

Romans

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[0 : 00] That I, my dear. That I, my dear.

That I, my dear. Yeah, it's been really good to have young people with us.

! Raise your paw if you're at All Nations Ilford. Raise your hand. Just see, that's great. You're here. And if you're at Canada Water Church, there you go. And Grace Church Hammersmith, there's a couple there as well, isn't there?

So, and we're really, really pleased that you can be with us. And so, warm welcome. It's lovely to have Rob and Jenny out here too. And Lottie. And so, and we've been praying for you in Grace Church Hammersmith.

As you begin, we're going to pray for those churches. Please also pray for Arthur Kiefer. Arthur's got his presbytery exams on either Friday or Saturday up in York.

[1 : 04] It's our presbytery where all the elders of IPC churches gather. And one of the things we do is examine people for ordination. And Arthur's been examined. And so, do pray for him in that.

Let's turn to God in prayer. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you that we can come boldly to the throne of grace.

And we can find grace and mercy to help in time of need. We thank you for your love for that sacrifice, the son of God given for me.

We thank you that we, the guilty ones, through Christ, might go free. And we thank you for partnership in the gospel with churches that are proclaiming that message.

We thank you for Grace Church Hammersmith. And we pray for them as they begin life as a new church. And we ask for encouragement for Rob and Jenny and the family.

[2 : 01] We thank you for those you are bringing to them. And we pray that you would bring more. And there would be a strong work established there. Lord, we rejoice to have seen the growth of All Nations Church in Ilford.

And thank you for Simon and Becky and dear Chris and Emma and Gabriel and Kit. And thank you for the people who have been reached and disciplined in that church. And we pray, Lord, that that work would know much growth, both in maturity and in people coming to us.

Lord, we're so grateful for the work of Canada Water Church. For Kruger and Stefania and the family. And their faithfulness over many years. And we want to pray that there would be a rich harvest of men and women and boys and girls coming to know you through that church.

Thank you for the young people who are gathered here today. Thank you for the message that they've heard this weekend. And we pray for strong friendships amongst them.

That they would encourage one another and build one another up over coming years. We pray that they would walk faithfully. And trust the Lord Jesus Christ and be unashamed.

[3 : 14] We pray that you would help them and help us to honour our parents. And to recognise authority in a godly way. Heavenly Father, we do thank you for your church in this country and around the world.

We pray for those places where it's very difficult. And particularly of the country of Myanmar. We thank you for pastors who've been released.

And yet we pray for the church under great pressure there. That they would be encouraged to press on confidently in their Christian work. They would stand for you.

And that you would use their stand to bring many others into your kingdom. We pray for those who are working amongst your ancient people, Israel. For the international mission to Jewish people.

And we ask, Lord, that there would be many Jews who come to recognise in the Lord Jesus Christ. Their Messiah, their Lord and their God. And Heavenly Father, we thank you for Arthur and Emma.

[4 : 23] And we pray for Arthur in his presbytery exams later this week. That you would help him. That your will would be done. Heavenly Father, how we need wisdom in your church.

How we need to encourage one another to work while it is light. Strengthen us as your people to stand in this generation. We thank you that the gospel has come.

And that the gospel is flowing out to all the nations. And so we pray that as we look at a part of your word, which can often be controversial. We pray that we would be excited by it.

Pray that you would open our minds and hearts. And thrill our affections. That we would come to your table. Rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A saviour. Who has been given. To men and women and boys and girls like us. And so we pray all of these things. In the precious name of Jesus Christ.

[5 : 22] Our great high priest. Amen. Before we come to God's word. We are going to sing again. Before the throne of God above. I have a strong. A perfectly enduring this hymn.

And we will take up an offering. And for the Lord's work. Amen. Amen. Before the throne of God above.

I have a strong and perfect King. The great high priest. Jesus' name is love.

Whoever lives the peace for me. I need his wisdom on his hands. I need his hidden in his heart.

I know the wall in heaven we stand. He will come and force me to defy. He will come and force me to defy.

[6 : 31] Amen. free, for God the justice satisfied, to look on him and pardon me, to look on him and pardon me.

Beholding there the risen Lamb, my perfect father's righteous Lamb, the great unchangeable Lamb, the King of glory and of grace.

One within self I cannot die, my soul is purchased by his blood, my life is saved with Christ on my life, with Christ my Saviour and my God.

With Christ my Saviour and my God. I do turn in Romans chapter 11, it's on page 945 if you've got a church Bible, page 945.

And Romans 11 is a complicated chapter. I want to take verse 25 as I think the key that unlocks the chapter. Paul says this, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery brothers, a partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

[8 : 35] Paul says there's a big secret in the Bible. There's a big secret in the Bible, there's a mystery that's been revealed and you're in on the secret. The word mystery in the Bible is a technical term.

It doesn't mean something mysterious or something spooky, it means something that you wouldn't have guessed unless God had told you. And Paul is saying there's something like that in the Bible and it's clear there for all to see, but unless God reveals it to you, you won't get it.

And I'm going to share that mystery with you. He describes it there in verse 25. He says, I don't want you to be unaware brothers and the reason I'm telling you this is so that you don't become wise in your own sight.

A partial hardening has come upon Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. The problem is in Rome, it's about the early 40s, Emperor Claudius has booted out the Jews.

He's dispelled all of the Jews from the city of Rome. So the church in Rome that Paul is now writing to is largely made up of Gentiles. The Jews have been expelled and there's a kind of, you can read it a bit towards the end of the letter, there's a kind of anti-Jewish thing going on in that church.

[9 : 55] There's a kind of superiority. God has finished with the Jews. That's the Old Testament. Now it's our turn. And that's what Paul is addressing throughout the letter really, but particularly here in this chapter.

Let's look at it together. We're often tempted to give up on people, aren't we? Our friends in our family circle. Maybe you've been praying for somebody for a long time and you've been witnessing to them and you think to yourself, they just seem so hard to the gospel.

It would take a miracle for that person to become a Christian. Hello? What did it take for you to become a Christian? It's easy, isn't it, to put people in the too hard basket.

To give up on them. To label them as unbelievers. And that's what Paul is wanting to address here. Sometimes, do you know what, we can even give up on whole people groups.

Whole segments of society. And we think, well, the gospel is never going to reach that section of society. It's never going to penetrate those subcultures. They seem to be so resistant to the gospel.

[11:10] We just give up on them. And we should never do that. We should never give up. Because God's grace is overflowing. His kindness, which is undeserved, flows over.

And God has so many surprising ways in which he brings people to faith. And that's really what this chapter is about. So we saw at the end of chapter 10, if you remember, there are a number of Old Testament quotes.

How there's been this surprising turn in history of redemption. The Gentiles, that's us, if we're not Jews. The nations that have been going in the wrong direction, away from God, are now suddenly coming to Jesus.

And they suddenly find themselves at the center of the Messiah's kingdom. And the Jews, who should have known better, who've been waiting for the Messiah to come, whose whole orientation and history has been towards God and towards righteousness, in a weird reversal of fortune, they find themselves on the outer.

And that's what Paul is troubled about. It's a bit like the parable of the two sons. I think there's lots of allusions in Romans 11 to the parables.

[12:26] The parables of the kingdom. So we know the parable, don't we, of the prodigal son. It's a bit misleading though, isn't it, to call it that? Because there were two sons. And the parable is not just about the prodigal, you know, the waster.

The parable is about the two sons. So let me tell you how it goes. You have the runaway son who says to his dad, I wish you were dead. And he goes into the far country and he squanders his inheritance.

In wild living, he comes to his senses. He starts to walk back to his father practicing his speech. And the father sees him from afar off and runs towards him.

And welcomes him. There's a great party thrown for his runaway son. And that's the bit we love. We get excited about that. But there's another son, a dutiful son, who stays at home.

And he stands outside and he refuses to go into the party for his brother. And he's angry and resentful and bitter and he's left out in the cold.

[13:28] And that's the picture here. That's what Paul is troubled about, this turn of events. So the Jewish nation who had the covenants and the promises and the prophets and all the visual aids they needed, they are out in the cold.

And they are the most resistant people group to the Lord Jesus on earth right now. And he's concerned about that. And so he asks, have the Jewish people stumbled beyond recovery? Has God given up on them? Is it all over for the Jews? Israel has rejected the Messiah. Does that mean God has turned his back on the Jews? Does that mean Israel is finished? And he says three things. He says firstly, that Israel's hardening is not final. And it's not over yet. So here are the three things.

First of all, he argues that Israel's unbelief is not total. Israel's unbelief is not total. And exhibit number one is Paul himself.

[14:38] He is the evidence. He says, you know me. You know me as the apostle to the Gentiles. But look, verse one, I'm a Jew. Verse one, I'm an Israelite. Don't forget that.

You don't get more Israelite than this. You don't get more kosher than this. I'm a descendant of Abraham. I'm from the tribe of Benjamin. If ever there was a Jew, Paul says, it's me. And if ever a Jew deserved to be thrown out, to be cast out, to be forgotten about, it's me.

And yet God had mercy on me. Listen to how he puts it to Timothy. This is what he says to Timothy. He says, even though I once was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and I was a violent man, I was shown mercy.

Here's something that you can hang your hat on, Timothy. Here's a trustworthy saying. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief. I'm the worst.

That's not a humble brag. That's not false modesty. That is not Paul trying to be pious and pretending he was worse than he really was.

[15:44] No, he really was the worst of the worst. He was a fundamentalist terrorist. He persecuted the church. He separated children from parents. He murdered Christians.

He held the coats of those who were stoning Stephen to death. He held the mobile phone while they stoned a man to death and filmed it. So when he says, I'm the chief of sinners, and I'm a blasphemer, and I'm a persecutor of the church, we've got to take him seriously.

And he says, God had mercy on me, and if he had mercy on me, there's no one beyond the pale. Spiritism puts it like this.

He says, if a bridge is strong enough for an elephant to cross over, it will most certainly carry a mouse. And so you are a mouse, compared to the Apostle Paul.

And you might think of yourself this morning as a great sinner. Now you might say, you don't know me, and I don't. You don't know what I'm capable of, and I don't. But I can tell you this, you're a mouse compared to the Apostle Paul.

[16:53] And he was saved. And if Spurgeon's argument is that if a bridge is strong enough to carry an elephant, it will certainly carry a mouse. If the greatest sinner who ever lived has entered heaven, by the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, then no one else who has ever lived can say, well, no, there can be no forgiveness for me.

I'm beyond the pale. And so don't give up on anyone. That's what Paul is saying. Has God finished with the Jews?

I'm a Jew. God has made me the Apostle to the Gentiles. But if you want any justification for Jewish evangelism, Paul says, look what God has done for me.

And that's a wonderful argument. When you're tempted to stop praying for people, it's a wonderful reminder, isn't it? When you think it'll take a miracle for that person to become a Christian, well, yes, it will.

I don't know if you've heard of the Starfish Foundation. I've not until I found this illustration. But all those years ago when there was the AIDS epidemic, it sort of broke up.

[18:05] It broke out. And there was no kind of proper treatment for AIDS patients. And many people were dying. This foundation got started. The foundation was a help to people and families that were affected by the AIDS epidemic.

And the story is interesting how it started. There's a guy, I think in South Africa, who's walking along a beach. And he sees a man in the distance who's standing there, seemingly like he's throwing pebbles into the sea, picking them up, throwing them into the ocean.

As he got closer, he could see they weren't actually pebbles, they were starfish. There were hundreds and hundreds and thousands and thousands of starfish. The tide had washed them into the shore.

And they were just there, lying on the beach, dying. Dying on the sand. And there's this guy going along, picking up a starfish and throwing it back into the ocean. And when he's challenged, they say, what are you doing that for?

There's so many starfish on the beach, you're just wasting your time, aren't you? He says, well, I'm trying to save these starfish, the man said. It can be like that, can't it?

[19:16] It can be so overwhelming. The human need in London is utterly overwhelming. You get paralyzed by it sometimes when you start to think about it.

There are so many needs out there. What can I do about that? It seems so overwhelming. The guy on the beach stoops down and he throws another starfish and he throws it back into the ocean.

And he says this, it made a difference to that one, didn't it? It made a difference to that one. And really, I think that's what Paul is saying here. When he draws attention to himself and he says, I'm a Jew, it made a difference to this one.

And God hasn't finished with the Jewish people yet. So I will keep going to the synagogue first, says Paul, and I will keep banging on the synagogue door. Even though they'll slam it in my face because I know if God did that for me, he can do it for someone else.

And maybe it will be one by one. Maybe it will be gradual. Maybe it will be slow. And hard work. It's not just the occasion of his conversion.

[20:28] Look at what he says in verse 2. He says it's much bigger than that. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. So he says, do you remember that story about Elijah and how he appeals to God against Israel?

And the language there is really technical. It's the language of an appeal from a law court. And Elijah brings a lawsuit against Israel as a prophet of God.

And he's lodging an official complaint with God about Israel. He says, Lord, they've killed your prophets. They've demolished your altars. And I, I alone am left.

And they seek my life. Isn't it time, Lord, we shut the doors and turned off the lights? It's over now. There's such apostasy. Israel is finished.

I'm the only true Israelite left. I don't know of any others. Do you remember what the Lord said? He says to Elijah, I've received 7,000. 7,000 who've not bowed the knee to Baal.

[21 : 30] False God. Dale Ralph Davis in his commentary on King says, it's the Old Testament equivalent of Jesus saying, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

One of those 7,000 in Elijah's day was a guy called Obadiah. And he was right under King Ahab's nose in his government, in his administration.

He was King Ahab's right-hand man. And he was one of those whom God had chosen from before the foundation of the world. He was one of those who'd been reserved by grace.

So even in the worst of times when the gospel doesn't seem to be making much headway at all, and there's almost wholesale turning away from God, God never leaves himself without a witness. However bad it gets. However discouraging it might be, don't ever think that God has given up on his people. There's always a remnant.

[22 : 35] It's like when you cook an egg. You know, you go to fry an egg, you crack the egg into the frying pan, and if it works right, doesn't it? You have a golden circle of yoke right in the middle and the white around.

And what Paul is describing here is this remnant. There is a little golden remnant in the nation of Israel. Within the white of the egg, there's this inner circle of people that understand the gospel.

They believe the prophets, and there always has been such a people. So do you remember when Jesus was born? He came into his own, but his own did not receive him, John 1 says.

But there were individuals, weren't there? There was Anna, there was Simeon. Those who were waiting for the consolation of Israel. Those who held true to the gospel.

And that remnant is right up to the present day. Notice he says that in verse 5. He says, So too, at the present time, there's a remnant. And when Paul went up to Jerusalem, with the famine relief, he was the apostle to the Gentiles.

[23 : 45] So he's going around the Mediterranean, and people were being converted in vast numbers, non-Jews. Churches were being planted. And at the same time, he's evangelizing the Gentiles.

He's asking them, Can you give towards the relief of the Jewish people? The Christians in Jerusalem. And so he goes back to Jerusalem in Acts 21.21. He comes with the collection from the Gentile believers.

And what does he find? Acts 21.21, he finds the leaders of the church tell him that there are actually thousands of God-fearing Jews in Jerusalem who've become Christians.

Remember in Acts chapter 6, that a great company of the Jewish priests have become believers. somebody has estimated that when Paul wrote the letter to the Romans, there were upwards of 300,000 Jewish believers in the Christian church.

Israel's fall is not total. It's not all over. But secondly, Israel's fall is not pointless. It's not pointless.

[24 : 51] There's a reason to it. There's a purpose behind it. And that's really exciting because it gives you and I an insight into how does God work. How does God work to save people? What does he do?

And so God's purpose has always been to bring blessing to the world since Abraham. to bring the blessing of Abraham to the nations. How does he do that?

Well, look at verse 11. He says, so I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means. Rather that through their trespass, the Jewish trespass, salvation has come to the Gentiles, the non-Jews, so as to make Israel jealous.

It's no wonder he calls it a mystery. It's no wonder he bursts into praise at the end of the chapter. He praises God for his wisdom and his knowledge and how unsearchable his judgments are. You would never have guessed that God was going to do something like this.

But think about it. Look what he says in verse 22. What an insight you have here into the character of God. That he should walk, work like this in the world. So consider, he says, think about the kindness of God and the severity of God.

[26 : 00] You see, there's both of the aspects of God in this chapter. The severity of God and the kindness of God. Severity to those who fell, but kindness to us Gentiles.

Kindness to us, provided you continue in his kindness. It sounds like a contradiction, doesn't it? Severity and kindness. In us, in me, it is a contradiction.

And in you. I don't know about you. What happens when you get angry? I wouldn't want to be around you when you get angry. And they say, well, you wouldn't want to be around me when I get angry.

Because when we get angry, we tend to lash out, don't we? We say things that we wish we hadn't said. When I get angry, I tend to lash out, like you do.

That is sinful. That is human anger. That is what we are like. But when God gets angry, can you notice what he does? When God gets angry, he reaches out.

[27 : 07] His anger is a perfect anger. Let me try and illustrate this. And the best illustration of this, if you stick with me, is from one of his parables. It is Luke 14.

Do you remember? There is a great, great banquet. A massive party. And people are invited. Who were the first people invited? Do you remember? The Jews. They were invited. They said they were going to come to the party.

And the master of ceremonies has gone to inordinate lengths and loads of trouble to make sure there is enough food for everybody. They killed the fatted calf to make sure that everything was ready.

And so when everything was ready, what happened? Do you remember? None of them showed up. They all had their feeble excuses. And so in Luke 14, we are told that the master of the house is justifiably furious.

He's so angry. What does he do? He says to his servants, you go out into the highways and the byways and invite. Bring them in, in fact. Bring in the poor and the maimed and the blind and the lame.

[28 : 15] Do you see what God does when he's angry? He doesn't lash out. He reaches out to the nations. To those who didn't have a right to an invitation. To those who probably never ever expected an invitation.

God goes out to the blind and the lame and the maimed and he says, come in. I'll have my house full. And that's what's happening now in the gospel age. The gospel is going out.

The invitation goes out to the Chinese, to the Japanese, to the Persian, to the British, to the Latin American, to the Africans. All around the world the invitation goes out.

And the nations come into this great feast. Do you see the sternness of God and the kindness of God? And that is the way his grace operates.

His anger explodes in blessing for the world. You see, if the Jews don't want Jesus, then he's going to offer Jesus to the Gentiles.

[29 : 19] But in order to make the Jews jealous. You'd never have guessed that. Neither would I. Again, think of the parable of the two sons.

Do you remember? It's a bit about sibling rivalry. We forget, don't we, with the prodigal son. It's such a great story. We see the father, arms outstretched, running down the road to welcome his son, the loser, the waster.

He didn't have any right to welcome that kid. But the father runs down the road. He wraps his arms around him to welcome him home. And we think, well, that is a wonderful story of God's grace. But it's only half the story because there's two sons.

And right at the end of the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15, the father goes out to the elder brother. He's sulking. He's not a good thing. He is bitter.

He's religious. And he refuses to come into the party. Do you remember what happens at the end? It's often missed. We're told that the father goes out to the older brother and he pleads with him.

[30 : 27] He says, come in, come in. Don't you see that? He pleads with the religious, the dutiful, the bitter, the resentful, the guy whose nose is out of joint because he feels that his brother has been given all of the grace and I've done my duty and nothing's ever been given to me.

And the father goes and pleads with him and pleads with him. Do you see what's happening? Right now, God is bringing in the nations. He's bringing people who never had a right to an invitation in the first place.

Us, we are Gentiles. We are the ones who are far off but God calls us in. Yet he pleads with the older brother. He's pleading with the Jews who are old covenant people.

He's wanting to make them envious and jealous. He uses a horticultural illustration. He says there's an olive tree. The olive tree is a symbol of Israel.

And what has God done? He's uprooted that tree? No, he hasn't. He's replaced it with another tree? No, he's not done that. He's just done some pruning. He's lopped off some of the branches. [31 : 35] The dead wood. Those who are in Israel but they really didn't understand the Messiah stuff. They didn't listen to the prophets. So what has he done? He's lopped off some of the branches.

And we, well we were just the weeds. We were just the wild olive branches so that we might be grafted. We don't replace Israel but we are grafted in and so Israel's scriptures become our scriptures.

And Israel's Messiah is our hope for the future. That's what Paul says to the Ephesians in chapter 2. Let me paraphrase it for you. He says, remember only yesterday you were outsiders.

You were outsiders to God's ways you Gentiles. You knew nothing of that rich history of God's covenant and promises in Israel. You didn't have a clue of what God was doing in the world at large. You were without hope and without God but now in Christ Jesus you who are far off you've been brought near by the blood of Christ.

So be careful you Gentiles. You are just Johnny Camilletys. Don't get all superior. You've been grafted in. And the only reason that some of you are Christians and the only reason why you've been grafted in is to make Israel jealous.

[32 : 59] I would like to think I've been preaching 20 years I would like to think that people become Christians in this church through my marvelous sermons. Or through buildings. It's a great building.

But do you know how people become Christians? Christians they become Christians because of what they see of Jesus Christ in someone else's life. Martin L. Jones used to have this phrase that he often used.

He would say that every Christian ought to be an enigma. Quite like that. If you are a Christian there ought to be something in your life that cannot be explained. And people look at you.

Don't kid yourself. People do look at you. And you may not realize it but they look at you and they try to size you up and they try to work you out. And they can't explain it away just by your upbringing or your background.

They can't explain it by the church or by sociology. They can't explain what has happened to you in terms of your life by psychology or sociology. You're an enigma.

[34 : 01] And as the church lives in that way people become curious. That's what Peter said, isn't it? We should be ready to give a reason to those who ask us for the reason for the hope that's within us.

And so people look at us and it excites their curiosity. But Paul goes further than that. It's not just that people should be curious.

It's not just that we should be different but Paul says, isn't it? I want people to become jealous. Jealous of you. So the Christianity in our lives is so evident as individuals and as a community as a church that people are actually envious.

That they see something in us that they haven't got. And that's what Paul is talking about. That's the rationale of Paul's argument.

Look how he puts it in verses 11 and 12. Let me paraphrase it. The language is difficult, isn't it? The message puts it like this. When the Jews walked out they left the door open and the outsiders walked in.

[35 : 17] But the next thing you know is the Jews started to wonder whether they'd walked out on a good thing. Now if their leaving triggered this worldwide coming in of non-Jewish outsiders into God's kingdom just imagine the effect of their coming back.

what a homecoming that would be. That's verses 11 and 12. You see God knows what he's doing. He is carrying out his sovereign purpose. He is carrying out his sovereign promise that he made to Abraham.

That through your seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed. And so Israel's fall is not total and it is not pointless. And then lastly Israel's fall is not final.

And here's the most exciting point and the most controversial one. So look at verse 16. Look at how he describes the remnant. He says God will always lose people. Notice how he describes them there.

In verse 16 it's the first fruits. They're not the leftovers. The remnant we often think it's the leftovers but he describes the remnant as the first fruits. In other words there's a promise here.

[36 : 24] There's more than a hint of a promise of a significant harvest. Look at verse 12. Now if their trespass means riches for the world and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles how much more will their full inclusion mean?

See those are how much more there? That's being more than hinted at. Look at verse 15. For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?

It's mind-blowing stuff. I think Romans 11 must make you and I very optimistic about the gospel. I do not believe that when Jesus comes back there's not going to be anyone to greet him. I don't believe that the church is going to dwindle away to nothing. We believe in the certain success of the gospel.

And I think that's what Paul is arguing for here. Matthew Henry puts it like this. He says if the putting out of your candle is the lighting of yours by that power of God who brings good out of evil much more shall the continued light of your candle when God's time has come be a means of lighting theirs again.

[37 : 37] It'll be life from the dead. He's not talking about the general resurrection when Jesus returns. He'd have used a different word if he was going to talk about that. He's talking about Ezekiel 37.

He's talking about the valley of dry bones. He's not talking about the reconstruction of the state of Israel. He's talking about the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. That's what we prayed for earlier when we prayed your kingdom come.

Paul in Corinthians puts it like this. It's really helpful verse 2 Corinthians 3. He says in verse 14 he talks about the veil being taken away. This is what he says. He says yes to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts.

But when one turns to the Lord the veil is removed. That's what's being promised here that through the preaching of the gospel there will be a turning to the Lord amongst Jewish people on an unprecedented scale.

Israel. It's not that there's two different tracks that if you're a Christian you've got to believe in Jesus and if you're a Jew you've just got to be a decent Jew. There's only one way of salvation.

[38 : 49] There's only ever been one way of salvation. You've got to believe in Jesus and through the preaching of Jesus there will come a day when all Israel will be saved. That doesn't mean every single Jewish person will become a Christian.

but it does mean that Israel will no longer be Israel in the sense of being opposed to the Lord Jesus. So when I stand here Sunday morning and Sunday night I look out on this congregation and I often think what will happen today?

Will these dead bones live? That's the vision Ezekiel had in chapter 37. A valley of dry bones. And he was told preach to the dead bones.

And he said can these bones live? And there's a rattling of the bones. And the breath of God comes into those bones. And a mighty great army arises from the dead.

That's what's being pictured. And so when I stand here on a Sunday morning and Sunday night I need to say can these dead bones live? There are people here this morning that you're dead in your transgressions and sins.

[39 : 53] You're blind. And there's a veil over your heart so that you cannot see and you cannot understand. And things are very simple to understand but you can't see it.

Can these dead bones live? That there could be life from the dead for these people. That's what Paul is saying. He's saying that there will come a time when the generality of the Jewish people will recognize Messiah.

Listen to what Thomas Goodwin said. He's a preacher. He said there will come a time when the generality of mankind, both Jew and Gentile, will come to Jesus Christ. He's had but little takings of the world up till now but he will have before he is done.

Of course he will. Do you think Satan is going to have more people in hell than Jesus Christ will have in heaven? That's what's promised in the promise to Abraham.

And God has not given up on his promise to Abraham. He hasn't torn it up and come up with a plan B. It's just we never understood it. What a secret. It's plainly there in the prophets but we missed it.

[41 : 06] And this is how he will accomplish it. He will accomplish it by grace spilling over from one to another. So that in the end all nations and all tribes and all tongues will be there around the

