



TEACHING NOTES

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“The Vine, the Branches, and the Believer”

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(some notes compiled from various sources)

Nestled in the hills of Southern Illinois' Shawnee National Forest is Rendleman Orchards. Since 1873, Rendleman Orchards has been committed to growing and shipping quality peaches, nectarines, apples and vegetables to the commercial produce markets throughout the Midwest.

During harvest season, which runs from June to December, Rendleman Orchards also offers retail packages of our best quality farm-fresh, tree ripened peaches, nectarines and apples along with a wide selection of other fruits and vegetables, and, also, jams, jellies, pickled items, baking and soup mixes, ciders, salsas, snack mixes, candles, linens, apple gift boxes, and specialty food gift baskets! Rendleman Orchards began in 1873 as an 88 acre family farm raising chickens, cows and corn for livestock. In this past century, the small family farm has grown and developed into the present day modern agricultural enterprise while maintaining its identity as a family farm.

Now, it is not far fetched to think there is a connection between the Rendleman Orchards of South Illinois and the Rendelman family of South Carolina. There is also a connection between trees, fruit, vines, and the people of YHWH.

In John 15, the Master Y'shua gives many deep spiritual insights regarding the vine and the gardener. Let's begin our study here.

¹"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

²"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.

³"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

⁴"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

⁶"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

⁷"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

⁸"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

⁹"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love.

¹⁰"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

¹¹"These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.

Vines grow horizontally. This plant is symbolic of our relationships with others. YHWH uses the people around us to prune and develop our faith. Our interactions with people reveal our closeness to YHWH.

We are branches that are to be attached to Y'shua in all things. The word "abide: means to stay somewhere, to continue in some place or relationship or condition or expectancy. It means to dwell or live somewhere, or remain constant in a relationship.

Satan has tried to duplicate the produce of this sacred vine; but he has not succeeded. His plant is the wild vine of Sodom and his fruit is likened to the harvests of Gomorrah.

Deut. 32: 32: *For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: 33: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps*

The main objective in keeping a vineyard is to produce grapes and wine to gladden the heart.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Fruit doesn't just appear. There must be care for the vine and the branches to produce fruit:

John 15:2

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

John 15:6

If a man abides not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Failure to produce fruit after a given period of time will result in being *cut off!* Moreover, even success, results in heavy pruning in order to produce more fruit!

John 15:4

*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch **cannot bear fruit of itself**, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*

In other words, unless a believer keeps in constant contact with the Savior, fruit will never come. There will be no fruit in that believer's life; no love, joy, peace etc., and certainly no souls won for the Kingdom of Heaven.

John 15:8

Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

Obedience is Abiding in YHWH

John 15:5

He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

John 15:10

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

Prayer is the balance of obedience. We can not abide in Y'shua with just actions. The heart and the soul must be connected as well. Faith and works must work together to bring forth fruit.

John 15:7

If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

John 15: 16

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John 16:23-24

And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

John 14:13-14

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

As we are attached to the vine we will have good fruit.

At the time of Y'shua, a golden grapevine was draped across the four columns at the entrance to the Temple. Josephus records that its beauty was such that it was known as a marvel of size and artistry to all who saw with what costliness of material it had been constructed.

The Mishnah says that people would sometimes make a freewill offering by purchasing a golden leaf, berry, or cluster which the priests would then attach to this vine. Often those who gave generously to the Temple had their names inscribed on the golden leaves. This was a custom that all were familiar with in Jerusalem.

When Y'shua depicted Himself as the True Vine, He was undoubtedly contrasting Himself with this artificial vine, suggesting that if the disciples would offer themselves to Him to the degree that people offered their substance to this golden symbol, the result would be abundant spiritual fruit.

As modern believers, we can sometimes focus on the religious symbol represented by the golden vine and miss the true vine of Messiah's life. May we always seek the YHWH Himself rather than religious activities that might make us feel good but do not help us walk with YHWH. Prayer and spiritual action (flowing in the gifts of the Ruach HaKodesh) must accompany our actions.

Y'shua called himself the vine in John 15. The scriptures also speak of other trees such as the fig or the olive tree.

The olive tree is very different than the grape vine. The vine grows horizontally while the olive tree grows vertically towards Heaven / Shamayim. The olive tree is used throughout the Bible in reference to the nation of Israel. The first mention of the olive tree in the Scriptures is in reference to a restoration after the flood of Noach. In like manner, the Olive Tree of Israel will be restored during the day of Noach (Matthew 24:37).

The Mount of Olives, located just east of the Old City of Jerusalem, attests to the prevalence of olive trees around the city. Also, it was in the Garden of Gethsemane (Gat Shemen in Hebrew, literally, the place of the "olive press"), where Yeshua spent much of His time in Jerusalem with His disciples. "Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him" (Luke. 22:39).

Gat or Geth is Hebrew for press and Shemen in Hebrew means "oil." The word "zayit" is Hebrew for olive. Gat Shemmon is at the western slope of the Mount of Olives. This land was covered with olive groves. Y'shua went to the Garden of Olive groves. The process that took place here is symbolic to what happened to our Master and to what happens to us in the Spirit realm.

At Gat Shemmon, the air would be filled with the pungent odor of the fresh oil. A huge stone pillar needed to be lifted onto the olives. This was turned for the **first pressing** for the finest virgin oil – that used for anointing. For the **second pressing**, the remaining pulp was placed on baskets. (If olive oil comes from crushed olives, where does baby oil come from?)

Matthew 26:36, 38-39, 42, 45-46:

“Then Y’shua went to a place called Gethsemane. He told them that His soul was overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. He asked them to stay and keep watch with Him.

A little further, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will’.

He went away a second time and prayed, ‘My Father, if it is not possible for this cup to be taken away unless I drink it, may your will be done’.

Then he returned to the disciples and said to them, ‘Look, the hour is near, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us go!’“

The place of the olive crushing is place that we must visit as we are made more like Y’shua. It is a time in place in our lives that we must pray, “may your will be done.” It is here that abiding in the true vine comes to fruition. **The progression is simple - We obey and we pray and then we yield to the Father’s will!**

No matter what the conditions: hot, dry, cold, wet, rocky, or sandy, the evergreen olive tree will live and produce fruit. It is said that you can never kill an olive tree. Even when cut down or burned, new shoots will emerge from its roots. Israel may have looked as if it was destroyed but a remnant of the nation has always remained. The tenacity of the nation of Israel is beautifully illustrated in the olive tree.

"The YHWH called your name, Green Olive Tree, Lovely and of Good Fruit....For the YHWH of hosts, has planted you....(From Jeremiah 11:16, 17)

"I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall grow like the lily, and lengthen his roots like Lebanon. His branches shall spread; *his beauty shall be like an olive tree*, and his fragrance like Lebanon." (Hosea 14:5, 6)

The physical attributes of the olive tree mirror many characteristics the Israelites have displayed throughout the ages. Their history in the Exile / Diaspora / Galut (all the nations of the world outside Israel) testifies of their enduring nature in hostile, foreign lands: Its branches are gnarled and twisted and will grow where other trees cannot survive. It clings to life and is enduring. Some olive trees live as long as 3000 years. Only one flower in 100 bears fruit the others fall off. Cultivated olive tree branches can be grafted into wild olive trees to improve the wild olive tree; but rarely are the branches of the wild olive ever grafted into a cultivated olive tree.

Romans 11:24-25: "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 (Judah) how much more will these, who are natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree (be returned to YHWH's privilege)"

- Psalms 80:8-19 - You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. {9} You cleared the ground for it; it took deep root and filled the land. {10} The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches; {11} it sent out its branches to the sea, and its shoots to the River. {12} Why then have you broken down its walls, so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit? {13} The boar from the forest ravages it, and all that move in the field feed on it. {14} Turn again, O YHWH of hosts; look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine, {15} the stock that your right hand planted. {16} They have burned it with fire, they have cut it down; may they perish at the rebuke of your countenance. {17} But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself. {18} Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name. {19} Restore us, O YHWH YHWH of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

Often in their history the people of YHWH are disobedient and break away. Pruning occurs when the Hebrew people mistreat the poor or widows or take advantage of each other. Remember that our faith in YHWH is proven in how we relate to people. For Jeremiah, at a time of national crisis, when the future is threatened, Israel is a choice vine; but becomes wild, useless.

Jeremiah 2:21: Yet I planted you as a choice vine, from the purest stock. How then did you turn degenerate and become a wild vine?

Jeremiah 11:16 states that although the green olive would suffer in this coming judgment, he does not speak of its total destruction, but warns only that the branches of it will be broken.

- The olive tree is a slow-growing tree--unlike the vine-- requiring years of patient labor before reaching full fruitfulness. Consequently its growth implies a certain degree of settledness and stability in the community, and hence its association with the idea of peace. The beauty of the tree is referred to in Jeremiah 11:16 and in Hosea 14:6 and yet--and surely this is deeply significant--the most fruitful of these trees are the product of bare and rocky ground. The cultivation of them requires a great deal of attention, constant pruning is necessary, and fruit comes very late in the year.

The book of Isaiah again shows how Israel became wild and unproductive and will be allowed to be broken down:

- (Isaiah 5:1-10) Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. {2} He dug it and cleared it of stones, and

planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. {3} And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. {4} What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? {5} And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. {6} I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. {7} For the vineyard of the YHWH of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry! {8} Ah, you who join house to house, who add field to field, until there is room for no one but you, and you are left to live alone in the midst of the land! {9} The YHWH of hosts has sworn in my hearing: Surely many houses shall be desolate, large and beautiful houses, without inhabitant. {10} For ten acres of vineyard shall yield but one bath, and a homer of seed shall yield a mere ephah.

In Romans 9-11 the Scriptures are focused on this topic of the olive tree image as the history of Israel is explained. Here Paul shows what the olive tree represents as it grows from the Holy Root – Messiah Y'shua.

Romans 11:17-24

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in their place to share the rich root of the olive tree, {18} do not boast over the branches. If you do boast, remember that it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you. {19} You will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." {20} That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe. {21} For if YHWH did not spare the natural branches, perhaps he will not spare you. {22} Note then the kindness and the severity of YHWH: severity toward those who have fallen, but YHWH's kindness toward you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. {23} And even those of Israel, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for YHWH has the power to graft them in again. {24} For if you have been 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 natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree.

Take time to read chapters 9-11 of Romans.

In Romans 11:26 - that people chosen by YHWH from amongst both Jews and Gentiles, that people called out from every tribe and kindred, from the four corners of the earth, all who are brought to faith in Messiah, the election of grace

To best understand what is being said here, let's review a paragraph from:

The olive tree parable (Rom. 11:16-24) parallels the two "sticks" prophecy of Ezek 37 (the word "stick" in Ezek. 37 is ETZ which also means "tree"). Rom. 9 begins the contrast of the "Jews" and "Gentiles" by quoting Hosea 2:25(23); 2:1 (1:10) in Rom. 9:25-26. But if we look up the context of the people "which were not my people" which he calls "my people" in Hosea we find that they are the "children of Israel" (Hosea 2:1 (1:10)) as opposed to "the children of Judah" (Hosea 2:2 (1:11)) So if Paul is quoting Hosea in context and contrasting Jews and Gentiles (Rom. 9:24) using Hosea 2:1-2 (1:10-11) then the "Jews" of Rom. 9:24 are the "Children of Judah" of Hosea 2:2 (1:11) and the "Gentiles" of Rom. 9:24 are the "children of Israel" of Hosea 2:1 (1:10). If this is true then as this contrasting pair advances into Rom. Chapter 11 the two trees are the two Houses. The uncultivated olive tree in Rom. 11 is clearly Ephraim and the cultivated olive tree is clearly that of Judah. Branches from the tree/stick of Ephraim will be broken off and grafted into the tree/stick of Judah, are to be fed by the root of Judah and are not to boast against the natural branches (Jews)."

From Romans 9-11 we can see and understand that our movement is NOT about Hebrew roots but about knowing and loving and accepting the Hebrew root of Y'shua – of Jesse.

Many will reject their Hebrew roots and therefore reject the Hebrew Root Y'shua. We must not be a stumbling block before these people. Instead, we need to learn how to relate and speak to those whose eyes are still blind. We must understand that THE End Time message is the restoration of the Olive Tree of Israel. It is possible that the Tree of Life from Genesis, whose leaves and fruit are for healing in Rev. 22:2, may be an olive tree.

The pruning and movement of the Ruach HaKodesh is to bring about the restoration of Israel through spiritual growth. We are the branches, we are the olive tree. Y'shua is the Vine. YHWH is the gardener. Our purpose as a people and a nation is to bear fruit.

- Matthew 15:13, "Every plant that my Father has not planted will be uprooted"

- Psalms 128:3 says, “Your wife (the Bride of Messiah) shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house; Your children like olive plants (nation of Israel) all around your table.”
- Galatians 5:22, “By contrast, [with the fruit of the flesh, vv. 19-21] the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, {23} gentleness and self-control.”
- John 15:8, “My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”