

Facts About Olive Production

Olive trees grown from seed bear fruit that is poor/wild. They must have help, or grafting, to bear the best/tame fruit.

Grafting is a violent process, but it is necessary to keep olive trees producing as much good fruit as possible.

The burning of an individual olive tree is done to prevent parasites and bacteria that may be present in the sick branches from infesting the rest of the grove. It also clears the ground, preventing weed growth and making it easier to care for healthy trees.

Entire olive groves are sometimes burned deliberately to reconstitute them. When reconstituting an olive tree by burning, the tree is taken up, leaving only the large roots. After burning and cultivation you may get as many as three hundred trees in what once was a grove with just one hundred trees. Thus, burning an olive grove is a symbol of rebirth. It conveys botanically the idea of starting over.

Assignments

Look for ways that the Allegory of the Olive Tree relates to the atonement of Christ. Christ seeks to redeem everyone -- even when they reject him. What does that mean for you?

Look for ways to personalize the Allegory of the Olive Tree by substituting your name in place of references to olive trees. For example: "it grieveth me that I should loose Jenny (this tree)".

Spend a few moments pondering about how hard the Lord works to save his vineyard. If the Lord works so diligently to save olives, how hard does He work to save you?

What might you do differently as a result of the feelings you had as you studied this chapter?

Jacob 5:

The Allegory of the Olive Tree

"This allegory as recounted by Jacob is from the outset intended to be about Christ. ... Even as the Lord of the vineyard and his workers strive to bolster, prune, purify, and otherwise make productive their trees in what amounts to a one-chapter historical sketch of the scattering and gathering of Israel, the deeper meaning of the Atonement undergirds and overarches their labors"

~ Jeffrey R. Holland

Who was Zenos?

Zenos was a Hebrew prophet whose writings appeared on the brass plates but who is not mentioned in the Old Testament. He lived after the prophet Abraham and before the prophet Isaiah. He prophesied and testified of Jesus Christ. Zenos is best known for his allegory of the olive trees. More of Zenos' prophecies are listed in the Index in the Book of Mormon.

Points to search for as you study:

- Even though Israel has rejected the Savior, they will be gathered to Him and accept him as the head of their corner.
- The Lord loves us and works diligently for our salvation.
- The influence of gospel covenants allows Heavenly Father's children to overcome sin and bring forth righteousness.
- The Lord promises us joy as we labor with Him to accomplish His work.