

Remember God's Purpose

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Preacher: William Philip

[0:00] Well, there you go. Let's be thinking about who we might be able to invite along! And if you are here looking into the Christian faith, then we'd be delighted to have you along! on the 7th of September. That's all of our notices for this evening. So we're now going to turn to our Bible reading. Willie Philip, our senior minister, is beginning a new series in the book of Exodus. So do grab your Bible and read along as we read Exodus chapter.

If you don't have a Bible, we've got plenty of visitors' Bibles, some here at the front, at the side, at the back. Do grab one. They're here for you to use. And if you're using one of those, it's on page 45. Exodus chapter 1. I'm going to read the whole chapter.

These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household. Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin, Dan, and Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

All the descendants of Jacob were 70 persons. Joseph was already in Egypt. Then Joseph died, and all his brothers, and all that generation. But the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly. They multiplied and grew exceedingly strong so that the land was filled with them.

[1:36] Now, there arose a new king over Egypt who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply. And if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land. Therefore, they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens.

They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Ramses. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied, and the more they spread abroad. And the Egyptians were in dread of the people of Israel. So they ruthlessly made the people of Israel work as slaves and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in all kinds of work in the field. In all their work, they ruthlessly made them work as slaves.

Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah, and the other Pua, when you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him. But if it is a daughter, she shall live. But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live. So the king of Egypt called the midwives and said to them, why have you done this? Let the male children live. The midwives said to Pharaoh, because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women, for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them. So God dealt well with the midwives and the people multiplied and grew very strong. And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, every son that is born to the Hebrews, you shall cast into the Nile, but you shall let every daughter live. Well, amen. This is God's word and we'll return to it shortly.

Will you turn with me to Exodus chapter 1? And we're going to spend these next few Sunday evenings looking at chapters 1 and 2 anyway of Exodus. And then we'll see where we go after that. It is an abiding principle that when God opens doors of opportunity for his church and in our own lives, then alongside that comes inevitable struggle and battle. Because that's true of all real gospel progress. Remember what Paul said in Ephesus, a great and effective door is opened unto me and there are many adversaries.

And as we look forward to a new term, to families coming back from holidays, schools starting back, then students coming, terms starting, our autumn ministries beginning, I guess if we take that seriously, we could be quite fearful. We want open doors for effective ministry, don't we? Of course we do.

[5:09] But the struggles, the testing, the hardship, the opposition, not quite so much I suspect. And we may feel rather fragile. We might even feel fearful if that really does sink in.

But to counter those kind of feelings, these first two chapters of Exodus have a great message for us because they shout out very loudly to us that when hardship comes, even when the prospects of the church look very threatened, very dark, even when it may seem that God himself is absent and silent, they shout to us, don't be afraid, fear not. Remember that however fragile our lives may seem, however fragile the church may seem in a very hostile world, we have a wonderfully faithful God.

And he is the same yesterday, today, and forever. And that's why these ancient stories, from Moses, they are preserved in the scriptures for us. The apostle Paul says they're written for us, for our instruction. So that through endurance, through the encouragement of these scriptures, we might have hope. Hope in our faithful, unchanging God. And I want us to be encouraged by the wonderful things that we see in these chapters about our God, so that if you feel as fragile at times, as I certainly do, then together we might look ahead to the coming days of witness together, whatever comes our way, however difficult that might be, and not be afraid, but rather be full of faith in our faithful God. Years ago, these chapters rather came alive to me when I was reading a little book by my friend Ralph Davis called *The Word Became Fresh*. It's a little book about dealing with biblical narratives. And he uses these two chapters as a worked example at the end. I'm very thankful to him for the insights that he gave me, but for the excitement of just seeing the wonderful message that's here. And I want to try and share that with you. So let's look tonight at this chapter one that we've read and see how encouraging its message is for us. Because it is a message for Christians, for churches, perhaps particularly when we feel fragile in a culture that is alien to us, increasingly hostile perhaps. But it says to us, fear not, remember God's purpose. It's unchanged and it is unchangeable. However circumstances might suggest the opposite to us, remember God's purpose. God always accomplishes what he purposes for the people that he loves and cares for. So let's try and focus our thoughts on this chapter under two main headings. First of all, notice how this chapter highlights for us that God always remembers his people. God will never forget the people that he loves. You see the very first verse of the book, how it reminds us of that. These are the names of the sons of Israel. It's interesting, I think, isn't it, whenever we come across lists of names in the Bible, we tend to sort of skip over them and think it's just another boring list of names, you know, genealogies and these sorts of things. But these lists must be pretty important to God, because when you read through the Bible, you find lots of them, don't you? Try reading the first nine chapters of the book of Chronicles, nothing but lists of names. I wonder why we get so impatient with lists of names. Names can be very, very important. I still remember when I was at university at medical school, and we used to have to go and stand outside the university office and look at the notice boards and the lists of names that were going up. Probably all done online now, but then we had to go. And I'll tell you, there was one thing that was really, really important, was finding your name on those lists.

Because if your name was on the list, you passed your exams. You got to the next year. If your name wasn't on the list, well, it was a different story. So you went looking, is my name there?

[9:13] The list of names can be very, very important, and in the Bible, infinitely more important. And see, this chapter with its focus on the names of God's people is a powerful reminder that God never forgets his people, the people that he loves, the people who he calls his own.

Way back in Genesis chapter 46, God said to Jacob, I'm the God of your father. Don't be afraid to go down to Egypt, because there I will make of you a great nation. I myself will go down with you, and I myself will bring you back again. And here we are now, hundreds of years later, and what do we find? God has not forgotten the names of any of his own. They're all listed here, the sons of Jacob.

And when God gives himself to his people, he gives himself to them forever. And he remembers our names, because he's a personal God. He never forgets his people's names. We sang it, my name from the palms of his hands. Eternity will not erase. Impressed on his heart, it remains in marks of indelible grace.

And those words encapsulate one of the great, great themes of Scripture about the wonderful nature of our God. He never forgets the people that he loves.

That's why Jesus tells his followers, doesn't he, not to fear anything that man can do to them, not to fear anything that this world can throw at us. Fear not, he says, aren't two sparrows sold for a penny?

[10:55] Not one of them falls to the ground without your heavenly father. But even the very hairs of your heads are numbered. Fear not, you're of more value than many sparrows.

He knows our names. He'll never forget the names of the people he loves. That's why the risen Lord Jesus says to John in Revelation chapter 3, the one who conquers will be clothed in white garments, and I will never blot out his name from the book of life. I will confess his name before my father and his angels. Isn't that a wonderful promise? Later on in Revelation 14, what is he concerned with? The 12,000 times 12,000 who have the name of the Lamb written on their foreheads.

Then later on in chapter 20 of Revelation, it's all about those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. Chapter 21, it's all about the names of the tribes of Israel, the apostles of the Lamb, inscribed in the very foundations of the city, the new Jerusalem.

God always remembers his people's names. He never will forget the people that he loves. It's a wonderful thought, isn't it, that our names are always before him. There's a lovely reminder of that, a vivid picture of it in Exodus chapter 28, where it talks about the symbolism of the high priest's garments, Aaron. And in his ephod, he has stones placed in his garment upon which are inscribed the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. And he brings them, we're told, as a regular remembrance before the Lord. They will be on Aaron's heart whenever he goes in before the Lord. So God cannot ever forget the names of these his people. And that means you and me. It means all of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ. All of those who are alive now. All of those who've gone before us. All of those who'll come after us. He knows their names. He'll never forget them. Maybe some of us here tonight need that reminder.

We have a great high priest who lives with his names on our heart, interceding before the Father forever and ever. Doesn't that encourage you? As you think about the year ahead, the days ahead.

[13:32] Whatever seems to be going on in world history and politics, whatever seems to be going on in our personal circumstances, what really matters amidst all of that is that God's focus is squarely upon the people he loves. To be present with him, to bless them. See, this chapter shows us that God's view of world history is so very different to ours. Because we care about big names, don't we? Important people, important events and things. That's what's in the news, or I should call it the propaganda.

Don't watch it. That's what it is. But you see, if we were writing this story, we'd be careful to tell you all about the important names, wouldn't we? The name of the king, Pharaoh. The name of his cities. The lists of his achievements and all of these things. But do you see, when you read this chapter, God has no interest whatsoever in that. Do you see? Pharaoh isn't named. He's just called the king. In fact, the only thing we're told about him is that he didn't know the name of Joseph, which was a name that was important to God.

Just like the midwives. Look at verse 15. Isn't that great? We don't get the king's name, but we get their names. We know they're called Shephra and Pua. The nobodies of this world. Just ordinary people doing their day job. But God thinks they're far more important and knows their names. Not kings and emperors, because they're his people and he loves them. And because he loves them, he uses them, doesn't he? Quietly, just getting on with their day job.

But he uses them to play an absolutely integral role in his whole plan of salvation for the world. Isn't that encouraging? God needs prophets, yes, apostles, evangelists, all that. But he also needs midwives. And builders, like Nehemiah. And fishermen, like Peter and the others. And homemakers.

[15:30] And musicians. And teachers. And policemen. And doctors. And everybody else. But don't ever think that you're not that important in God's scheme of things. You don't matter to him if you're just an ordinary person doing an ordinary job seeking to live by faith.

Fear not. God never forgets his people's names. He remembers them. He knows the names of his own. They're on his heart. Always. Forever.

But secondly, what this chapter shows us so clearly is that God always remembers his purpose. He'll never forget either his purpose for these people that he loves and he's called to himself. Now what he has purposed, he will accomplish as he works all things for good to those who are called according to his purpose. And this chapter shows us that whatever might seem to be the case at times, nothing but nothing can ever interfere with God's perfect plan and purpose for the blessing of his people. Forever. Nothing. Not ever. First of all, can you see time does not wear out God's purpose.

That's the first thing this chapter reminds us because, of course, not suddenly a new story beginning here, is it? Comes after the book of Genesis. And that first verse takes us back hundreds of years to the story of Jacob, to their family going down to Egypt as God had told them to in the time of Joseph. And to the promise that we read of that God made to Jacob to say he would be with his people to bless them there. And that, of course, takes us even further back, doesn't it, in Genesis?

[17:11] Right back to Genesis 12. Do you remember God's great promise to Abraham? What did he say to him? I will make of you a great nation. And through you, indeed, all the families of the earth will be blessed. And that promise, that covenant promise is repeated again and again through Genesis. Genesis 15, Genesis 17. Then again to Isaac in Genesis 26. And as we've said, to Jacob as they were about to go to Egypt. But here we are now, hundreds and hundreds of years later. What do you read in verse 7?

Then the people of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly. They multiplied and grew exceedingly strong, so the land was filled with them. Time does not wear out God's purpose, his promise. And just in case we didn't notice that, you see how Moses hammers it in a couple more times. It's there in verse 12. It's there again in verse 20. Verse 12, the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread abroad. Verse 20, and the people multiplied and grew very strong. Now why is he emphasizing that? Well, because it looked as though time had worn out God's purpose and his promise.

Didn't it? Outwardly, the picture seemed quite bleak. Here are all these people enslaved in Egypt. It's as though God has actually disappeared. Hundreds of years have passed. And there's no great sign, is there, of all they'd promised to Abraham. No sign of the permanent homeland. No sign of this worldly paradise of blessing. And God seemed so silent. I wonder if you notice, as we read through the chapter, God doesn't speak. It's the same in the next chapter. It's as though God is completely invisible and absent. In fact, the voices that do dominate in this chapter and the next are the voices of the enemies, the oppressors of God's people. Pharaoh, the Egyptian taskmasters. They're the ones who seem to be in ascendancy. And that's often the case, isn't it? It often feels like that today.

The ascendant voices in our culture are the voices of the secularists and the pluralists. And increasingly, the voices of other false and dark religions. That's what we hear in the media.

[19:33] That's what we see manifesting in the legislatures in our world. And it's easy to think, isn't it, that God's purpose for his church has somehow been worn out with the passing of time.

I think we find ourselves thinking that, maybe even unconsciously. We don't expect God to do the great things in our day that he did in the past. We might read biographies. We might read about great revivals in the past. I think, well, that was then, but this is now.

And this chapter reminds us, don't go by appearances. It was hardly noticed here, was it? But God's purpose was marching on just as he planned it.

His people, his church was multiplying. It was growing. And it was having an impact on the world. That 400-year-old promise was still going absolutely strong.

And friends, the 2,000-year-old promises of our Lord Jesus Christ are still going just as strong as strong as we're going to day. Time will never wear out God's purpose for the people that he loves, for his church. Not ever. I will build my church. And the gates of hell will never stop that. Not in our day, and not ever. And we need to remember that, don't we? Especially when it can seem to us as though we are stuck in a day of small things. In a day when the culture around seems to confidently proclaim the death of Christianity and the death of God. Remember what Peter said in his second letter.

[21:15] Yes, the last days will be full of scoffers like that, saying, oh, where's this coming of the Lord Jesus you're talking about? But no, says Peter, don't forget his promise. With the Lord of days is a thousand years. And there is purpose indeed in his delay because he wants many, many more to come to repentance and find life. It's so easy for us, I think, to fall into the trap of beginning to doubt God's purpose, God's faithfulness, just because he isn't working to our timetable, isn't doing things according to our preferred pattern. But we need to learn God's subversive patterns.

He often is far from ostentatious in his greatest works of salvation and judgment. Isn't that true? Think of the incognito of that unnamed stable in Bethlehem. Who could have thought of what was truly going on there when the God of heaven and earth came down into a seven-pound lump of human flesh?

He is at work in his people and for his people and through his people always. And that means that he hasn't forgotten you either, or me, or his purpose for you and me.

That's why Paul, the apostle, can encourage us in our own daily lives, in our own daily walk, by saying, you know that none of your labor done in the Lord is in vain, not ever.

Because time will never wear out his purpose, and you're part of that purpose. But secondly, neither can trouble ever suppress God's purpose.

[23:06] See verses 8 to 14. They paint a grim picture of God's people facing real trouble, real strife. But far from suppressing God's purpose and his promise, in fact, it only acts to serve God's purpose all the more.

God has blessed his people with numbers and with strength. And so the Egyptians get worried, and they do everything they can to discriminate against them, to afflict them, to exploit them. Ethnically inferior, slaves.

They ruthlessly made them work as slaves, says verse 14. But it doesn't suppress God's purpose, does it? In fact, it serves it.

Look at verse 12. The more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied, and the more they spread abroad. It's exactly the language, the word that God had used promising Jacob, that his offspring would spread abroad in Genesis chapter 28, verse 14.

This was all part of God's plan. His purpose was always to bring glory to his people through affliction. That's what God promised way back in Genesis 15 to Abraham.

[24:14] There'll be affliction for a long time, and then glory and blessing. Now that's something that might seem very strange to us. I suppose it does.

Why does God allow such suffering like that in the experience of his people? Why doesn't he just bring that victory and glory immediately to show he's God, and these are his people? But you see, the answer, for all its many mysteries, the answer is ultimately a very profound one.

And it's all to do with the closeness of the bond that God's people have with God himself as the great deliverer, their redeemer. And this pattern, you see, of suffering and glory, and of glory through suffering, is right at the very heart of the story of the gospel.

Our Savior suffered so that he might be glorified and bring glory to all his people, for all who are truly his, and all who belong to him are bound to him in that very same pattern.

That's what it means, doesn't it, to be heirs of God. We suffer with him, says the Apostle Paul, in order that we may be glorified with him.

[25:29] And all through Old Testament history, you see, God's people are allowed to suffer because this is the way that God works in them in order to bring them to that glorious future bound up with their redeemer.

And you see that pattern. You see that pattern of glory through suffering, of resurrection through death, etched over all the experience of God's people all through the ages again and again and again.

Because just like us, as Paul says to the Philippians, they too were granted not only to believe, but to share in the sufferings of the Christ who was to come.

But you see the big point in these verses, no trouble, no strife can ever suppress the purpose of God for his people's lives.

They serve his purpose. And that means, you see, that when you and I face real struggles and hardships from without or from within, it's not because God has forgotten you.

[26:29] It's not because God is unable to bless you. It's actually God's way of doing just that. It's because he wants you to share in his subsequent glory that he allows you to share in those hardships now.

That's so, so important for us to know and to understand. I can't tell you how important that is. If we don't grasp that, we could get so, so wrong about God.

And everything that he's doing in our lives, we can become bitter. We can become resentful of him. But we're so, so wrong. I wonder if you know this hymn by John Newton, because it expresses this biblical truth so very clearly, I think.

He says, I asked the Lord that I might grow in faith and love and every grace, might more of his salvation know and seek more earnestly his face. It was he who taught me thus to pray, and he I trust has answered prayer, but it has been in such a way as almost drove me to despair.

I hoped that in some favored hour at once he'd answer my requests and by his love's constraining power, subdue my sins and give me rest.

[27 : 42] Instead of this, he made me feel the hidden evils of my heart and let the angry powers of hell assault my soul in every part.

He had more. With his own hand, he seemed intent to aggravate my woe, crossed all the fair designs I schemed, blasted my gourds and laid me low.

Lord, why is this? I trembling cried. Wilt I pursue this worm to death? Tis in this way, the Lord replied, I answer prayer for grace and faith.

These inward trials I employ from self and pride to set thee free and break thy schemes of earthly joy that thou mayst find thy all in me.

Well, friends, that may be your experience in the past or just now or in the future.

[28 : 51] And if it is, we need to remember, remember that these trials can never scupper God's purpose for us, but rather they can and they will serve God's gracious purpose for us wonderfully, even if very painfully at times.

But time cannot wear out God's purpose for us. Troubles cannot suppress God's purpose for us. And the third thing in the end of this chapter shows us is that even tyranny and terror can't destroy his purpose either.

Because verses 15 to the end paint a terrible picture, don't they, of state oppression, social engineering. Infanticide. Genocide. And again, very true to human history.

Here it was to kill all the baby boys. Today in many parts of the world it's the same, isn't it? But it's to kill the baby girls. In fact, we hear that that is now happening more and more in our own country. But here's a society of organized tyranny and terror where ruthless evil reigns supreme. And God's people seem utterly helpless in the midst of that.

[30 : 13] And that may come to our lives, may come sooner than some of us realize. And yet, what do we see? Again, the marvelous mystery of God at work.

Because far from destroying his purpose, the very worst, the most demonic opposition only succeeds in demonstrating God's sovereign power, which will never, ever be overcome by the powers of hell or the schemes of man.

And will never pluck the future of his precious people out of God's hand. God's love is one of the marvels of the God who's revealed to us in the Bible that he constantly upends evil, turns it upside down, turns evil into good, uses even evil for his own glory and for the blessing of his people.

And the devil and the gates of hell can't do nothing, nothing to stop it. Look at verse 20. Despite it all, everything that the seed of the serpent himself, could throw at them so as to destroy God's purpose, the people multiplied and grew very strong.

It's just like Joseph's own testing, isn't it? Do you remember in Genesis chapter 50? The evil in his brother's hearts, which they certainly purposed for evil, but what happened? God purposed it for good.

[31 : 36] To bring about the great future blessing of his chosen people. And where do you see the greatest demonstration of that in the history of this whole world?

Of course, you see it, don't you? At the cross of Calvary. The darkest day in history. The hour of deepest darkness, but we call it Good Friday.

the most glorious day in all of time and all of eternity. When all the powers of hell, when all the wrath of man were made to serve the glory of our God and to bring ultimate triumph to the people of our God.

And that is always, always the pattern. And you see it in the lives of God's people all through history. And often it is amid the greatest opposition, even tyranny and terror, that God does work his greatest wonders of salvation because these things can never, ever, ever destroy his purpose.

Think of Daniel in his day and the evil arrayed against him that God turned and used for glory. Think of Esther. Think of that great reversal of Haman, the enemy of God's people, hoist on his own petard, hung on the gallows that he meant for God's servant, Mordecai.

[32 : 54] Think of Nero's persecution of the Christians in Rome. And yet what happened in the end? That land, that whole empire became Christianized. More recently, think of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union seeking to utterly crush and destroy Christianity.

Think of China and other places. Have any of these terrors ever destroyed God's purpose to build his church among people of every tribe and every nation?

Quite the reverse. Have a look at China today. Back in the 1950s, everyone was mourning, lamenting, the missionaries being thrown out of China. And what do you see today? Countless numbers of Christian believers all across that land. Chinese Communist Party notwithstanding. And it's always been so, right back to the very beginning. It was Tertullian, the second century church leader, who said so famously, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Always that has been so because tyranny and terror and even the gates of hell cannot prevail, cannot destroy the purpose of God for the people that he's loved and chosen. [34 : 14] And God turns even rank evil on its head so that it must serve his purpose and his people. The wrath of man shall praise him as the psalmist.

And friends, we need to know that, don't we? We need to stand in awe of the God who can do such marvelous things, things that are too marvelous and wonderful for us to grasp or understand. Because you see, when we do stand in awe of this God, when we truly fear God like that, well then we'll be fearless of anything else in the whole of life, won't we? Nothing that this world or the devil himself can throw at us can ever possibly perturb us. And that means we'll be able to go on standing and serving God faithfully, whatever comes to us and to our lives in the future.

Just like these midwives in Egypt, aren't they magnificent? Verse 17, they feared God, they stood in awe of God and so they didn't fear the king, they defied the king who had the power to end their lives and they served God and God blessed them abundantly in the midst of all the struggle, the strife, that reign of terror.

Now I don't suppose any of us will experience that kind of tangible terror in this coming year, although you never know. And tyranny and totalitarianism is on the rise across the world, including in the West.

[35 : 50] Certainly some of our prayer partners are facing these things and will face these things in the coming year. And many of us will also have very, very real struggles and battles, real assaults from the evil world, so that it does feel as though Satan and all his legions are attacking us.

Some of us have terrible battles to fight with addiction, with anger, with bitterness, with sexual impurity, or whatever it is, hundreds of things.

But we need to remember that even in that darkest hour, no terror, no tyranny of darkness will ever destroy God's purpose of grace for the true people that he loves and he cares for, not ever.

And we mustn't forget that, not ever. Look at the last verse of the chapter. It leaves us in great suspense, doesn't it, with this awful decree of Pharaoh to murder all the infants.

Every son that is born to the Hebrews he shall cast into the Nile. And we're left hanging. What's going to happen? Is it going to end in terrible tragedy?

[37 : 08] But that's the point, isn't it? Because the whole story thus far has told us of the God who will never forget the people he loves, who will never forget his purpose for them. A purpose that can't be worn out by time, it can't be scuppered by troubles, it can't be destroyed, by terror or tyranny.

So will the greatest tragedy that could ever possibly confront your life in the future, will it ever be able to blot out God's purpose of grace for his people, for those he loves, for those he has given his life for?

No. There are many tragedies that we could imagine, I'm sure, coming to us in the year ahead. probably very few could possibly be as painful as having your children murdered in front of you. But what the Bible is telling us here is not even that, terrible as it is, not even that can wrench you out of the good hand of our God or blot out his wonderful eternal purpose for the people he loves. That's the point, isn't it? As Ralph Davis puts it, the God who has held you all through Exodus chapter 1 won't let go of you after verse 22.

[38 : 34] Now you see, we are people who can say with Samuel, hitherto, thus far, the Lord has helped us. And the implication of that is he will go on helping us.

Come what may, we can trust him for the future, whatever it might hold. God's purpose is unchanged, it's unchangeable. He always accomplishes his purpose for the people that he loves and cares for.

The world can't stop it, the devil can't stop it, not even our own sin can stop it. Isn't that wonderful? Not even our own sin and failures.

Because by the wonderful mysterious workings of his good providence, he is always at work. He's at work confounding his enemies. He's at work turning evil to good for the ultimate blessing of his people.

So friends, as we look into the unknown of this coming new term, let's remember God's purpose. Knowing that however fragile we are as Christians, however fragile we are as a church, we have a faithful God.

[39 : 49] And we don't need to fear because he will never leave us or forsake us. He's promised. And that is his purpose. And it is unchanging and it is unchangeable.

Well, let's pray. together. The Apostle Paul says, we know that for those who love God, all things, all things work together for good for those who are called according to his purpose.

And in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. and I'm sure that neither death nor life nor angels nor rulers nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

our Father, we thank you for your promises to us in the Lord Jesus Christ which are unchanged and unchangeable.

We thank you for the encouragement that we find in these scriptures that speak of our God who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. who will never forget the people you love and never forget the purpose you have for us.

[41 : 27] So help us Lord, never to forget you, to remember your great purpose and to rejoice even in the darkest hour.

For Christ's sake, Amen. Amen.