

The Bible's a big book, with a lot of stuff going on  
and it can be hard to keep track            have it all in focus

Thank Heaven the gospel is clear and simple

In Acts 16 a Roman jailer, distressed by an earthquake  
falls down trembling before Paul and Silas and asks

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”        They Reply     Acts 16:31

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved . . .

Amen and Amen            it's as clear and as simple as that

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved . . .

that is clear and simple,            but it's also vast and profound

there's a lot of freight packed into the words:

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved

'Believe'     Salvation by Faith not works

driven by the grace of God            so no one can boast

tempered, James reminds us     with the realization faith without works is dead . .

Believe

on the Lord Jesus Christ            Son of God            Son of Man            Son of Mary

What does it mean to Believe 'on' Him?

What do you believe 'about' Him?            Virgin Birth?     Crucifixion?     Resurrection?

John 1:3 says            All things were made through Him,  
and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Do you have to believe that            to be saved?

in the closing chapter of the Bible     2000 years ago            [Rev 22:7]

He said            “Behold, I am coming quickly!

Do you have to believe that            to be saved?

There's a lot of freight packed into the clear, simple words

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved

but they are, and remain     the essence of the Gospel

this sermon is on the 49th chapter of Isaiah

and I begin by contrasting the simplicity and profundity of the gospel

because we experience that sort of sweep in Isaiah 49

in the clear simple sense,

it's the proclamation the Messiah will provide salvation for the world as well as Israel

on the Vast, Profound side of the scale . .

Isaiah's detailed Imagery            and nuanced poetry

can make it difficult to see the clear, simple message  
and, to top it all off I'm gonna talk about Israel and the Church  
compare and contrast their roles in the provision of salvation  
because understanding the difference between them  
is essential to Understanding what God is up to in the world  
So, in this sermon on Isaiah 49 we'll begin by surveying the text to hear its message  
Messiah will provide salvation for the world as well as Israel  
then we'll talk about the different roles  
Israel and the Church have in that provision of Salvation  
and should you get disoriented on the way  
just remember Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved

ZZZ

I would divide Isaiah 49 into 3 main sections vv 1-8 9-13 and 14-26  
In the first we hear from 'the Servant'  
and 'the Servant' is a very important character in this portion of Isaiah  
sometimes the title refers to the Nation as a whole  
but others, it's clearly an individual that special individual The Messiah  
and there's an interplay between those identities which we'll see in our passage  
as we begin Isaiah 49, the servant is speaking:

- 1 "Listen, O coastlands, to Me, And take heed, you peoples from afar!  
The LORD has called Me from the womb;  
From the matrix of My mother He has made mention of My name.
- 2 And He has made My mouth like a sharp sword;  
In the shadow of His hand He has hidden Me, And made Me a polished shaft;  
In His quiver He has hidden Me."
- 3 "And He said to me, 'You are My servant, O Israel, In whom I will be glorified.'

there, in v3 'the Servant' is plainly called 'Israel'

we would assume it's a reference to the Nation as a whole but read on v4

- 4 Then I said, "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and in vain;  
Yet surely my just reward is with the LORD, And my work with my God.' "
- 5 "And now the LORD says, Who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant,  
To bring Jacob back to Him, So that Israel is gathered to Him  
(For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, And My God shall be My strength),

there in v5 we learn the Servant was 'formed in the womb'

to bring Jacob back to the Lord and gather Israel to Him

so the Servant can't be 'the Nation' or 'just the Nation' because He's bringing the Nation back  
This is that interplay between the Individual Messianic Servant and the Nation as Servant  
now, what I'd identify as the 'main point' of this passage

The Servant/Messiah will provide salvation for the world as well as Israel 530

v6 Indeed He says - The Lord speaking now

6 Indeed He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant  
To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel;  
I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles,  
That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.' "

so Messiah/Servant will not only restore Israel

He'll also be a light to the Gentiles provide salvation to the ends of the earth v7

7 Thus says the LORD, The Redeemer of Israel, their Holy One,  
To Him whom man despises, To Him whom the nation abhors, To the Servant of rulers:

the Lord is still speaking to the Servant

but here we learn the Servant will be 'despised' the nation will 'abhor' Him

in all the OT I think Isaiah most clearly combines The Suffering with the Glory  
conveys the shocking reality that the servant will be 'rejected'

the mission will apparently 'Fail' before it Succeeds but it will ultimately Succeed!

7~ "Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship,  
Because of the LORD who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel; And He has chosen You."

8 Thus says the LORD:

"In an acceptable time I have heard You, And in the day of salvation I have helped You;  
I will preserve You and give You As a covenant to the people,  
To restore the earth, To cause them to inherit the desolate heritages;

now in 9 thru 13 we're given a poetic picture of the world-wide salvation the Servant provides

9 That You may say to the prisoners, "Go forth,' To those who are in darkness, "Show yourselves.'  
'They shall feed along the roads, And their pastures shall be on all desolate heights.

10 They shall neither hunger nor thirst, Neither heat nor sun shall strike them;

For He who has mercy on them will lead them, Even by the springs of water He will guide them.

11 I will make each of My mountains a road, And My highways shall be elevated.

12 Surely these shall come from afar; Look! Those from the north and the west,  
And these from the land of Sinim."

13 Sing, O heavens! Be joyful, O earth! And break out in singing, O mountains!  
For the LORD has comforted His people, And will have mercy on His afflicted.

The Whole World is in view here they're coming from afar

it's debated but many scholars think the 'land of Sinim' is a reference to China

in any event it was 'too small' for the Servant to just restore Israel

He would be a light to the Gentiles offer salvation to the ends of the earth

but that may raise something like . . . jealousy in Israel

and that's what I think the rest of the chapter addresses v14

14 But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me."

as salvation flows out to the Gentiles

What about Zion? What about Israel? Is she forgotten? v15

15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb?  
Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.

16 See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me. 900

No, the Lord has not and will not forget Israel

and the rest of the chapter, in dense imagery

revolves around the ultimate restoration of Israel v17

17 Your sons shall make haste; Your destroyers and those who laid you waste Shall go away from you.

18 Lift up your eyes, look around and see; All these gather together and come to you.

As I live," says the LORD, "You shall surely clothe yourselves with them all as an ornament,  
And bind them on you as a bride does.

19 "For your waste and desolate places, And the land of your destruction,

Will even now be too small for the inhabitants; And those who swallowed you up will be far away.

it's about their blessing after their discipline

they're going to lose their children then have an Abundance of children provided v20

20 The children you will have, After you have lost the others,

Will say again in your ears, "The place is too small for me; Give me a place where I may dwell.'

21 Then you will say in your heart, "Who has begotten these for me,

Since I have lost my children and am desolate, A captive, and wandering to and fro?

And who has brought these up? There I was, left alone; But these, where were they?' "

22 Thus says the Lord GOD:

"Behold, I will lift My hand in an oath to the nations, And set up My standard for the peoples;

They shall bring your sons in their arms, & your daughters shall be carried on their shoulders;

23 Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers;

They shall bow down to you with their faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet.

Then you will know that I am the LORD, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me."

as I said, the imagery is dense

salvation is going out to the Gentiles but Israel will not be forgotten

in the closing verses Israel's deliverance from Gentile enemies is affirmed v24

24 Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, Or the captives of the righteous be delivered?

25 But thus says the LORD:

"Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, And the prey of the terrible be delivered;

For I will contend with him who contends with you, And I will save your children.

26 I will feed those who oppress you with their own flesh,

And they shall be drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine.

All flesh shall know That I, the LORD, am your Savior,

And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

So Isa 49 begins with the Servant speaking

we learn He'll provide salvation to the ends of the Earth

Yet it concludes w/ the affirmation the Lord will not abandon Israel

ZZZ

and I'm going to take the rest of our time to talk about how those things 'fit together'

about the relationship between the Church and Israel

Israel the descendents of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob  
The Church anybody who believes in the risen Christ

Israel OT Law  
The Church NT Grace

Israel it seems is what God 'did'  
The Church it seems is what God is 'doing'

1200

For most of Church History most Christians have believed that the Church replaces Israel  
God tried to use Israel but they failed so miserably

He finally had to 'let em go' and move on with the Church

So the idea is God's done with Israel and it's just Church now and forever more

That's not correct - or only half correct

God is working thru the Church now Amen

**but He is not done with Israel**

right there in Isa 49 in light of the World-wide salvation the Servant will provide

Zion says "The Lord has forsaken me, my lord has forgotten me" [14]

But the Lord replies

15] "Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb?  
Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.

16] See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands;

God is not done with Israel

and I hope to show you how that works, give you the 'big picture' in the rest of this sermon

and in order to see that we're gonna have to start from the beginning

the beginning of Israel which is . . . Genesis chapter 12

ZZZ

the calling of Abraham, at that point named Abram Gen 12, 1 thru 3

1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family  
And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you.

2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you  
And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.

3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you;  
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

God is going to make Abram into a 'nation' a great nation v2

and thru him "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" v3

That is repeated to Isaac Gen 26:4

in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed;

and to Jacob 28:14

in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

God wasn't forming Israel to be a 'Saved' nation among the lost nations

He was forming Israel to BLESS the Nations be a vehicle of Salvation FOR the Nations

Now, let's think about what happened BEFORE Gen 12

because that's the context

Of course it starts w/ Creation then the Fall then the Flood then the Tower of Bable

takes us thru Gen 11, right up to the call of Abraham . . Gen 12 1445

In Gen 1-11 the whole of Humanity is in view and, apart from Creation it does not go well  
our parents fall

then the world becomes so corrupt God has to wipe it out and 'Reboot' humanity  
then rebooted humanity huddles up in their city to build their tower in opposition to God  
in response to which He does not wipe them out but He does break them up

He breaks them up, by means of language, into Nations

you might not catch that just reading along because the list of nations is in Gen 10

BEFORE the story of Babel but it's there

God divided humanity into 70 nations, listed in Genesis 10

Genesis 11 tells us why that happened The Tower of Babel

& Genesis 12 tells us what else He did about it

which was to make His own 'nation'

NOT to be a 'saved' nation among the lost ones

but to guide all the nations

bless ALL the families of the earth

~~Israel was to be the vehicle of salvation for All Nations~~

God committed Himself by 'Covenant' that is, a 'contract' a sacred agreement

First with Abraham then with his son Isaac then Isaac's son Jacob

who is 'renamed' Israel He's the original, individual 'Israel' (Gen 32)

his 12 sons become the patriarchs of the 12 tribes of Israel

The Family, at that point about 70 people, goes down into Egypt

which was a Good News / Bad News deal

The Good News being they Grew they multiplied

the Bad News being they were enslaved

that set the stage for the Exodus under Moses

he leads them out they receive the Law at Mt Sinai enter the land under Joshua

obviously we can't go into detail but it's vital to note

they never got it entirely Right and often got it disastorously Wrong

Moses up on the Mountain meeting with God They're down in the valley making a Golden Calf

With a mighty hand and an outstretched arm He brought them out of Egypt

but they couldn't trust Him to take them into the Land,

When they entered the Land under Joshua they did not conquer all of it

in the following period of the Judges, they repeatedly

slipped into Apostasy Got Disciplined Cried Out Got Delivered . .

then slid into Apostasy again!

Over and Over

1730

along the way there's individual stories of faithfulness and blessing

But as a whole, they never succeeded

Even at the height of their earthly influence under Solomon

his foreign wives turned his heart to foreign gods. . . so the Kdm was divided  
we've been in the book of Isaiah all year

In the first part there's a lot about how Niniveh conquers the Northern Kdm

Now in the second it's about how Babylon conquers the Southern

tho there was Individual and occasionally even Collective Faithfulness

it never completely 'worked'

On the Whole it was Failure after Failure after Failure . .

yet somehow it Ultimately Succeeds!

cuz Isaiah talks about more than conquest and exile

He talks about a Return from Exile

and that marvelous Kingdom period when the wolf will dwell with the lamb [v6]

and They shall not hurt nor destroy in all [His] holy mountain, [v9]  
For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.

That's Ch 11, v9 here's Ch 9 v6

6 . . unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given;  
And the government will be upon His shoulder.  
And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end,  
Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,  
To order it and establish it with judgment and justice  
From that time forward, even forever. . .

so somehow, though the nation repeatedly fails

God ultimately triumphs thru them

and this is where it's important to note the difference between Israel and the Church

because the ultimate triumph on Earth is Thru Israel

The Child born, the Son given . . with the increase of government and peace . .

is Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom,

Just as the angel Gabriel said to Mary [Lk 1]

31 . . behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son,  
and shall call His name JESUS.

32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest;  
and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

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So how does that fit with what happened?

Because as you know we haven't even got to the grand failure

tho some individuals received Him the Nation as a whole rejected Jesus

the Child was Born the Son was Given and they said Unt-Uh

"We will not have this man to reign over us." [Lk 19:14]

they not only Rejected Him they handed Him over to the Romans to be Crucified

which He was dead and buried . . .

PACE

the third day rose again and Whoosh! we're on to the Church!

How does it all . . . fit together?

As I said thru-out Ch history most Xtns have thot the Ch replaces Is

the rejection of Messiah seems as if it had to be "the last straw"

and God was just done w/ them as a nation

of course individuals can come to faith in Christ

but as a Nation Israel is finished Ka-put!

that's the historic understanding of the Church

But it is Incorrect That's not what's goin on

There's a couple of key passages about this

Daniel chapter 9 and Romans chapter 11

we can't unpack them in this sermon just have to deal with them in summary

In Dan 9 the angel Gabriel tells Daniel 70 weeks are determined for his people and his holy city

to wrap it all up

make an end of sins bring in everlasting righteousness annoint the Most Holy . . .

His People are the Israelites and His Holy City is Jerusalem

So at the end of those 70 weeks That will be accomplished Thru Them Amen

but if you study the passage you'll see there's a break, an interval

between the 69th and 70th weeks

and the Church fits in that interval

the entire Church age, goin on 2000 yrs, occurs between the 69th & 70th weeks of Daniel

in Romans 11 Paul acknowledges Israel's failure

points out Thru that very failure salvation comes to the Gentiles v11

11 . . . through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles.

12 Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles,

how much more their fullness!

he's talking about God bringing Israel back full circle

2230



remember They were formed to 'reach the nations' well they failed  
but in a way Ironically God is gonna reach Israel thru the Nations!  
as salvation flows out to the Gentiles thru the Church  
Israel will be provoked to Jealousy  
that's what Romans 11:11 says and we see that same dynamic in Isa 49  
it's too small for the Servant to just restore Israel so the Lord makes Him a light to the Gentiles  
Israel's response? Hey, you've forsaken us, Hey you've forgotten us  
and the Lord says No, I have not  
Paul talks about the same thing in Ro 11, now v25  
25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery,  
lest you should be wise in your own opinion,  
that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.  
26 And so all Israel will be saved . . .

the process of salvation, which required the Servant's rejection  
also involves Israel being set aside UNTIL the fullness of the Gentiles has come in  
that's what the Church is doing bringing in the Fullness of the Gentiles  
being His witnesses to the ends of the earth  
making disciples of ALL nations

and as that's done when that's done He will again restore Israel  
They may say The LORD has forsaken me, And my Lord has forgotten me.  
But He says Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb?  
Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you.  
See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands;

No God is not done with Israel  
and in closing I want to focus on one other way the NT says this  
fairly shouts it and that is the Church is described as a Mystery  
something that was hidden, kept secret about the way God would provide Salvation  
Ro 11:25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery,

The NT idea of 'mystery' is different from the way we use the term  
we hear 'mystery' and we think a story where we're trying to figure out 'who done it'?  
and that's fine that's what we mean by it but the NT meaning is different  
In the NT a mystery is simply something that was NOT known, which now IS known  
there's no Plot Trajectory or implication of trying to 'figure it out'  
It's just something that was concealed that gets revealed 2530

You could not see it, now you can

You did not know it, now you do

In Revelation 1 John sees the glorified Christ

in the midst of 7 lampstands, with 7 stars in His right hand

that's the vision that's what he sees what does it 'mean'

in v20 Jesus explains

The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands:  
[is this]

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches,  
and the seven lampstands . . . are the seven churches.

pretty straight-forward in this instance it's just the meaning of the imagery

we didn't know what the 7 Stars and the 7 Lampstands represented

Jesus tells us 'explains' or 'unveils' the mystery and now we DO know

The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches,  
and the seven lampstands . . . are the seven churches.

Now the fact that there are 7 churches and that they have angels

is fascinating and intriguing but we're not going into that . . .

we're just citing it as an example of the NT meaning of 'mystery'

it is NOT something for you to 'figure out'

it is something that was concealed, that gets revealed

Time and Again in the New Testament the Gospel . . . the Church is described as a 'mystery'

the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations,  
but now has been revealed to His saints. Col 1:26

the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God Eph 3:9

the mystery kept secret since the world began Ro 16:25

THAT the Church was a mystery is a simple matter of fact

I just rattled off 3 verses, there are others . . .

But WHY was the church a mystery?

Remember we're talking about the relationship between Israel and the Church

It's commonly believed that the Church just 'replaced' Israel

I'm telling you that's NOT what the Bible says

The Bible says Israel has been temporarily set aside

and when the Church has done its job brought in the fullness of the Gentiles 2745

we're outta here and God will resume dealing with the Nations thru Israel  
that will be the 70th week of Daniel AKA the Tribulation  
But WHY has it unfolded this way?

I'm just going to Blurt it out and then, I hope, explain it  
The main reason the Church was a mystery is because Satan had to be kept in the dark

God could have judged sin any time He wanted to

Dropped the cutrain and been done w/ the whole thing

but then everybody would have been judged and God doesn't Want to Judge, He Wants to Save

But providing salvation had to be done a particular way

because Satan had a rightful claim on humanity

consider Heb 2:14

14 Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood,  
He Himself (that's Jesus) likewise shared in the same,  
that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,

that says Jesus needed to be human to pay humanity's debt

no surprise there, that's what the Incarnation's about

but it also says the devil had the power of death the devil had it!

now I'm certainly not denying that God has the power of Life and Death

nor am I implying satan is 'equal' to God in any way, shape or form

I AM making the point that satan is a significant factor in the 'Salvation Equation'

and no small reason it unfolded the way it did

winding

is because he had to be . . . involved

in order for his power to be broken and his claim relenquished he had to take part

Key vv here 1 Cor 2:6 thru 8

6 we speak wisdom among those who are mature,  
yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

7 But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery,  
the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,

8 which none of the rulers of this age knew;  
for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

note again we're talking about the 'mystery'

hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages

which none of the rulers of this age knew

vital to understand,

he's not referring to kings and emporers

he's referring to the spiritual powers which 'rule this age'

the "rulers of this age" are satan and his Principalities and Powers

the mystery was hidden from them v8 none of the rulers of this age knew it,

for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

satan is their leader, for simplicity's sake we'll just talk about him

Had he 'known' the mystery he would not have crucified the Lord of Glory

because the crucifixion is what broke his power sealed his doom

and had he known it would do that he would not have done it

But he didn't know it was a mystery

& so he did . . . participate in /go thru with / bring about the Crucifixion

remember satan's not omniscient, he doesn't know everything

think about what it looked like to him

the church was a mystery not revealed in the OT

so if you read it straight-up it looks like Messiah just comes and sets up the Kingdom

you may recall that's what the Jewish people were expecting

turns out that's what Satan was expecting as well

so Jesus came and satan knew He was the one

but, perhaps to his surprise satan saw an opportunity

saw a way, maybe, he could monkey-wrench God's plan

he couldn't knock the Savior off course, he tried that in the Temptation

but he could effect the people

manuver and manipulate them so that instead of accepting their Messiah

they would reject Him and crucify Him!

So satan went for it and "Succeeded" QUOTE QUOTE

that it was his ultimate Victory

and on the surface it looked like it was

but that's where the mystery comes in

thru His DEATH [Jesus] destroyed him who had the power of death [Heb 2:14]

The Mystery kept satan from knowing the fact that by driving the Crucifixion of Christ

he was destroying his own kingdom signing his own death warrant

ZZZ

Okay let's wrap it up

this is a sermon on Isa 49 where the Messianic Servant is told, v6

it's 'too small' a thing for Him to just restore Israel

He'll also be a light to the Gentiles, bring salvation to the ends of the earth

as the passage goes on . . Israel is troubled, says "Hey, you forgot me!"

and the Lord says "No, I have not!"

3245

I've taken the opportunity to talk about the relationship between Israel and the Church historically most Christians have believed and currently most still believe that God is done w/ Israel as a Nation that it has been replaced by the Church I've told you that is NOT what the Bible says, The Church was a Mystery, Israel has been temporarily set aside and when the Church has 'done its job' which is to bring in the fulness of the Gentiles we will be removed and God will resume dealing w/ the Nations thru Israel that removal is the Rapture and God will deal w/ the Nations thru Israel during the 7 year Tribulation AKA the 70th Wk of Dan

So lots of information maybe too much we close w/ 3 practical points

First it's good to understand the Bible accurately and apart from the first 11 chapters it's all about God bringing salvation thru Israel and/or the Church

but if you've got them confused you won't understand what God is doing now or what He's going to do so, for basic understanding it's important to distinguish them

Second it is, or should be encouraging because along with the widespread mistaken idea that the Church replaces Israel there's widespread confusion about what the Church's job is a lot of people thinking the Church's job is to 'christianize' the world the church is here to make the world better and better until it somehow morphs into the Kingdom of God

that is a very common idea but is certainly NOT what the Bible says it plainly teaches that Jesus will return to establish the Kingdom of God and that just before He does, the world will be in the grip of darkness and evil as never before in other words the World is going to get Worse and Worse not Better and Better

and understanding that is, or should be encouraging because, if you're paying attention you can plainly see the world IS getting Worse and Worse not better and better but if you think it's supposed to be getting better because we're supposed to be making it better you'll be very frustrated indeed but if you understand what Scripture says when these things begin to happen you can lift up your head because you'll know your redemption draws near [Lk 21:28]

so much to say about this but we'll leave it there for now

Third and finally, understanding this is, or should be humbling humbling

Paul makes this point in Romans 11 using the imagery of an Olive tree

Israel is, he says, God's olive tree

and their being set aside he likens to branches being broken off

and we in the Church he likens to branches being grafted in vv17 & ff

17 And if some of the branches were broken off,  
and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them,  
and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree,

18 do not boast against the branches.

But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.

19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in."

20 Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith.

Do not be haughty, but fear.

21 For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

from our vantage point on this side of the Cross, with the mystery revealed

we can look back on Israel and think how could they be so wrong!?

they're counting on works & worshipping idols & not trusting God & So on & So on . .

and we can be tempted to think we're better than they were

we're not we've got better information fuller revelation . .

but we are no 'better' we're cut from exactly the same cloth

We stand by faith So don't be haughty

Understanding the unique role and position of the Church, should make us Humble, not Haughty

-conclude prayer w/ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved