**Romans Chapter 11**

* Romans 11:1-6, Israel is not rejected by God.
* Romans 11:7-10, Israel failed and was hardened
* Romans 11:11-16, Israel's failure is the Gentiles' salvation
* Romans 11:17-24, Israel is the natural branch
* Romans 11:25-32, Israel has a partial hardening upon them
* Romans 11:33-36, God's ways are unfathomable

# I say, then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."

* 1. God has not rejected His people
     1. Jesus told the Jews, in a parable, that they would reject the Messiah.
        1. Matt. 21:33–41, "But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 "But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' 39 "They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. 40 "Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?"
     2. Though Israel failed to recognize the Messiah, God has not rejected Israel, at least not totally.
     3. Paul uses himself as evidence that God has not rejected the nation.
        1. Phil. 3:4-5, "although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: 5 circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee."
  2. The tribe of Benjamin
     1. "…of the tribe of Benjamin (Phil. 3:5)—that tribe which, on the revolt of the ten tribes, constituted, with Judah, the one faithful kingdom of God (1 Ki. 12:21), and after the captivity was, along with Judah, the kernel of the Jewish nation (Ezra 4:1; 10:9)"[[1]](#footnote-1)

# God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel?"

* 1. God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew.
     1. “foreknow” is προγινώσκω proginṓskō. It occurs five times in the New Testament. Acts 26:5; Romans 8:29; 11:2; 1 Peter 1:20; 2 Peter 3:17.
        1. Acts 26:5, "since they have known about me for a long time, if they are willing to testify, that I lived as a Pharisee according to the strictest sect of our religion."
        2. Rom. 8:29, "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren."
        3. 1 Peter 1:20, "For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you."
        4. 2 Peter 3:17, "You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness."

# "Lord, they have killed Your prophets, they have torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they are seeking my life."

* 1. 1 Kings 19:10, "He [Elijah] said, 'I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. '"

# But what is the divine response to him? "I have kept for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal."

* 1. 1 Kings 19:18, "Yet I [YHWH] will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him."
  2. This demonstrates the sovereignty of God. He keeps people for Himself.
  3. Remember, He grants belief (Phil. 1:29) and repentance (2 Tim. 2:24).

# In the same way, then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice.

* 1. Remnant
     1. We tend to move away from the truth of God and toward apostasy. This is why we need constant examination of God's word in Bible study and listening to preaching.
     2. Paul brings up the issue of Elijah regarding how God is not dependent on Israel. Likewise, it was the same in the time of Paul. God was keeping a remnant for Himself. After all, many Jews came to believe in Christ as the Messiah.
     3. The election of God is of both the Jews and of the Gentiles.
  2. The word "remnant" is λεῖμμα leímma, and only occurs here in the entire New Testament.
  3. Choice
     1. The sovereign right of God dealing with election.
     2. ‘Choice’ is ἐκλογή eklogḗ. It occurs seven times in the New Testament.
        1. Acts 9:15, "…he is a chosen instrument of Mine…"
        2. Rom. 9:11, "…so that God's purpose according to his choice would stand…"
        3. Rom. 11:5… here
        4. Rom. 11:7, “… But those who were chosen obtained it…”
        5. Rom. 11:28, "… But from the standpoint of God's choice there beloved…"
        6. 1 Thess. 1:4, "knowing, brethren beloved by God, his choice of you."
        7. 2 Pet. 1:10, "…be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you…"

# But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise, grace is no longer grace."

* 1. By grace, it is no longer on the basis of works
     1. The proof of God's sovereign election and work of grace that comes from Him is found in verses 4-7. Paul tells us that God's remnant for Himself is by grace. The implication is that without that grace, none would believe in Him.
        1. Rom. 3:28, "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law."
        2. Rom. 4:5, "But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,"
        3. Gal. 2:21, "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."
  2. There are two means of salvation: grace and works. There is not a combination of grace and works as false religions teach.
     1. Gal. 5:2–4, "Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you. 3 And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law. 4 You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by Law; you have fallen from grace."
     2. Rom. 4:5, "But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness."

# What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened.

* 1. What Israel is seeking
     1. Israel was seeking righteousness with God.
        1. Rom. 9:31, "but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law."
     2. The remnant found the righteousness with God, the righteousness that is by faith.
        1. Rom. 9:32, "Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone."
  2. Those who were chosen obtained it
     1. Chosen is ἐκλογή eklogḗ. It occurs seven times in the NT.
        1. Paul is a chosen instrument of Jesus (Acts 9:15).
        2. God chose Jacob, (Rom. 9:11)
        3. A remnant according to God's choice (Rom. 11:5)
        4. Israel was by God's choice (Rom. 11:28)
        5. God chose people of the church of Thessalonica (1 Thess. 1:4)
        6. The brethren are to make sure about God's choosing them (2 Pet. 1:10)

# just as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes to see not and ears to hear not, down to this very day."

* 1. God opens hearts and closes minds according to the sovereign counsel of His will.
     1. Opens
        1. Acts 16:14, "A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul."
        2. Luke 24:45, "Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,"
     2. Closes
        1. 2 Thess. 2:11, "For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false."
        2. John 12:39–40, "For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, 40 'HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM.'"

# And David says, "Let their table become a snare and a trap, and a stumbling block and a retribution to them."

* 1. Psalm 69:22, "May their table before them become a snare; And when they are in peace, may it become a trap."

# Let their eyes be darkened to see not, And bend their backs forever.

* 1. Psalm 69:23, "May their eyes grow dim so that they cannot see, And make their loins shake continually."

# I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous."

* 1. Stumble
     1. Their stumbling is their rejection of Jesus.
  2. Salvation has come to the Gentiles.
     1. Acts 28:28, "Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also listen."
     2. Gen. 12:3, "And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed."
     3. Gal. 3:8, "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU.'"
  3. Jealous
     1. The word 'jealous' is παραζηλόω parazēlóō and occurs in Rom. 10:19; 11:11, 14; and 1 Cor. 10:22. It means "To make jealous, provoke to jealousy or emulation."[[2]](#footnote-2)
     2. Rom. 10:19, "But I say, surely Israel did not know, did they? First Moses says, 'I WILL MAKE YOU JEALOUS BY THAT WHICH IS NOT A NATION, BY A NATION WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WILL I ANGER YOU.'"

# Now if their transgression is riches for the world and their failure is riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be!"

* 1. Because Israel rejected the Messiah, the riches of righteousness are now for the Gentiles.
  2. Paul points out that if Israel failed to produce such great good, how much more will the fulfillment of the duty of Israel mean to the world?
     1. Rom. 11:25–27, "For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery - so that you will not be wise in your own estimation - that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; 26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, 'THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB. 27 THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.'"
     2. Luke 21:24, "and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."
     3. John 10:16, "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd."

# But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry.

* 1. We can see from this verse that Paul is addressing his epistle to both the Jews and the Gentiles.
     1. Rom. 2:17, "But if you bear the name 'Jew' and rely upon the Law and boast in God."

# if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them.

* 1. We know that Paul loved his countrymen. Remember, he would have given up his own salvation for them.
     1. Rom. 9:3, "For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh."
  2. That is a kind of love that is godly.
  3. Would any of us give up our salvation so others could go to heaven?

# For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?"

* 1. Repeats the sentiment of verse 12 above.
  2. Israel was, so to speak, castaway though not totally nor finally. Paul is speaking of the temporary and partial rejection by God for failing to recognize the Messiah.
  3. When Israel finally repents and comes to full knowledge of who Jesus was and is, and considering the prophecy of Revelation concerning the 144,000, it would be monumental. It will have a worldwide effect.
  4. Just as Jesus' resurrection from the dead sent shockwaves throughout the world, so too Israel's "resurrection from the dead" would do the same thing.

# If the first piece of dough is holy, the lump is also; and if the root is holy, the branches are too."

* 1. The first piece of dough…the root
     1. The root would appear to be the nation of Israel from which the first fruit comes forth; namely, the apostles and other godly Jews who were first converted to Christ.
  2. Lump
     1. "The Israelites were required to offer to God the first-fruits of the earth—both in their raw state, in a sheaf of newly reaped grain (Lev. 23:10, 11), and in their prepared state, made into cakes of dough (Num. 15:19–21), by which the whole produce for that season was regarded as *hallowed*. It is probably the latter of these offerings that is here intended, as to it the word "lump" best applies.."[[3]](#footnote-3)

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

* 1. Some of the branches were broken off… were grafted in
     1. This speaks of those Jews who rejected Christ. They are broken off and replaced by the Gentiles who believed.
  2. Agriculturally, branches were sometimes cut from one plant and moved upon another to acquire more produce. Paul is using the analogy familiar to the people of the time.

# do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you."

* 1. Do not be arrogant toward the branches
     1. Apparently, some looked down upon the Jews for not recognizing who the Messiah was.
     2. We must be careful not to look down upon those who do not believe in Christ. Don't take credit for your own wisdom in choosing Jesus.
     3. We are granted belief (Phil. 1:29), and this belief in Christ is the work of God (John 6:29). Furthermore, we are granted the action of coming to Christ by the Father (John 6:65). Therefore, we should be humble in our appreciation that God has given us saving faith. We can ask that God would do the same for others.
  2. The root supports you.
     1. It is from Israel through whom the prophets, the working of miracles, and the Messiah were manifested.
     2. Therefore, we are to be grateful for the nation of Israel and the people of God. After all, God is not done with Israel yet (verses 25-27).

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

# Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear;"

* 1. They were broken off for their unbelief
     1. There is a mystery here that we cannot solve completely. Why were they broken off for unbelief if God grants that they believe (Phil. 1:29)? Why didn't God just grant that they believe and appoint them to eternal life (Acts 13:48)? Here are some possible explanations.
        1. The Jews were the covenantal people of God and were believers in the true and living God. So, they are without excuse because they were morally obligated to accept the Messiah.
           1. Note: All truth is rooted in God, and since God is moral, all truth is ultimately moral. So, people are morally obligated to believe and affirm whatever God says and does. They are morally obligated to follow truth even if it's 2+2 = 4. Likewise, people are obligated to follow the truth of who Christ is.
        2. Truth is rooted in God's nature. All people are obligated to believe what God reveals about Himself/Jesus, whether or not they accept it.
        3. God desired to conceal His word from certain people (the non-elect), which is one of the reasons Jesus speaks in parables (Mark 4:10-12). This deals with election and predestination (Eph. 1:4-5). Therefore, in light of this, we can see a broader plan that God has instituted in the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11), a counsel that we are not privileged to know. Therefore, we submit to God's sovereignty.

# for if God did not spare the natural branches, He will not spare you, either.

* 1. If God dealt harshly with the people of Israel who had so much and whom he loves so much, don't be arrogant to think that you're better than them or that you, too, will be cut off.
  2. This is not dealing with eternal security but with groups of people. In the case of the Jews, it is the covenant people. In the case of the Gentiles, it is the mass of people outside of covenant Israel.
  3. Individuals are elected and secure. But groups of people are addressed generically.
  4. Having thought through this quite a bit, I do not understand how God's sovereignty, human responsibility, election, and predestination all work together. I do not see them being contradictory. But they are sometimes paradoxical.

# Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

* 1. Paul continues to persuade the Gentiles to be humble. Don't look down on the Jews. Be humble in light of God's grace to you.
  2. To those who fell, severity
     1. Those who fell from your belief in the true living God. In other words, though intellectually they acknowledged the God of Israel, they were self-righteous unbelievers who put their hope of salvation in their own goodness. This deserves a severe judgment because it insults the grace of God in Christ and produces pride.
  3. But to you, God's kindness
     1. Paul is speaking of the Gentiles. The Jews faced the severity of God (i.e., A.D. 70!), But the Gentiles received the kindness of God even though they were not God's covenantal and chosen people.
        1. Matt. 15:24, "But He answered and said, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'"
  4. If you continue in His kindness
     1. It is true that if you continue in God's kindness, you will not be cut off. It is also true that if you do not continue in God's kindness, you will be cut off. But what does this mean? Here are two possible explanations.
        1. It is possible to lose one's salvation.
           1. This appears to contradict such scriptures as John 3:16; 6:37-40; 10:27-28
        2. Continuing or not continuing is a manifestation of regeneration. Either a person is truly regenerated or is not. Either will manifest by whether or not they continue or do not continue to believe in God.

# And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again."

# For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?"

* 1. God is not done with Israel. God's grace to the Gentiles can extend back to the Jews. So, the Gentiles should remember their position. They were not the covenant people of God. They were grafted in because of God's mercy.
  2. Furthermore, God can return His attention to the nation of Israel and show His incredible grace to them - just as He did to the Gentiles.
  3. Paul is urging humility. Sometimes, we take credit for salvation by boasting, even if only a little, in our own wisdom and ability to follow Christ.
     1. This is the root of the failure of so many religious systems where it is faith in Christ *and* something else, whether it be our own wisdom, sincerity of heart, or ability to follow God's Law.
  4. Quote
     1. "The usual method of grafting in involves taking cultivated branches and grafting them into a wild tree. That way, the cultivated branches may bear more fruit. Grafting wild branches into a cultivated tree will not produce good fruit. In other words, the reason for God's inclusion of the Gentiles does not lie in their desirability but can only be explained as a manifestation of God's tendency in his election to do the opposite."(Kruse, Colin G. 2012. *Paul's Letter to the Romans*. Edited by D. A. Carson. The Pillar New Testament Commentary. Cambridge, U.K.; Nottingham, England; Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Apollos.)

# For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery—so that you will not be wise in your own estimation—that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

* 1. A partial hardening has happened to Israel
     1. The partial hardening of Israel is due to God's sovereign plan of election and predestination, something that God decreed from the foundation of the world.
        1. Eph. 1:4–5, "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will."
        2. Gen. 12:3, "And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you, all the families of the earth will be blessed."
        3. Gal. 3:8, "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU.'"
  2. Until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in
     1. God, in His great mercy, has ordained the salvation of more than the Jews. God is gathering His elect among the Gentiles. God has ordained this from before the foundation of the world, and God knows the exact number of the elect. When that is reached, then the time of the Gentiles will be over.
        1. Rom. 8:29–30, "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; 30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified."
        2. Rom. 9:22–23, "What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? 23 And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory."
     2. As the Jews had their time (covenantally), the Gentiles have their time (covenantally).
     3. As the Jews were the representatives of God on earth, the Gentiles (Christians) are the representatives of God on earth.
  3. Related Verses
     1. Luke 21:24, "and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled."
     2. John 10:16, "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd."
     3. Matt. 24:22, "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."

# and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob."

* 1. Isaiah 59:20, " 'A Redeemer will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,' declares the Lord."
     1. To those who turn from transgression in Jacob,' is taken from the LXX. There is a slight difference between the Hebrew and the LXX.
  2. Heb. 8:8–10, "For finding fault with them, He says, 'Behold, days are coming, says the Lord, When I will effect a new covenant With the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; 9 Not like the covenant which I made with their fathers On the day when I took them by the hand To lead them out of the land of Egypt; For they did not continue in My covenant, And I did not care for them, says the Lord. 10 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel After those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their minds, And I will write them on their hearts. And I will be their God, And they shall be My people."
  3. All Israel will be saved
     1. Does this mean that all of Israel as a nation will have a mass conversion? Or does it mean that spiritual Israel, the redeemed?
     2. It appears to be national Israel, the actual descendents of Abraham.
     3. Psalm 14:7, "Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord restores His captive people, Jacob will rejoice, Israel will be glad."

# "This is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins."

* 1. Isaiah 59:21, "As for Me, this is My covenant with them," says the Lord: "My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring's offspring," says the Lord, "from now and forever."
  2. Isaiah 27:9, "Therefore through this Jacob's iniquity will be forgiven; And this will be the full price of the pardoning of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones like pulverized chalk stones; When Asherim and incense altars will not stand."

# From the standpoint of the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but from the standpoint of God's choice they are beloved for the sake of the fathers;

* 1. At the time of Paul's writing, the Jewish nation was against Jesus and what the apostles were teaching. Yet, since they are God's chosen people and God is not done with them (vv. 25-26), God still loves them.
  2. Even in their state of exclusion, they are still loved by God.
  3. How much more are we loved by God since we are included, grafted in, and called from eternity past (Eph. 1:4-5)? Even in our failures and occasional "unbelief" in the work of God, He still loves us and will never forsake us (Heb. 13:5).

# for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

* 1. Gifts
     1. Greek is χάρισμα, charisma, and occurs 17 times in the New Testament: Rom. 1:11; 5:15, 16; 6:23; 11:29; 12:6; 1 Cor. 1:7; 7:7; 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 2 Cor. 1:11; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Peter 4:10.
     2. The context deals with the calling of Israel. His gifts and calling to them will not be revoked.

# For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience,

* 1. Paul is pointing out that God has shown the Gentiles mercy because of the failure of the Jewish nation to receive Christ.
  2. Think about it. If Israel had accepted the Messiah, what would be our state? Would we be saved? Would we have been adopted into the nation of Israel?

# so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy.

* 1. The mercy shown to all is manifested in the work of God on the cross.
  2. Though Israel rejected the Messiah and we were the beneficiaries of that rejection, Israel still benefits because God promised to redeem Israel.
  3. Furthermore, as noted, those who are unbelievers their whole lives also benefit from the work of Christ on the cross. After all, for the sake of the elect, God endures with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction (Rom. 9:23).

# For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all.

* 1. Notice how Paul uses "all" in two different senses. He also does this in Romans 5:18 and 1 Cor. 15:22.
     1. Rom. 5:18, "So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men."
     2. 1 Cor. 15:22, "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive."
  2. The mercy of God is on the Jews and the Gentiles, not just the Jews.

# Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!

* 1. Paul speaks of how God's great wisdom has included all mankind, not just the Jews, in the salvific work of the cross.
  2. Remember, to the Jew, Jesus is only for Israel.
     1. Matt. 15:24, "But He answered and said, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.'"
     2. Yet, because of the disobedience of Israel, the Gentiles are saved.
  3. Depth of the riches (the riches of God's grace in Christ)
     1. Rom. 10:12, "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him."
     2. Eph. 3:8, "To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ."
     3. Phil. 4:19, "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."
  4. Wisdom of God
     1. The phrase "wisdom of God" occurs in 1 Kings 3:28; Luke 11:49; 1 Cor. 1:21, 24; Eph. 3:10
     2. Wisdom is the proper use of knowledge. Of course, God is the standard of all wisdom because He is all knowledge. He is holy and just. Therefore, He possesses wisdom: omnisapience.
  5. Knowledge of God
     1. The phrase "knowledge of God" occurs in Prov. 2:5; Hosea 4:1; 6:6; Rom. 11:33; 1 Cor. 15:34; 2 Cor. 10:5; Col. 1:10; 2 Pet. 1:2.
     2. God has always had all knowledge of all things actual as well as potential. It does not increase or decrease with Him – from eternity past to future.

# For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor?

# Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again?

* 1. Isaiah 40:13, "Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him?"
  2. Job 41:11, "Who has given to Me that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine."
  3. Since God is the ultimate source of all things, because all knowledge rests in Him, and because He has all wisdom, no one can counsel Him.
     1. Unfortunately, many people think they know more than God and try to speak about how God of the Bible ought to behave.

# For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

* 1. God is the ultimate source of all things and the necessary precondition for all intelligibility.
  2. All facts, actualities, and potentialities must derive their existence from the causal chain that was initiated by the ultimate and initial cause. Otherwise, all facts (plurality) are ultimate. Without an ultimate, nothing can be grounded, and no facts or explanations can be justified. All facts exist in a context. No fact exists independently of other facts. God is the ultimate foundation for all things.
     1. Gen. 1:1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."
     2. John 1:1–3, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being."
     3. Col. 1:15–17, "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. 17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."

1. Brown, David, A. R. Fausset, and Robert Jamieson. *A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Acts–Revelation*. Vol. VI. London; Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited, n.d. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Zodhiates, Spiros. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Brown, David, A. R. Fausset, and Robert Jamieson. *A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Acts–Revelation*. Vol. VI. London; Glasgow: William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited, n.d. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)