

W_86_Romans.mp3

[00:00:02] This is a recording of a Bible study given at the chapel of the opened book. Under the covering title, The Pleroma. The special theme for this evening will be Romans, the ninth chapter to the 11th, with particular reference to the place that the olive tree occupies in the exposition. It is our custom at these meetings to read a portion of scripture together. If those of you who are listening to this recording care to join us, will you switch off for a little while and read together with us? Romans The ninth chapter. We are still dealing in this series with the all covering title, The Pleroma, The Fullness. And we turned over from examining the early books of the Old Testament. And came into the New Testament in order to keep some measure of balance. We've had before you an outline on this chart of the occurrences of the word pleroma in the New Testament, except those which have no bearing upon doctrinal teaching at all. Just 1 or 2. The first one. Was where we considered John's testimony. But having come in the flesh. He was full of grace and truth. And out of that fullness have all we received and grace. Over against or instead of grace. And he goes on to explain that we've now been translated from the law of Moses, with its types and its shadows into the full gospel liberty of the Son of God. That's practically summing up in a few words what we considered under John the first chapter verses 16 to 18.

[00:02:04] Well, then we moved to Galatians and our theme was the fullness of time. When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his son. The fullness of time. The earth had been submitted to. All the degradation that follows sin and its consequences for 4000 years, according to the teaching of the Old Testament. Sin or the New Testament as well. Sin entered into this world through the action disobedience of one man. It reached a terrific zenith in the days of Noah and even after the flood. The heart of man manifested to be just the same. And so the groan of creation had been going up all those years. And God had never intervened. Not in the way which he intended to do at last. But we had to face the fact that time was a thing that belonged to the purpose of God, that he couldn't be hurried and he was never late. It was a strain upon our faith sometimes to pray and get no answer. But we have evidences in the scriptures that others were in the same position. And Habakkuk is a peculiar example where he said, after being baffled by this, he would wait and see what the answer would be. And the answer was The vision is yet for an appointed time. White flight. Though it tarry, wait for it, but it's not really tarrying. And the meanwhile in that waiting the just shall live by faith.

[00:03:45] Well, I can't go over all that ground again, of course. But now we make another advance and we come to a little collection of passages which are linked together, by the way, in which words are related to them. We are going to consider the fullness this time that is mentioned in Romans 11, where it says these words verse 12. Now, if the fall of them, that's Israel. Be the riches of the world and the diminishing of them, the riches of the Gentiles, how much more they are fullness. You will notice on the chart there are four passages linked together in this section. The first one and the last one. Use those words to provoke to jealousy. In one Corinthians ten, we have the same expression to provoke to jealousy. In the first case, it is associated with the fullness of Israel. In the other case, the balancing one. It's the very fullness of the whole earth. I think we have the two in the middle. The Gentile fullness. Chapter 11:25. But I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits. That blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. So in this Chapter 11, we've got the fullness of Israel yet to come and the fullness of the Gentiles about to be concluded. And then that is balanced by the last reference in Romans when the apostle contemplating a visit to Rome, but not yet being fully aware that he was going there as a prisoner.

[00:05:39] He says, When I come, I hope to come in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Now, whether he knew all that those words implied, I don't know. But when he did get there to Rome, he did certainly have the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ as we find developed in those great prison epistles. Without this this evening, concentrate our attention upon the testimony of Romans nine, ten and 11. And if we attempt to give any sort of exhaustive analysis, we shall not get through Romans nine this evening. And that would keep us waiting perhaps a bit too long. Let us just sort of ventilate the problem that is now being opened up by the apostle. He, being a Hebrew and trained as he was in the Old Testament scriptures. He knew most. Certainly he knew that the appointed channel of blessing. Since the call of Abraham was one people, the people to which he belonged. He could bring chapter and verse from Old Testament prophets, from the gospel statements recorded by our Savior and by the things that he himself had been inspired to utter, that the people of Israel were the destined channel of blessing to all families of the Earth. Now. I met with some people. Who was he fighting? This question of Acts 28 and they set it aside.

[00:07:16] One of them only recently has just said, oh, it was something of importance to Israel, but no bearing whatever upon anybody else. Many say to guide the people of Israel were the appointed channel of blessing to all the rest of the world. Now they came to an abrupt end in Acts 28. It was a rather important to them, but no importance to anybody else. Now, let's put it another way. I'll put it this way. The only means of getting water in this particular village is by an aqueduct that comes down the side of the hill. And that's been like that for centuries. Then the aqueduct ceases. It's broken or something goes wrong with it. So they meet together and they say, Well, it's very unfortunate for the aqueduct, but it'll make no difference to us. You imagine? You imagine anybody saying the only supply of the water of life is cut off. Makes no difference to us. But some may have been stirred up to say, you know, I think we must look for another source of supply. Don't you? Before we're all dead and buried. We shall be buried. I believe less obvious. And so they are the ones. They are the peculiar ones who believe Dispensational truth. And they discover when that aqueduct was cut off. God pointed a secret supply of water for those who would believe what he said. Well, that's common sense, isn't it? Although you won't make these people think it's common sense who take the other view.

[00:08:51] What happened. The apostle is going to ventilate this question. What about this idea? Because it was patent to anyone who eyes to see that the long suffering of God was reaching its end. These people had received a personal visit of the Son of God. He'd been born in Bethlehem and fulfilled the scriptures and his walk through life, his sacrificial death, his resurrection had all fulfilled explicitly what was written in the Scriptures. And then in spite of the fact that they rejected him. Those very apostles are told to remain at Jerusalem and go to the self-same people and give them a second invitation. I'm borrowing the words from the parable of the marriage of the King's son. You know, they all turned it down. And then the king said, Now go again to the same people and say, Come for all things are ready. And they despised it. And then they they ill used his servants and finally burnt up their city. And then he sent out into the byways, you see. All that was known to the apostle. And so he says at the end of Chapter eight. I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth. And he might have said. Nor the detection of the people of Israel shall be able to separate us from the love of God or spoiled his purpose.

[00:10:20] But he didn't say quite like that. He finished his subject. But there is no Chapter eight and Chapter nine in Paul's epistle to the Romans. That's only what we've done for reference sake. He went straight on. I say the truth in Christ. I lie not. But whatever all about what he's just said. I say the truth in Christ. I lie. Not this purpose of God will go on. It must go on. Otherwise we are of all men, as he said in another context, most miserable. And then he begins to deal with the debatable point. Well, if that's the case, if that's the case, what about the people of Israel? Were they not elect people? Were they not chosen to be a channel of blessing? And you can see with their own eyes that they've turned their back on their very messiah and they're going to lose their place. So. He introduces his subject like this. If you look at all covering sort of Romans nine, ten and 11, you start with sorrow. Sorry. I have continual sorrow as I think of them, and it ends with sorrow, for suddenly he leaves all his teaching. He says, Oh, the depth of the riches and the wisdom of God. Our uncertainty, sorrow, battling through problems, coming right out into the light, realizing that God indeed is over all. And you read that in Romans nine. Only this time it's spoken of Christ.

[00:11:50] Now for the first thing he mentions, he says about this people concerning whom he has sorrow. Is to give you immediately a sketch of their peculiar privileges. Romans nine. They are his kinsmen, according to the flesh. They are Israelites to whom pertain the adoption glory covenants giving of the law service of God promises Whose are the fathers? All that not belong to them doesn't belong to us. We have no covenants, no fathers, not in the scriptural sense. And then he goes on to add another, the climax of whom? As concerning the flesh. Concerning the flesh. Mark you Christ came who is over all God blessed forever. Then when he gets through to the end of Chapter 11, he comes back to practically the same thing without using exactly the same words. All the debts of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out? For who hath known the mind of the Lord or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him. And it shall be recompensed unto him again. For of him and through him. And to him are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen. So now we've got Christ now and God ultimately in the fullest sense, standing there? Absolutely, sir. Completely irresponsible. And he says, that's where I stand. Well, now the next thing he says. If we go through this. As you'll see, by the way, in which he opens Chapter 11.

[00:13:41] Don't forget that God has chosen this people. I say that and there's a possibility that I say that could be translated better. Do I say that? Then you say, Don't misunderstand me. Do I say then that God has cast away his people? See, at the end of the chapter it says All day long have I stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people. He says, Am I saying that God has cast away his people? God forbid. For. I also am an Israelite. I'm only one, but I'm a sample. You know, my past life. He could have said to them, you know what an exceeding zealot I was for the traditions of my fathers. And I persecuted those who believed in the name of Christ. I only did what they are doing now. But he saved me. And he may be a pattern of those who should afterwards believe unto everlasting life. He said, God hath not cast away his people, which he thought you. That's the point. And so you discover that in Romans nine and 11 at the present moment, I speak from Paul's angle. At that time, he says, I'm not so concerned about the whole nation at the moment. What I'm concerned is that you shall see that God has never left himself without a remnant. Here. He emphasizes it in Romans nine. And again, he picks it up in Romans 11. First five.

[00:15:17] Even so, then at this present time, also there is a remnant according to the election of grace, as you read Romans nine. It seems terribly severe, doesn't it? All about Pharaoh and Esau and others. But you must remember its context. He's endeavoring to show them that nothing. Nothing. Not the defection of Israel or anything else that man can do right or wrong, can ever alter the ultimate fulfillment of God's purpose. He uses a figure of a potter and a clay. But you could take this out of its context and you could teach that men are simply clay in the hands of an impersonal god and they have no more responsibility for their actions than the piece of clay has in his hand. That is, as he puts it all know. And will you notice the way in which it's safeguarded a wee little bit? First of all, I would like you to realize that there is no word for dishonor in verse 21. God has never made anything dishonorable. This is the same thought that you have in two Timothy, that in a great house you will have some vessels unto honor and some that have no honor. They're not dishonorable, they're no honor. You may have something peculiar that's valuable in the drawing room and you have all sorts of pots and pans in the scullery that the master of the house, if it's a any size at all, doesn't even know exist.

[00:16:45] They are without any honor. He said the the Potter has complete control as to whether he makes the one or the other. What insights cited God, if he has a purpose

and he wants some vessels like that and some vessels like that. Are you going to turn around to him and say, Why hast thou made me thus? Or it's not not to do with this or that. And then you notice the two expressions. The vessels of wrath are fitted to destruction, but the vessels of mercy he prepared before her. There's a change. He doesn't say he prepared before the Vessels of Wrath. Oh, no. No, no. You have a responsibility. Comes in only, of course, you can't put human responsibility into a figure of clay in the hands of a potter. So what? You step out of that and then once more, if you're at all concerned about the hardening of Pharaoh's heart. Well, I believe the subject alone or take the complete statement and a complete statement is that over and over again in the book of Exodus, we read that Pharaoh hardened his own heart until at long last he would have dodged the issue. And God said, No, no, you've had all these long periods of opportunity. Dreadful ones. Now you must reap the consequences. But that's according to scripture. It doesn't say God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and that's all it said. Pharaoh continually hardened his heart, and the two must be held together.

[00:18:14] And then finally, what difference is there Friends between Farer who hardened his heart and disobeyed and Israel who hardened their hearts and disobeyed him greater light than fair who ever sinned? Oh, that's the point. Yet, said God still chosen that people are still chosen them not for any good they've done or any bad they've done. So we've got to face that. And that is the saving thing that no defection on the part of Israel will ever ultimately upset the purpose of God. Surely that's a comfort in the midst of all the backward and forward movement when human elements are introduced. They failed, of course, in the great doctrinal sets of Romans for the question of righteousness still pursues. They didn't realize Romans ten, so they did not realize that Christ was the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. It's still going about to establish their own. And so their eyes have yet to be opened. But I think it's about time. Then, with one further exception, we get down to this word fulness. In Romans 11. But the other exception is this In Romans 11, following verse 25, we read these words. And so all Israel. Shall be saved. All Israel. Well, now, what does it mean? What it means. What it says. All Israel. What does that mean? Every single individual Israelite that ever lived. Does it mean every single individual descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Will you say yes? Well, I say, I don't know.

[00:20:02] But Romans nine says, Would you listen to me? Oh, Is there something you did in Romans nine? Because if Romans nine discusses all Israel. We are wrong to look

at Romans 11 before we know what Romans nine has said. Because Romans nine, they put us wise. Let's come back then. Romans nine. But it's not as though the Word of God hath taken none effect, for they are not all Israel which are of Israel. Now, God to say that they are not all Israel that are of Israel. So we've got to watch our step when we come to the interpretation of all Israel a second time, haven't we? All right. Well, what are they then? Neither because they are the seed of Abraham. Are they all children? But in Isaac, shall thy seed be called Isaac? The type of Christ, the one who was given a miraculous birth in a measure. The one who was offered, at least so far as intent was concerned, on a mountain in Isaac, shall thy seed be called? And he left people. And there were not, according to the flesh, merely. These are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for a seed. So we come back and we ought to admit we do not really know what the extent of all Israel is, but who's going to worry about that? Because we're not the ones to decide. God has already decided, but it may stop us from coming to wrong conclusions.

[00:21:31] Now, I don't want to go too far afield, but here we have a principle. Any amount of problems that we have with regard to the wider scope of things can be understood a little better. If you see the smaller now, the smaller is what God does with Israel. The larger is what he's going to do with all mankind. When I read that all Israel are not every single individual descendant of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I ought to remember that when I read as in Adam, all die. Even so, in Christ shall all be made alive. Because I jumped to the conclusion if I don't read anywhere else that all anatomy's every single person has ever lived who was a well, everybody descended from Adam. But the scripture says everybody who descended from Abraham is not counted as a seed, but a child of promise. Was it a child? A promise in mind when God put Adam and Eve there? There is. Most certainly was. And he said to he said to the woman, I will put enmity between thy seed and the serpent's, thy seed. Shows, as you've seen. We mustn't jump to the conclusion because it says all in Adam. It means necessarily every single individual that ever has or ever will live descended from him. It's still got the elective purpose in view. And those things sometimes are useful for us. Whether you say that's as clear as moonlight or daylight, well, is another matter.

[00:23:04] I'm only throwing those things in as just in passing. Now, should we come to Chapter 11 a little bit more closely? I say there has God cast away his people. Because if you can say he has. Well, what's what's going to happen now with regard to our faith?

Because you see in the scriptures, he not only chose them and called them, but he said this, that if the ordinances that govern the seasons, if the sun and the moon and the stars should fail, then said he will cast all these people for what they have done. Oh, you can gather it like that. What is it now? He hasn't cast off his people who before you and those who before you were election according to Grace and the remnant now is a pledge of the fullness yet to come. As you will see by looking at another statement in Romans 11, verse 16, for if the first fruit be holy, the nap is also holy. And if the root be holy. So are the branches. So there is a link between the remnant that's kept right the way through the ages. You remember how Isaiah writes in his first chapter? He said, If there hadn't been a remnant, we should have been as Sodom and Gomorrah. And in Romans six, when there was that great departure. When he said, lest I should, they should repent and I should heal them.

[00:24:34] But he said, yet it shall be a 10th. A taste, not a taste at a time. That's God's portion. All. We should have never left myself without that tithe. And the illustration is given of Elijah. What does he not what the Scripture says of Elias Elijah, how he maketh intercession to God against Israel. Strange use of the word intercession there, isn't it? We generally think of intercession as pleading for and on behalf that he made intercession against Israel and he said, Lord, they have killed our prophets. I dig down thine altars and I am left alone. And they seek my life. That takes me back to the time about this time or no? About a month ago. Last year in the United States. We were travelling. Through part of Arizona. Phoenix. Makes you feel hot to say the words. And we had a temporary stop. I sat down under a tree. Adine Robertson said, Oh, you got me. He said he was sitting under a juniper tree. What? Elijah sat under a duty for three. He said these words. I see my life and I below. Well, I wasn't quite so bad as Elijah there, but there it was. Hello. And then what God did. What did God reveal to Him? God did I have reserved to myself 7000 men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal? I think we ought to remember that ourselves sometimes, because this witness is of such a character that is a good deal of lonely walk about it, a good deal of adding to stand by yourself, a good deal of sometimes saying to yourself, Well, I wonder whether I am really crazy.

[00:26:30] And then you get a letter through the post and you think, Well, if I am, this other man is too. So on we go again. But you can really sympathize, can't you, with Elijah? There comes moments when you think, Well, is it possible that I'm the only living

person that can see the truth? And then God whispers, Have you not? You don't know everybody. How did you come back? A bit to reality. And so he said to Elijah, I've reserved 7000. You don't know them, but I do. So we take age. So he says, even at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And in the Apostles Duffs because he's not now on doctrine. He's on dispensational truth. But you can forgive him, can't you? He wants us to be sure that we understand the meaning of grace. Because it's the key word of his, of his gospel, and it's the key word of his dealings with his people. So he puts it two ways. And if by grace, then is it no more of works? Otherwise, grace is no more grace. You see, he's ventilated the same thing in chapter nine when he says about the children having neither done good or evil.

[00:27:44] So he says grace. In no order works. Otherwise. Grace is no more grace. And then if you don't quite see it, let me put it the other way round. But if it be it works, then is it no more Grace? Otherwise, work is no more work. So that if God's dealings with all his people will ultimately be dealing in grace, not one of us can boast in his presence of being worthy of it. And we cannot question him because, well, then out of our whole mass, the whole wide world, there wasn't a single person that came up to the qualifications that would be necessary to merit it. You know, we're going to say, Well, then the only thing that God ought to do was to condemn the lot. Or shall we say that the God of love had a purpose and Satan had tried to thwart that purpose and God wasn't going to allow him to thwart that purpose. And so whatever happened to that chosen seed, however far they went, he sought them and he found them and redeemed them. And he brings them back. He's done that with you and me. He'll do it with these people. And ultimately his purpose will be completely, fully realized. Let leading us on. Now he goes on to say this in. Verse seven, The verse four for what? Saith the answer of God to him. That is to say, just the same as we read down in verse eight, according as it is written.

[00:29:22] You sure this isn't something that's taking us all by surprise? At least it's not taking God by surprise. Listen, what he said about the chosen people. Israel. These elect people that are to be the blessing to the rest of the world. God hath given them the spirit of slumber eyes that they should not see. Ears that they should not hear. Unto this day. And as Isaac says, that was their condition. Then David speaks about a snare and a stumbling block. Then he raises this question verse 11. Now am I saying see it as a gain? I say, Then he says, Am I saying. This. Do I say that they have stumbled in order

that this is a word that has got to do a lot of service in translation? But this particular word means with the object that if you want to know the original Tinner Hill to have, they stumbled with the object that they should fall. God forbid he says no, they've stumbled right enough. But the object is not that they should fall, but that God should use that very fall when it came for another purpose of grace, which gives you a chance, opens the door to you. That's his point. Now he's going to show that even though Israel did fail temporally, it didn't take God by surprise. But he has a purpose for others that he raised up an apostle of the Gentiles to go to the outside gentile world, even though Israel had not yet been completely set aside.

[00:30:57] So he says. But rather through their whole. Salvation is come out of the Gentiles. So that you see, instead of it being a tragedy, we can say out of that, which might have been a tragedy, has come untold blessing. The Gentiles have had an opportunity of believing Christ, which otherwise they might not have had. And then the next word is most important for to provoke them to jealousy. And it repeated further down in another verse to provoke them to emulation. Verse 14. Same word, translated jealousy in one verse and emulation in the other. Emulation may be the better meaning of the two, but by reason of its context. So here's a point that we do well to ponder. The the call of the people of the the Gentiles to salvation during this period was not because it was the full time had come for the revelation of God's purpose for the Gentile. They were definitely told that they were saved to help Israel if it's possible. God is using you to say this. How? How is he going to use the salvation of a Gentile to help Israel? What he says to provoke them to jealousy, to provoke them to emulation. You say, I don't see that good. Many others end. But he's going to explain it in a minute. So let's go on with him, shall we? First of all, he enlarges this point that what appeared to be a tragedy can be overruled by God to be a great mercy.

[00:32:47] If the all of them be the riches of the world, what it was. It was a tragedy for Israel that they went out of their blindness, that they became the people that wandered over the earth without a settled to any place. They were in blindness and darkness and suffered tremendously. Oh, yes. But he said, look what he did to the Gentile world. It had reached the Gentile world instead of it being kept exclusively for that people. As it looked at the first when our Saviour came here. It ministry was exclusively to that people. I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Oh, he said, No. God is now sending it abroad. And it's the riches of the world. And if the diminishing of them,

the diminishing of them. The riches of the Gentiles. How much more their fullness. He says, if you could see that God can use it like that, what would it be? When they're brought back, would he tell you. Verse 15. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world. What shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? So. In between that he slips in a little bit about his own office. And a guide about this principle of jealousy or emulation. Verse 30 For I speak to you Gentiles.

[00:34:18] Inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify my office. Who said, I can see this, but I'm torn in two directions. I have continual sorrow for my own brethren, the Jewish people. And I'm rejoicing in the fact that I've been entrusted with salvation, with the Gentiles. What a position to be in. That's where the apostles stood. And I think the Lord had great pity for this man who was serving him like this. And although most of his writings and nearly all his ministry was directed to the Gentile, I believe the epistle to the Hebrews was given him in order that he might be used of God to speak to his own people, if possible, to lead them on to the full recognition of their position in Christ. And he says all this is if by any means I may provoke to emulation then which are my flesh and might save some of them. Now. He goes on to show how that can be brought about and why. He uses the figure of an olive tree. And this has been a bit misunderstood. As far as I can interpret, a good many of those are written on the subject. I know it sounds as though I keep on saying if only they'd asked me. They've all been on the right road, you see. I know that. But that isn't it. If the scriptures say a certain thing, it doesn't matter who it is, high or low who points it out.

[00:35:47] That's good enough. Well, here it is. Verse 17 each. Some of the branches were broken off. This tree that he's speaking of. And now being a wild olive, he speaking to the gentile. A wild olive. You know, there's the olive tree which bears its fruit. And there's a wild olive, which is of the same family, but it doesn't bear fruit. It's a different sort of growth. If a wild olive tree were grafted in among them. And we send particles to the root and fatness of the olive tree. Boast. Not the gates, the branches. He said, I want you to remember, I don't want you be wise in your own conceits. I don't want you to think that you're the people you're not, not, not yet. God is only blessing you, Gentiles for the sake of that olive tree. So that's not very boastful for you, is it? You're being used by him to bless them, if possible. But we've got to go on with the figure first to get at that. But if thou knowest thou barely spot the root. But the root be. So you might say then all the branches were broken off that I might be grafted.

Is said you're no more right than to say that they have stumbled in order that they should fall. These branches were broken off in order that you might be grafted. The branches were broken off and beneath.

[00:37:18] And you've been put in by mercy and grace. Don't boast about anything except the grace of God, will you? Well, because of unbelief. They were broken off. And thou standest by faith be not high minded, but fear. For if God spare not spared, not the natural branches take heed, lest the auto spare, not thee. And he goes on to say that if they abide not in unbelief, God can graft them back again and he will do so. Verse 24, for if thou wert cut out of the auditory, which is wild by nature, and were grasped contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? Now in stock because this needs a little explanation. Those of you who know the explanation, you'll only be too hopeful that I'm going to give it for the sake of those who don't. This has been submitted to a good deal of adverse criticism. Some have taken the line. Will the Apostle just went a bit beyond his territory. What did he know about agriculture or horticulture? Anybody who has a garden and knows how to work it knows that he's wrong, that if you're going to make a graft. You take. A wild specimen. And into that wild specimen. You put your choice graft. It may be a briar rose and you put your choice rose into it. Or it may be a paradise stock of a wild sort of apple.

[00:39:01] And you put your choice a pippin into it. But who ever heard of anybody taking a wild rose and grafting it onto a choice C or a wild crumpy apple and grafting that onto a Cox's Orange Pippin? So they smiled and say, You see, he didn't know. But then it's a strange thing. If an apostle is going to use an argument in an inspired epistle and it's all upside down and he doesn't know what he's talking about, a little modesty on our part might say, Well, I wonder what he meant. Oh, if we'd only asked that, we might have taken a different line. Now go back. For so many years. I can hardly remember what the date was. But many, many years ago, I took a course of training at the Horticultural Institute in Essex, and for some little time I used to use the letters after my name. Don't worry about it. I don't. But I did at that time. And in the class one day the lecturer said, I want to give you an illustration of a strange thing that's happened. He is a big nursery in Essex and they've just made a peculiar discovery. They had a line of pear trees, a certain type that used to come into full blossom every year. That ain't no fruit.

And then a workman did one of those things that sometimes has happened before, a little accident.

[00:40:38] He grafted to those pear trees a very indifferent, almost wild graft. And to the amazement of the nursery. Those trees bore fruit. The grass didn't. And they were saying they didn't know quite the answer. So I stood up very meek and Baruwa was asking for it. I said if they'd only read Romans the 11th chapter, they would have found the answer already. Or what a titter, what a laugh. I didn't care for that, that little bit. In fact, if there's your answer and not only so the Apostle Paul wasn't writing without his book. There was written in the year ad 40. Ad 40 is the precise time that the Apostle Paul was running his ministry in the Acts of the Apostles in 1840, there was a book written on horticulture and the management of trees by a man named Columella, and he wrote it in Latin. And he said that in the culture of an olive, they do a very strange thing. The olive will gradually get older and older and older, like some folks that we know, present company just of course, excepted. And they begin to flag and fail and they cease to bear fruit. And you've got are the two things, cut them down and grabbed them up or another method. And this sometimes is very successful. You take a piece of a wild olive with no idea that the wild is going to produce fruit and you graft it into that olive tree and it provokes the olive tree to emulation and it starts all over again.

[00:42:22] Well, God says if an ordinary olive tree on earth can do that, I might do that with my olive tree, Israel. He said I might because an olive tree hasn't got any argument. He could do nothing about it. But he's dealing with men so they can. And I did. And I rejected. But God gave him that extra opportunity to Israel. He said, Look, I've given the people of the nations, I've brought them into a church relationship. I've given them the gifts of the spirit. And you know what it says in Corinthians about the gifts of the Spirit? Let's have a look and see, because this may help you. He gave them in one Corinthians 12. You remember all the gifts without distinct that were especially associated with the people of Israel in the first instance, like Pentecost and then later on. In chapter 14, he says in verse 20. Brethren be not children in understanding how be it in malice, be children, but in understanding be men in the law. It is written with men of other tongues and other lips. Will I speak unto this people? And yet, for all that, they will not hear me saith the Lord. And he goes on about speaking with tongues. He said, You see, you Gentiles have got the gifts of the spirit. Not for your own sakes, not for your own self,

but to provoke that people that they may say, where do you see what's happening? These Gentiles who knew not God and were once idolaters.

[00:44:03] They've got all these gifts of the spirit. Why? And it may dawn upon them. And they provoked to emulate him, provoked to jealousy, turn unto thee be saved. And then all Israel shall come into their blessings. But they did not. So it's written across the acts of the Apostles all day long have I stretched out my hand to a disobedient and gainsaying people. Well, now let's look at the words in Romans 11, which introduce our word fear over. That again. We've already looked at it, but we must do it now after seeing this. Verses 11 and 12. Do I say then or have I said this? I say, then have they stumbled with the object that they should fall? God forbid. No, but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles. For to provoke them to emulation. Now you've got the figure of the olive tree, you see. Now, if the fall event. The riches of the world if it's brought that about and the diminishing of them. The riches of the Gentiles. How much more? Their fullness. So he's getting help out of this. He's extracting comfort out of this. He's showing you that you need not be depressed over this. Of course, from the human point of view, it's a sad thing to see anybody going down and going wrong.

[00:45:28] But from God's point of view, he doesn't need you to sympathize with him and say your purpose is going very bad, isn't it? But he says, I've got complete control. These people are for you. And if for you what they would do for know what the other was going to do. And so I bring you Gentiles in, although they may not have recognized it at the time. So he says how much more their fullness. Well, now he speaks about the Gentile and then coming back after this argument about the grafting into this olive tree. He says in verse 25. But I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery. So here's one of the mysteries of the New Testament. Every reference to the mystery in the New Testament does not refer to the church, which is the body of Christ. In other words, we are not the only pebble on the beach, friends. Although we may be a very blessed one in the sight of God just now. The same is true of the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven in Matthew 13. That has nothing to do with the Church of the one body. It has to do with the defection of the people of Israel and the condition that the that the Kingdom of heaven had gone into while they remained in unbelief. And so you've got three lots of sowing that go wrong before you get the final sowing that goes right.

[00:46:54] And then the next parable says, an enemy hath done this and the enemy is at work there, as you could see. So is it. I would not, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery. Lest you should be wise in your own conceits, that's a point. He didn't want them to think that they were now entering in to blessings that have been prepared by God for them before the foundation of the world and all that sort of thing that hadn't come. They were only being used for the moment by God to bring about the salvation, if possible, of Israel. So he says. That blindness in part. Has happened unto Israel. Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles become it. Which is a blindness in part. I thought they were all going to be blind. Oh, you're all wrong. Because the apostle could turn round and go and say, What about me? Have you forgotten me? I was an Israelite. My eyes have been opened. And there were others of the circumcision that saw the truth. But they were a remnant. They were only a small company. They were just a little group. But he says, as a nation, they went out. They go out into their blindness. That blindness in part is happened to Israel and then it's got an anthill to it. It's not forever. You remember in Acts 13, when the man, the Jew, was smitten with blindness and the Gentile believed? Well, that's exactly what's happening here.

[00:48:31] When Paul started his ministry in Acts 13, a Jew was blinded and a Gentile believed as a consequence. Well, he says, that's what I'm telling you. Only I use the figure of the olive tree. And then he said that man who was blinded went out not seeing the sun for a season. He says blindness has happened until. I thought I was going to be opened. Yes. Yes. They are going to look upon me whom they pierced, said the Lord, and they shall acknowledge and mourn. And then what's going to be the consequence? And nation shall be born in a day. So all Israel shall be saved. As it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer. I shall turn away Ungodliness from Jacob. Now, the thing that distresses me a little bit is. That is some of God's people that believe his word and preach a very fine gospel and have a glorious testimony have come to the conclusion that there is no future for the people of Israel. And they spiritualize all these passages. A how a person can read these words and still say that so far as Israel is concerned, they have no further place. That if they've got anything, they'll have to become members of the church and just lose all their nationality. I don't know the Lord alone. Could deal with it, but this is what it says. But this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins.

[00:50:11] As concerning the gospel. They are editors for your site. You see, the whites come around. They are enemies, for your sakes. Are you were saved for their sakes. See? So he's not saying that the people of Israel didn't fall desperately. All he said, Yes, there are very enemies of the gospel. But as touching the election as I forgotten that he said, Have you forgotten neither good nor evil touching the election? They are beloved. For the father sakes. And then he adds these words for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Do you believe that? Oh, I believe you do. Well, that's the basis of all our hopes. But if the gifts and calling of God without were not without repentance, I wonder where some of us would be. For have we not failed sometimes. Have we not tried him? Have we not exhibited an evil heart of unbelief? Sometimes. We can't throw stones at the people of Israel. We could only bar one at the grace that saves us. And as promised, ultimately to save them. Well, now, let's finish it, because our time is almost up. But as he in times past have not believed God. Yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief. That is it. He is addressing the Gentiles. Even so, have these also now not believed that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. For God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all.

[00:51:50] I have read the writings of some who teach universal reconciliation, and I have noticed that when they quote verse 32. I sometimes leave the word them out. For God hath concluded all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all. That proves universalism. But the Scriptures is not talking about it from that angle at all. Here he says, God hath concluded then Israel all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all, whether it be the Jew or the Gentile. And then he stops his argument. It's about time we stopped ours, isn't it? For begetting out of our debts, aren't we? With all this matter of election and all this statement about Israel's blindness and gentile fullness and olive trees being grafted wrong, way round and whatnot? Oh, the depth of the riches. Both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out? For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Who in his counsellor? Who? Who hath first given to him. And it shall be recompensed unto him again. Don't forget, we can't tell him anything. You got come rarely ends well. Ever tried it? You know. Tell God. Oh, yes. He for ashes to stick with it. Quiet knitting ten us, isn't it? That's what he's come to hear. For all he. And through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever. I.