

Abundant Mercy through Abounding Wisdom # 40

Romans 11: 25-36

Today we will conclude the parenthetical passages written concerning the salvation of Israel. Although Paul continues to reveal his burden for the salvation of Jews, he is speaking to the Gentiles in this passage. While speaking to the Gentiles, he reveals God's sovereign dealings with the nation of Israel and the opportunities afforded the Gentiles as well. The plan and means of salvation remained the same for all people, regardless of race or nationality. Jesus Christ stands as the sole means of salvation for all humanity. All who are set free from the bondage and condemnation of sin in salvation must embrace the finished work of Christ upon the cross by faith, without any mixture of works or effort. It is obtained by faith alone in Christ alone!

These words were written thousands of years ago, but the truth they reveal never changes. Christ remains the hope and salvation of the world. Even today, all who are saved by His marvelous grace must come by faith in His finished work. As we ponder the grace and mercy God has shown, I stand amazed at His provision for us. God knew, prior to creation, we would all be sinful and in need of salvation. He made the way of salvation through the sacrifice of His precious Son on the cross for our sin. I want to consider the [assurances](#) Paul speaks of in our text as we think on: [Abundant Mercy through Abounding Wisdom](#).

I. The Mystery Explained (25-27) – Here Paul discusses the mystery of the Gospel, and in particular, God's dealings with the Gentiles. Notice:

A. The Admonition (25a) – [For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits](#). Clearly he is speaking to those who are saved, referring to them as brethren, and it is apparent he is dealing with Gentile believers. They were cautioned against becoming arrogant in their relationship with Christ, seeking to belittle or criticize the Jews. As he will discuss later, it is of the Lord's mercies that salvation was offered to any. They were no better, and certainly no more deserving, than the unbelieving Jews.

- We too must guard against such pride and conceit. I fear the majority of the American church has a distorted view of the church at large. Many will be surprised when they get to heaven. The church will not be made up primarily of white, middle class Americans. There will be untold millions in heaven, coming from all races, backgrounds, and cultures. Rather than developing a sense of arrogance, we ought to rejoice that salvation was even offered to those who were undeserving. Were it not for God's mercy and grace, we too would yet be in our sin!

B. The Preparation (25b) – *that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.* Paul reminds the Gentiles of God's prior dealings with Israel. They were His chosen people, enjoying His abundant blessings throughout the centuries. While it was true they had rejected Jesus as the Christ, the sole means of salvation, God wasn't through with Israel. For the time being they were blinded to the truth, and nationally would remain so until God's appointed time, the Lord would deal with them again in the end times. God was now working primarily among the Gentiles, but His grace would be extended to Israel again.

▪ I hope we all grasp this eternal truth. We may not fully understand the exact order of events in the end times, but the Bible clearly reveals that God will again offer grace and salvation to Israel. While this promise isn't reserved for us, we can find comfort in it. I am reminded that we serve a sovereign God who always works according to His divine will. His plans for Israel, and the entire world, will never be altered, regardless of the actions or approval of mankind!

C. The Restoration (26-27) – *And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: [27] For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.* Israel had rejected Jesus as the Messiah during His first advent, but they will embrace Him as the Christ when He comes again to establish His kingdom here on earth. God had made a covenant with Israel and even though they had rejected Christ, God had not forsaken them. When Christ returns, they will believe and turn from their ungodly ways unto Christ the Savior and Redeemer of mankind. *Isaiah 25:9 – And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the LORD; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.* Again, we too can take comfort in the fact our Lord is sovereign and trustworthy. His Word is true, and every promise He made will be fulfilled.

II. The Mercy Extended (28-32) – Paul now addresses the abundant mercies of the Lord. Consider:

A. The Opportunity (28) – *As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes.* The Jews stood opposed to the preaching of the Gospel. They did everything within their power to hinder those who shared the Gospel, seeking to silence their voices, and stamp out Christianity. Their rejection of the Gospel had led to the Gentiles being presented with the opportunity for salvation. Although they were a great hindrance, Paul wanted the Gentiles to keep their opposition in a proper perspective.

- He also reminded them again of God's future plans for Israel. They were not entirely rejected, even though at this present time the majority denied Christ. They were loved of God, and He would deal with them again in mercy and grace, leading to their salvation.

B. The Certainty (29) – *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.* Some may have thought there had been a mistake. Some may have believed Israel's initial rejection of Christ would result in eternal rejection of God and separation from Him. Paul assures all who read these words that God doesn't make mistakes. His gifts and calling are not altered. His determined plan, set in motion before the foundation of the world, is irrevocable and unchangeable. He would visit Israel again in the end times. He had sovereignly decreed to do so and that would not change!

- There is comfort for the entire church in these words. God's will is absolute and irrevocable. His promises are true and certain. He has ordained the salvation of men through faith in His Son. He has determined all the saved will spend eternity with Him in heaven, enjoying eternal life. His will for our lives is without question. His call and desire for our lives will never change. There is no weakness, variance, or uncertainty in our Lord. He is steadfast and sure!

C. The Generosity (30-32) – Paul now defines the generous mercies of God offered to those who are undeserving. We see:

1. Generosity to the Gentiles (30) – *For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief.* For centuries the Gentiles had rejected the Lord, having no desire to know Him or walk according to His ways. When the Jews rejected Jesus as the Christ, the Gospel was taken to the Gentiles because of the unbelief of the Israel. They were unworthy of such mercy and grace, but God had been generous in bringing it to them.

2. Generosity to the Jews (31) – *Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.* The majority of Israel was unsaved, having rejected Christ as their Savior. Most of them yet remained in unbelief, but God continued to show mercy. His grace and mercy was now being directed toward the Gentiles, but the same mercy He had shown them would also be shown unto Israel. God is no respecter of persons. Israel had rejected Jesus, but individually salvation was available for the Jews in Paul's day and nationally they would experience salvation in the future.

3. Generosity to Humanity (32) – *For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.* Paul affirms a fundamental truth: all were guilty of unbelief at some point in life. We all are born in sin, separated from God and in need of salvation. We had no way of obtaining the righteousness God demands within ourselves. We were helpless and hopeless apart from God. He knew we all stood in need of mercy and grace, and He has extended such mercy and grace to all who will believe upon Christ by faith. *Gal.3:22 – But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.*

III. The Majesty Examined (33-36) – In conclusion, Paul speaks of the majestic ways of God. We are reminded of:

A. His Wisdom (33-34) – *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* ^[34] *For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?* The wisdom and mind of God are beyond human ability to comprehend. Paul was amazed as he considered the wisdom of God. He knew the Lord was sovereign and had received counsel from no other. His plans and ways were carried out according to His divine wisdom. *Isaiah 55:8-9 – For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.* ^[9] *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

- In light of the Gospel, we could never have devised a plan that would make us worthy in God's sight. We could not have developed a plan that would have appeased His holy and righteous nature. We tend to sympathize with those who share our values and concerns, but are much less sympathetic to those who are different. God had a plan that only He could devise, and it is sufficient for all people!

B. His Works (35) – *Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?* Paul offers an argument that cannot be denied. God is indebted to no man. No one has made any offering unto the Lord prior to His abundant offering of grace. In fact, we could not have known or loved God had He not taken the initiative in the relationship. All that we have, and ever hope to have, are the result of the gracious works of God on our behalf. He did not offer grace that leads to salvation because we had earned it or that it was owed to us. He came to us while we were undeserving and offered what we could never deserve. We could spend our entire lives seeking to live a righteous life and still not merit God's grace and favor. We are indebted to Him for His gracious provision in our lives!

C. His Wonders (36) – *For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.* Here Paul makes a definitive summary statement. Our entire being is a result of the good grace of God. We are what we are and enjoy what we have based upon His grace in our lives. In and of ourselves we have nothing to boast of. He is the source of every blessing we enjoy and should be the sole object of our worship. Had Christ not been willing to bear our sin, dying in our place, we would yet be separated from God and condemned in sin! May we never forget the abundant mercies and grace of our Lord! He has done for us what no other could, providing for our redemption and reconciliation through Christ.

Conclusion: Although Paul was speaking to the Gentiles about the salvation of the Jews, his words bear witness of eternal truth for all men. Our salvation through Christ is nothing short of miraculous. We are the recipients of unmerited favor. Apart from the mercies of God, we would have no hope in this life or throughout eternity. He provided the sole means of salvation, which is the same for everyone regardless of race or any other factor. He desires all to respond to His gracious offer and receive salvation through Christ.

I am thankful for the His outpouring of mercy and grace. I responded by faith in Christ and received salvation in Him. For that I am eternally grateful and indebted to the Lord. This passage has challenged me to offer my life a living sacrifice to the Lord for His grace in my life. Every believer ought to share that desire. Do you know Christ in salvation? If not, provision has been made for you; you simply need to recognize your need and respond to the call of Christ in salvation!