

Evening Worship / April 16, 2023

“God’s Mind-Boggling Ways!”

Romans 11:13-36

I. Paul’s Call –

¹³ For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, Romans 11:13 (NKJV)

1. *A seemingly unlikely choice –*

For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. Romans 1:1

⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. Philippians 3:5–6 (NKJV)

Paul you might say had his doctorate in Old Testament Law. He was “a Hebrew of the Hebrews” you might say he was eminently qualified to minister to his own people, but ...

God called fishermen like Peter, James and John to lead the ministry to the Jewish people ...

2. *As we go further in the passage, though Paul magnifies his ministry, it wasn’t his first choice, it was God’s will –*

3. *God’s call of people is often this way ...*

II. Paul’s motivation –

I magnify my ministry, ¹⁴ if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. Romans 11:13b–14 (NKJV)

1. *Paul freely admits his heart is to make Israel jealous!*

2. *His desire is to save his brethren according to the flesh, Israel. Now, he is certainly not opposed to Gentiles being saved, but that is the love of God and Christ working in Him –*

¹⁴ For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again. 2 Corinthians 5:14–15 (NKJV)

A. *His heart as a new creature in Christ was for EVERYONE, He saw everyone equal in Jesus Christ –*

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. Galatians 3:28–29 (NKJV)

B. *In Romans 9-11 Paul is speaking of his own special love for his own people, he would even win his Gentile friends heart for them with loving logic –*

⁵ For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? Romans 11:15 (NKJV)

III. Paul's warnings / instructions to the Gentiles –

1. *Stay humble, do not boast, especially do not boast against Israel.*

A. Anyone, anything connect to the tree is holy -

¹⁶ For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. Romans 11:16

B. *Jewish people were the branches, but were broken off, gentiles grafted in, Christ is the Tree -*

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. Romans 11:16–18 (NKJV)

C. *Beware, you, a Gentile, are not the root ...*

2. *Stay committed, you also can be removed -*

A. *The temptation is to PRIDE, I am in some one else is OUT!*

¹⁹ You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.” Romans 11:19

B. *But it is faith in God and continued faith and reliance on Him that KEEPS us in! Note Paul says - Do not be haughty, but fear.*

²⁰ Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. Romans 11:20

C. *Real faith in God is not opposed to godly “fear” -*

²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. ²² Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. Romans 11:21–22 (NKJV)

Two doctrines that seem similar but are NOT!

(1) Perseverance of the saints –

¹⁶ For a righteous man may fall seven times And rise again, But the wicked shall fall by calamity. Proverbs 24:16 (NKJV)

(2) Once saved, always saved –

It is true that a person if really saved by God is always saved!

But this doctrine usually means, it does not matter how you live after you profess faith, God has to keep you, save you, but ...

but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. Romans 11:22 (NKJV)

Some people are deceiving themselves about their salvation in the first place, a haughty, “I am saved, it does not matter how I live, or how many times I SIN” ... this attitude sinning without FEAR is a sign a person is NOT REALLY SAVED at all!

¹⁰ **The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever. Psalm 111:10 (NKJV)**

3. God can graft Israel back in. God’s sovereignty is not a static thing, repentance would be included ...

²³ **And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. ²⁴ For if you were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, who are natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? Romans 11:23–24 (NKJV)**

4. Their Blindness was your benefit, that God may have mercy upon all.

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, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; ²⁷ For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.” ²⁸ Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, ³¹ even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. ³² For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all. Romans 11:25–32 (NKJV)**

A. *The blindness of the Jewish people was for this benefit to the Gentiles – ... until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. Romans 11:25*

B. *This implies a Gentile time, followed by a Jewish time?*

C. *Is there a future for national Israel?*

²⁶ **And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; ²⁷ For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.” ²⁸ Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Romans 11:26-29**

All Israel :26 = Jews and Gentiles, spiritual Israel

All Israel :26 = a future revival among national Israel, where many Israelites according to the flesh are saved! What we know for sure is that every person, Jew or Gentile who is elect, who truly believes, who is obedient to the Gospel will be saved ...

All Israel :26 does not mean that every Israelite, according to the flesh will be saved, even despite a lack of faith in Jesus Christ, we will not see Judas in Heaven! Nor does it imply a different way of salvation for Israel ...

IV. *God's sovereign workings were mind-boggling, even for the Apostle Paul*

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³³ **Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!**

³⁴ ***“For who has known the mind of the LORD?
Or who has become His counselor?”***

³⁵ ***“Or who has first given to Him
And it shall be repaid to him?”***

³⁶ **For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.
Romans 11:33–36 (NKJV)**

1. *Paul had not figured it all out, we should not expect to figure it out either!*
2. *God's mind is infinite, His thinking and working beyond us -*
3. *God should be glorified, and will be ... in both His goodness and His severity ...*
4. *Final application, make every effort to get right with God and to live for His glory!*

“Here first the Apostle bursts into an exclamation, which arose spontaneously from a devout consideration of God’s dealings with the faithful; then in passing he checks the boldness of impiety, which is wont to clamor against the judgments of God. When therefore we hear, *Oh! the depth*, this expression of wonder ought greatly to avail to the beating down of the presumption of our flesh; for after having spoken from the word and by the Spirit of the Lord, being at length overcome by the sublimity of so great a mystery, he could not do otherwise than wonder and exclaim, that the riches of God’s wisdom are deeper than our reason can penetrate to. Whenever then we enter on a discourse respecting the eternal counsels of God, let a bridle be always set on our thoughts and tongue, so that after having spoken soberly and within the limits of God’s word, our reasoning may at last end in admiration.” John Calvin

Having drawn together the various strands of his argument, Paul now responds in lyrical fashion with a song of praise that reaches heights that correspond to the depth of concern he sounded in 9:2, 3. God’s dealings with Jew and Gentile display a cross-section of His majesty in which His sovereign will (“from him”), His sovereign activity (“through him”) and His sovereign glory (“to him”) are richly displayed (v. 36). R. C. Sproul

God's wisdom and knowledge is deep, unsearchable and unknowable. We know and learn of Him, because He stoops to, but also by grace raises, and with great skill teaches our minds!

⁹ **The humble He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His way. Psalm 25:9 (NKJV)**