the earth. While they were alive on earth, they were the ones who poured the oil of consecration, and brought spiritual illumination or knowledge of God to the people via the Law and their prophecies, which make up the scriptures of the Old Testament and which shall all be fulfilled in due time. In the vision, the dripping of oil into the receptacle that feeds the lamps showed that God’s power was demonstrated through them; they being the channels through which God’s Spirit was seen to work, as it was also through all the other prophets who followed after them, and through whom God’s rule, power and purpose was brought about.

The ‘spiritual’ Olive tree is sustained from its roots by God. He alone is the source of the anointing oil that flows through those who are the branches. We also are channels or pipes through which the Holy Spirit’s oil flows in order to bless others, as in the laying on of hands to the sick and in the receiving of the Holy Spirit as shown in the New Testament. We have spoken of the blessings which the Olive represents – longevity, peace, blessing, fruitfulness and prosperity. All these blessings will God give to those who keep His covenant. Initially this blessing was upon the Jews only, but Jesus spoke of other sheep meaning the Gentile nations who are the Wild Olive branches that partake of the goodness from the Root – God.

- [Romans 11:24](#) For if you (the Gentiles) were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches (Israel), be grafted back into their own olive tree.
- [John 10:16](#) And I have other sheep THAT ARE NOT OF THIS FOLD. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

We have already spoken of the Jews and the Gentiles being brought together in Romans 11 through being grafted into the same Olive Root – God, from whom all blessings and anointings flow. He is the ‘One’ who lights our candle, indwells and illuminates our minds; but what of the lampstands?

The Lampstands

We have already read in Revelation that the seven lampstands are the seven churches of Asia. None of the churches of Revelation now exist, but it is important to note, that lampstands represent churches or assemblies.

- [Revelation 1:20](#) The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, AND THE SEVEN LAMPSTANDS WHICH YOU SAW ARE THE SEVEN CHURCHES.

Jesus threatens to remove the lampstand of the Ephesian church unless they repent and get back to their first love – Him. Unfortunately, the Israelite nation had their lampstand extinguished by the destruction of their Temple, firstly by the Babylonians, which led to their 70 years in captivity, but

God was gracious, for on their return He showed His love and kindness towards them by ordaining Zerubbabel, the governor, to build and complete the demolished Temple, which was as a great mountain of stones.

- Zechariah 4:6-7 So he answered and said to me: this is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: not by might nor by power, BUT BY MY SPIRIT, says the LORD of hosts. Who are you, O Great Mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of Grace, grace to it!

The rebuilding of the temple would be watched over by God until its completion. This shows God's willingness to forgive the sins of Israel, and how ready He was to bless them once again as before, and to restore their lampstand. But alas, history repeated itself, and the Roman's destroyed this same Temple in 70 A.D. Israel, the nation that did not recognise her Saviour, and had the Son of God crucified, also had her spiritual lampstand extinguished again! However, what the Jews accomplished through Jesus' death became a blessing to the Gentile nations. The Jews were broken off the Olive tree and left in spiritual darkness, and we Gentiles were grafted in as wild Olives. Since that time, the Jewish people have been scattered throughout the whole earth until 1948, when part of their homeland was restored. But as we have already said, God is able to graft the Jews in once more, and this will occur when the fullness of the Gentiles has been accomplished. Then God will save all Israel, for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance (Romans 11:29⁵). This scripture is so often quoted by us Gentiles, but it actually refers to the Jews! Who presently are the elect, whom God has temporarily blinded until He has fulfilled His work with the Gentiles.

- Romans 11:25-28 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, THAT BLINDNESS IN PART HAS HAPPENED TO ISRAEL UNTIL THE FULLNESS OF THE GENTILES HAS COME IN. And so ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED, as it is written: the Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins. Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but CONCERNING THE ELECTION they are beloved for the sake of the fathers.

Therefore, in the vision of Zechariah 4, the Olive trees show the purposes of God being fulfilled through the Law and the Prophets. This plan is guided by the anointing of the Holy Spirit and God's watchful eyes over that nation. By the power of God's Spirit and grace, the mountain of building work and restoration of the Temple, would become a plain, and Zerubbabel would finish the building by placing the headstone or final piece in place. This also is a prophecy of our Lord Jesus Christ who will fulfil all of God's purposes by His Spirit regarding God's temple of which we are a part; a holy priesthood of living stones – being His body.

- 1 Peter 2:5 ...you also, as living stones, are being built up A SPIRITUAL HOUSE, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
- John 1:16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

⁵ Romans 11:29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

- Zechariah 4:7 Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain: and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, grace, grace unto it.

Two Covenants Old and New

It appears then, that the vision of St John the Divine, in Revelation 11, refers to both Covenants – there being two lampstands – churches or assemblies – namely the Jews and the Gentiles – the ekklesia (true born-again from above believers in the Lord Jesus Christ) – both parties have been ‘called out’ or specifically chosen by Almighty God. When God eventually reveals Himself to His people Israel, and once again grafts them back into the Olive tree, they will partake of the same root and fatness of the Olive, meaning the Holy Spirit, as we do now. God will reignite their lampstand. This has been prophesied throughout the Old Testament, and also by the Apostle Paul in the New.

God made an everlasting covenant with Israel, which He will fulfil.

- Genesis 17:7 And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for AN EVERLASTING COVENANT, to be God to you and your descendants after you.
- Deuteronomy 7:6 For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God HAS CHOSEN YOU to be a people for Himself, A SPECIAL TREASURE above all the peoples on the face of the earth.
- Romans 11:2a God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew.

There will come a time when both believing Jews and Gentiles, will be ONE in Christ Jesus by being baptised into the same Spirit. I acknowledge that there are already what are known as Messianic believers from Jewish roots – they are but few.

- 1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

We shall ALL be one in Christ Jesus.

- Galatians 3:28-29 There is neither Jew nor Greek (Gentile), there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

It is when God finally removes the spiritual blindness, and their sin, that Israel as a nation will be “reborn” in one day. This will happen during a time of great travail – Jacob’s trouble.

- Isaiah 66:8 Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? OR SHALL A NATION BE BORN AT ONCE? For as soon as ZION TRAVAILED, she brought forth her children.

This was also prophesied in Zechariah chapter 3.

- Zechariah 3:9 For behold, the stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon the stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave its inscription, says the LORD of hosts, AND I WILL REMOVE THE INIQUITY OF THAT LAND IN ONE DAY.

The prophecy of the two witnesses (Revelation 11:3 ff.)

In the vision, the two witnesses are given power to prophesy and to overcome all those who stand against them. They are clothed in sackcloth; symbolic of mourning, perhaps because of the Jews' two thousand years of spiritual blindness; their lampstand being removed, during which time they were broken off the Olive tree and scattered throughout the world. At the time of the end, when their spiritual eyes are opened, they might well realise that they actually were the tenants of the vineyard, in the parable (Matthew 21:33 ff.), who beat and killed God's servants, and who finally killed the Son of the Owner – God. Or they may mourn because of the fact, that the holy city, Jerusalem, has been trodden under the feet of the Gentiles for 42 months, three and a half years, and also because those to whom they are preaching the Gospel do not want to hear it! One thing is certain, they have God's power until their testimony is finished, when the beast from the bottomless pit overcomes and kills them. After three and a half days, God raises them up, and they ascend into heaven in sight of their enemies. Before we reach the end of chapter 11 of Revelation, the Kingdoms of this world become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ and they shall reign forever. The Jewish nation, THE PEOPLE OF THE OIL will be one with their God, as will all those who love God, and have honoured Him as their first love.

Conclusion

What therefore can we glean from this study on the significance of the Olive tree? It is that nothing is done in God's sight except by His Spirit. As Jesus said,

- Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because HE HAS ANOINTED ME to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed.

For far too long the many churches and denominations at large have done works in their own strength, used their own methods, doctrines and teachings all to no avail. It is all mere religion, and the power of God is significantly missing from these churches and denominations. They have made their own mandate, but our mandate to reach the unsaved comes only from God, and by the power and anointing of His Holy Spirit. If we do not have the Spirit we are none of His.

Let the parable of the foolish virgins be a shock therapy to those who think they do not need God's anointing or help. However, He is the only ONE who can light our inner lamps through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Through the Olive tree, we can see just how merciful God is. Looking back on the Olive twig brought to Noah by the dove – it is if God had said, receive my peace. And true to His word God has never destroyed the earth by water and He further showed His covenant by the rainbow. Remember also His mercy to Israel after their 70 year banishment and destruction of the temple to help rebuild and watch over their temple and nation.

- Zechariah 1:16 Therefore, thus says the LORD, I HAVE RETURNED TO JERUSALEM WITH MERCY; my house shall be built in it, declares the LORD of hosts, and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem.

When we partake of the Holy Spirit, it is like the fatness of the Olive tree – blessing and prosperity as opposed to leanness and drought. We become fruitful carriers of the oil.

The longevity of the Olive tree echoes God's promise to bless us with long life.

- Psalms 91:16 With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.

God has done even more than just promise long life; He has given eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. That fellowship which was broken in the Garden of Eden has been restored by the Second Adam – Jesus Christ.

- 1 Corinthians 15:45 Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”;
THE LAST ADAM BECAME A LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT.
- 1 Corinthians 15:49 Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.

Just look at the parable of the Good Samaritan – meaning of course Jesus. He truly poured in the oil and the wine through His incomparable sacrifice. As Jeremiah said, God will restore health and heal Zion's wounds (Jeremiah 30:17⁶).

The cup of blessing, the new covenant in His blood – shed for our sins. His death on the Cross – spiritually, mentally and physically crushed so that the oil of the Holy Spirit was released to bless us so that we too become – sons of oil. This is a well prepared table before us – the oil of joy and gladness.

- Psalms 23:5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

⁶ Jeremiah 30:17 For I will restore health to you, and your wounds I will heal, declares the LORD, because they have called you an outcast: 'It is Zion, for whom no one cares!'
