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Introduction

While though Paul has shown a broken heart over the rebellion of Israel and their hard hearts, and although Paul prays for the salvation of the Jews of Israel -- that they would come to the true knowledge of the Savior. At the same time, Paul also knows who God is. Paul realizes and recognizes who God is, he knows that God is a covenant-keeping God, that when God makes a promise, when God makes a covenant, He always keeps His covenant. We know that God made a covenant with Abraham all the way back in [Genesis 12](#) and [Genesis 15](#). We know that he made a covenant with David in [2 Samuel 7](#). Paul knows that God will not back out of these covenants. These are unconditional covenants, unconditional promises that God has made with Abraham and David to his people, Israel.

So, we come down to the end of chapter 11. He's writing to the believing gentiles and Jews in Rome. And he concludes that although national Israel has rejected Christ, their Messiah. He knows that their future is bright. The future of Israel is bright, because Israel will eventually embrace Christ as their Messiah, who came to save them from their sins. How does Paul know this will happen? Because God's glory is on the line. God's glory is on the line here. And that's where we're going to see tonight.

Paul knows that God's glory will always be displayed in all that He does. In fact, look at verse 36. of chapter 11. He says, "[For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.](#)" ([Rom 11:36](#)) Paul knows that God always does what he does as the sovereign creator of the universe, for His own glory. And there are three ways that God's glory is put on display in this portion of Romans 11.

1. We're going to see first God's glory through His promise, in verses 25 through 27.
2. Second, we'll see God's glory through His mercy, verses 28 through 32.
3. And then finally, God's glory, through His wisdom, in verses 33 through 36.

Definition of God's Glory

God will always make sure that His glory is on display, always. Now, before we get into these three points, let me just help you understand what God's glory is.

1. First, you must understand that there is an intrinsic nature to God's glory, and intrinsic nature. This means that God's glory is a part of His being. It's a part of His very nature -- who He is -- that God is a God of glory. This means that God has glory that He alone possesses, that cannot be given to anyone else. It cannot be given to Him, and it cannot be taken away from Him. It's His intrinsic glory.

You see, oftentimes we pray that we do what we do for God's glory. And that's a biblical prayer, right? We would pray that. God, may we do this for Your glory, we should pray this way. But here's the thing, whether we do something for God's glory or not, that does not add or take away from God's glory. Because God has glory, intrinsic glory, He has glory. That's always His. His glory is not dependent upon us. His glory is His radiant glory that He has always had from all of eternity past and will have for all of eternity in the future. It's His perfect and complete glory that cannot be changed. It is never-ending glory. It's the glory that Moses wanted to see. Remember when Moses asked God, "[Show me Your glory](#)" ([Exodus 33:18](#)) That glory that Moses wanted to see. It's the glory that Jesus veiled when He came to Earth, but was put on display in the Mount of Transfiguration. It's that glory. That is God's intrinsic glory. No one gives it to Him, and no one can take it away from Him. It is His glory.

2. Second is His glory that is given to Him by men and angels. That there is glory that is given to God by men and angels. It's the honor that man brings to God. It's the honor that man gives to God through obedience to Him. When we obey Him, we are giving Him glory, we are giving Him honor. It's that glory that when someone says something amazing happened to you. And they say, wow, look at how amazing you are. You know that it only happened because of God. And then you respond with all glory to God, right? That's how we should respond at least. All Glory to God, we give God honor, we give God glory that He alone is due. Because that's why we live and move and have our being. Right? To give God glory.

That's why the Westminster shorter catechism says this, "*the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.*" That's the chief end of man. That's what we're here for, to give God, Glory. And any failure to give God glory is sin and rebellion. Because we take what belongs to God, and we give it to ourselves, that sin and rebellion against God, we must give Him all glory. We know that God does all things for His glory, because He alone possesses all glory.

1. God's Glory through His Promises

And so, let's look at how God's glory, then is seen, in verses 25 through 36. First, we'll look at our first point here, God's Glory through His promises. God's Glory through His Promises. Now, if you remember back at the end of chapter 8, Paul said this, "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 8:38-39)

But someone might ask, Well, what about Israel? What about Israel? Didn't God choose Israel and set His love upon Israel? And then turn his back on them? What happened Israel? How can we know that we won't be separated from His love since God has rejected Israel? Well, Paul wrote chapters 9-11 to show us that although God did set Israel aside for a time, He will fulfill His promise that He made to them, because He's a covenant-keeping God and He does all things for what? His glory. For His glory.

You see, God has not finished with His chosen people, there is still a future for them. How do we know? Look at verse 25. "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;" (Rom 11:25)

Now notice Paul calls this a mystery here. This is a mystery. What is a mystery? Well, at the end of Romans, in Romans 16, Paul actually gives us a definition of mystery there. In Roman 16:25, he says this, "Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;" (Rom 16:25-26)

You see, it's something that was hidden in the past, but it has now been revealed. Mystery. One commentator says, "It refers to a secret element of God's plan that has been hidden from human beings but has now been revealed." It's a mystery. But through God's progressive revelation, it is being revealed. And before Paul launches into this mystery -- notice -- he gives another warning to the gentile believers. A warning to them.

He's talking to the Gentile believers. How do we know that he's talking to Gentile believers? Look at verse 13. Look at what he says there. "But I am speaking to you who are..." (What?) "Gentiles." (Rom 11:13) I'm speaking to you guys. And his warning to these gentiles in verse 25 is this..."so that you will not be wise in your own estimation." (Rom 11:25) He's telling them, Look, gentiles, don't get puffed up. Don't get prideful thinking that you're better than the Jews are, that God set them aside. There's a partial hardening that's happened to Israel that He set them aside. And now He's focused on you...gentiles. And somehow now you can get prideful over this. "God has chosen me". He says, don't get puffed up. Just like he said back in verse 18, "do not be arrogant toward the branches. (Rom 11:18) Who are the branches? Israel. Don't get puffed up. Don't be arrogant toward them. In verse 20, "do not be conceited." (Rom 11:20)

And so, he warns the gentiles again, against being prideful toward the Jews, thinking that their election exalts them somehow over the Jews. He says, don't do that. If you have an attitude like that, you take what is meant for good (that is God's election of you...that's good, right? God has elected us. He has chosen to save us) and you undermine God's glory, out of pride, out of pride, and you give credit to yourself instead of to God. That's what happens. And he tells them don't do that. Don't become prideful, don't become conceited.

A. A partial hardening will happen to Israel

And then he tells them this mystery. What is it? There's three parts to this mystery. Three parts here to this mystery.

First, he says a partial hardening has happened to Israel, there's a partial hardening. Now notice this, notice the word "partial" there. That word "partial" does not modify the mystery (he's not saying that there's some kind of partial mystery that's going on here) but that word "partial" there modifies Israel. It modifies Israel. This means that Israel's hardening is partial. It's not final or complete. It's not a complete hardening. God is not done with Israel. He still has a future for them.

And not every single Jew has been hardened toward God, right? We talked about that last week. There are still Jews who are being saved today. God always has a remnant, always. But there is a hardening that has happened. Some of the branches have been broken off "for their unbelief." (Rom 11:20) verse 20, tells us they've been "broken off for their unbelief" because of their unbelief. And so, there's this partial hardening that has happened to Israel, they have not received their Messiah. They don't believe in Christ. A partial hardening has happened to them.

B. Until the fullness of the gentiles has come in.

The second part of this mystery is found in the next part of verse 25. He says, "until the fullness of the gentiles has come in." (Rom 11:25). Notice that word "until" there. That word "until" implies that the hardening of Israel is temporal. Its temporal, it refers to time here. That there is a hardening that has happened to them -- until. That word until implies time. And when will that hardening then be lifted? When the fullness of the gentiles has come in. As Paul stated back in verse 17, "that the wild olive branch has been grafted in" (meaning the gentiles have been grafted into the kingdom of God -- they have entered into eternal life, they have come in). That's what he's saying, the fullness of the gentiles has come in. That is the offer of salvation has been given to the gentiles to enter into eternal life into the kingdom of God.

There will come a time when the fullness of the gentiles though, is complete. It's complete. Now what is what does Paul mean by fullness of the gentiles? Well, it has the idea of, of a full number or a complete number. That is, all gentiles will come to saving faith. All those gentiles who are elect, by God, will come to saving faith.

As one commentator says, *"Paul is probably borrowing here another concept from Jewish apocalyptic, the idea of a fixed number of people whom God has destined for salvation. A fixed number of gentiles that God has destined for salvation."*

Now, some say this here refers to the rapture of the church, the rapture of the church. However, (and it could be implied in this... I get where the where they're coming from), but after studying this, I don't think it can be that because we know, that in the tribulation, after the rapture of the church (as when the church has been raptured out of here,) that gentiles will still be saved, there still will be gentile conversion that happens, salvation that happens in the tribulation. During that seven-year tribulation period. There will still be more gentiles who come in.

Revelation seven tells us of those who have come out of the Great Tribulation. And in Revelation 7:9 it says this, *"After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands;"* (Rev 7:9) Who are those people that are standing there that have come out of the Great Tribulation? Gentiles, those are the gentiles, they come from every nation, all tribes, peoples, and tongues. Those are gentiles there who are saved during the Great Tribulation. And so, this fullness will happen close to the time of the return of Christ.

When commentator says this, *"It is not possible to be precise about the exact timing of the conversion of Israel in comparison with other events of end-times. Although the fact that it will take place only after the salvation of all elect gentiles, suggests that it will be closely associated with the return of Christ in glory."*

It'll be closely associated with that...when Christ comes back, and He puts His feet on the Mount of Olives. And so, the mystery is, is first that a partial hardening has happened to Israel. And second, it will happen until the fullness of the gentiles comes in.

C. All Israel will be saved.

Third part of this mystery is found in verse 26. Notice what it says there, *"and so all Israel will be saved."* (Rom 11:26) All Israel will be saved. That is how you can know that God won't turn his love away from you, Gentile believer, you can know that he won't turn his love away from you. Because He always keeps His promises. Just like He made a promise to Israel, a covenant with them. He will fulfill his promise to Israel, and all Israel will be saved.

Now. Let me just stop right here and clarify for you. Notice that Paul says "Israel" here in verse 26. Notice this, there's Israel there. Then in verse 25, what does he say? Israel. Who is Israel? National Israel. This is national Israel. But some people who believe in replacement theology, they will say that Israel is a spiritual Israel, or the church, that Jews and gentiles become one there in the church -- replacement theology -- there's no more future for the Jews for Israel. But it can't be. It can't be that. Why? Because what did God do to Israel and verse 25? What does it say? He hardened them. There's a partial hardening that's happened to Israel, right? So if He hardened Israel, it can't be the church. It

can't. He doesn't harden the church. It has to be referring here to national Israel. Remember, they have rejected their Messiah, they have become hard towards Him. But Paul says that one day they will be saved.

And how will this happen? Well, what has Paul been talking about in chapters 1-8 of Romans? What has he been saying there? How does someone get saved? By faith alone in Christ alone. Right? That's how they are going to get saved. They're going to put their faith in Christ. All Israel will do this one day, they will look upon the one whom they have pierced, and they will believe upon him. They will trust in Him.

MacArthur says, *"God's control of history is irrefutable evidence of His sovereignty. And as surely as He cut off, unbelieving Israel from His tree of salvation, just as surely He will graft believing Israel back in. A nation completely restored and completely saved."*

God will do that. Then Paul quotes from Isaiah to show that God is the one who keeps His promises and fulfills His covenant. Continue on in verse 26. Notice what he says there, *"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.'" (Romans 11:26-27)*

- Notice it says the deliverer. Who is that? Jesus That's Jesus. He's the deliverer. In fact, if you look over at Isaiah, Isaiah says the Redeemer, the Redeemer is the one who will come. That's Christ, Christ is going to come. And He will come from Zion, that refers to His Second Coming, where many Old Testament passages tell us that Christ will reign from Zion.
- What is Zion? Jerusalem. It's Jerusalem, where He sets up His throne.
- And what will He do at that time? Notice, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob.
- Who was Jacob? Israel, that's Israel. There they are. And this will be the fulfillment of the new covenant that God gave in Jeremiah 31. Where He promised to Israel, I will put my Spirit within you. It's the promise of the New Covenant, He will fulfill it with Israel.
- What will he do there? It says He will take away their sins, He will take away their sins.

Notice, this is an unconditional covenant. It's unconditional. Just like the unconditional covenant that God made with Abraham, it's not dependent upon Israel, because Israel didn't make the promise. Who made the promise? God did. God made the promise. He made the covenant. So, He will fulfill His promise. Always.

We asked that question to our boys all the time. Does God always keep His promises? Yes, He does. That's right. We've got to remember that! God always keeps His promises, and He will keep His covenant promises that He has made to Israel. God will make sure that these covenants come to fulfillment, because He's the one who established them. And He cannot break them because listen, His glory is on display when He fulfills them. His glory is on the line. And He will fulfill His covenant promises for His glory.

2. God's Glory through His Mercy

Let's look at our second point here, God's Glory through His Mercy, verses 20 through 32. God's Glory through His Mercy. Mercy has the basic idea of having compassion, and meeting those who have needs. God shows mercy to us by meeting our greatest need. Which is to have our sins removed, right? That's our greatest need. Have your sins removed. God has been merciful to both gentiles and Jews, but He will show mercy toward Israel and saving them in the future.

Look at verse 28. "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; 29 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (Romans 11:28-29)

Right now, Israel is an enemy of God, because they have hardened their heart toward the gospel. They don't believe in Christ, the Messiah. They've hardened their heart to the Gospel, which is what their greatest need is, right? That's their greatest need -- is the gospel. And because Israel has become an enemy, the gospel has now gone out to gentiles. To us. We've received the gospel because Israel hardened their heart towards God. And so, God said, I'm going out to the gentiles, and we receive the gospel because of their hardened hearts.

But this hardness is only temporary for Israel. They are only temporary enemies. They won't always be God's enemies. Why? Notice what he says there for the sake of who? The fathers. For the sake of the fathers. Because of the covenant that God made with the fathers. Who is that? Who were the fathers? Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It all goes back to that covenant that God made with Abraham.

Remember, God chose Israel, God chose Abraham, and He set His love upon Israel, not because of anything that Abraham had done, right? Not a single thing did Abraham do. Abraham was not seeking after God. God chose him. God called him and He chose him. And He set His love upon Israel, not because of anything that Abraham had done, not because of anything anyone else had done. But God showed mercy by choosing them.

Do you realize that election is a merciful act of God? It's a merciful act of God. He chooses you. He chose you. And you get not only what you don't deserve, which is called grace, but you also don't get what you do deserve, which is mercy. Election is God's compassion on you, and meeting your greatest need. God by His own mercy, He bound himself by His own promise to bring Israel to salvation. God did it. And God will fulfill all the promises that He has made to them. Why? Because His plans will not change. Because the gifts and the callings of God are irrevocable. National Israel will be saved, just as Paul told us in verse 26. And this will happen because God has planned for this to happen. And it will be fulfilled because of His mercy. Because He's a merciful God.

Which is what Paul says in verse 30. Notice what he says there, "For just as you once were disobedient to God, but now have been shown mercy because of their disobedience, 31 so these also now have been disobedient, that because of the mercy shown to you they also may now be shown mercy. (Rom 11:30-31)

Just as gentiles were disobedient, and shown mercy, you and I were disobedient. And God showed us mercy. That same mercy extends to Israel. And even though Israel has been disobedient, they will be shown mercy and God will save -- listen -- all Israel, He will save them. But we might ask, Well, why did God allow them to become disobedient in the first place? Right? Why did God choose them and then allow them to become disobedient in the first place?

Which ties into the question that a lot of people ask, Why does God allow evil to exist? Why does He allow evil to exist? Why did He allow Israel to become His enemies and disobey Him? Well, Paul gives us at least a partial explanation of this in verse 32. Notice what he says there, "[For God has shut up all in disobedience so that He may show mercy to all.](#)" (Rom 11:32)

Man's sin provides a means for God to demonstrate His mercy, His mercy. If there were no sin, no disobedience, there would be no need to show mercy and compassion, right? And so God permitted sin, He is not -- listen -- He is not the author of sin, but God permitted sin. How do we know that? Raise your hand, you're a sinner, right? He permitted for sin to happen. But He is not the author of sin.

Why did He permit for sin to happen? So that His glory could be displayed through His mercy. That's why He did it.

3. God's Glory through His Wisdom

Point number three, God's glory through His Wisdom. We see God's Glory through His Wisdom. God's glory is also displayed through His wisdom. After Paul thinks about this marvelous plan of God, that through Israel's disbelief, the gospel would go out to the world. And yet God will save Israel because of the promise that He made to them. All Paul can do is burst out in praise. Burst out.

As the saying goes, theology leads to doxology. Theology leads to doxology. You should write that down, underline that highlight that theology leads to doxology. That's why we must know theology. We must know the truth of God. The deeper that you think about God, the higher your praise will go. The deeper that you think about God, the higher your worship goes.

And all Paul can do is Praise God. Look what he says in verse 33. "[Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!](#)" (Romans 11:33)

How can anyone contemplate God's plan and think that they understand it all? does anybody understand the mind of God? You can't. It's impossible. Your mind is too small. It's too small to comprehend the wisdom and the knowledge of God. No one can ever come up with a plan, like God has come up with this plan with Israel, and the gentiles of the church, and then saving Israel again. God's entire plan of salvation. No one could ever come up with that. His wisdom and knowledge are rich, and they're deep. And they're too deep to even search out, and too grand for the mind to even think up. That's how amazing our God is.

Which Paul puts on display with three questions.

1. Notice what he says in verse 34? "**For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD?**" (Romans 11:34) Answer, no one. No one has known the mind of the Lord. And you can't know the mind of God. It's impossible for you to grasp the mind of God.
2. Then he asked a second question, "**OR WHO BECAME HIS COUNSELOR?**" (Romans 11:34) Answer? No one. No one has ever given counsel to God. Your counsel is not good enough for God. No one can be His counselor. One commentator says, "It is not the countless, unrevealed things about God of which Paul is speaking, but the depths of the things which we do know through his self-revelation. Even the things that God has revealed to us are too magnificent for us to fully grasp and comprehend." That's why no one can ever get to the depths of this book right here.

It's rich, it's full of gold, it's sweet as honey. And we can always, always, always continue to grow in our knowledge of God's Word. That's why you don't read this thing and then just set it on the shelf. No one has done that. Because no one is comprehended the things that are in this book. It's rich. No one has become God's counselor. Even the things that God has revealed through His Word we cannot fully comprehend.

3. And Paul asked the third question, "**Or WHO HAS FIRST GIVEN TO HIM THAT IT MIGHT BE PAID BACK TO HIM AGAIN?**" (Rom 11:35) Did anyone give something to God so that He is now indebted to you? No. Everything that you have is God's. Do you realize that? Everything that you own, everything that you have, the salvation that you have is all because of God! Everything is all by the grace of God, every breath that you breathe is by the grace of God. And He owes you nothing. He owes you absolutely nothing. And He owes the Jews absolutely nothing. Everything that we have is by His grace, and His mercy.

Then Paul says in verse 36, "**For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.**" (Rom 11:36) What do all things exist for? For His glory, which is what he says, "**To Him be the glory forever. Amen**" (Romans 11:36). A doxology of praise as he comprehends and understands and thinks about the plan of God. As he thinks about the greatness and the grandness of who God is, and he says, It's all for God's glory. What great theology Paul has just given us in these first 11 chapters, right? Just full of rich theology. How should we respond to this glorious truth that we've been given in these first 11 chapters? We should respond by living out what we have learned, which is what we're going to study next week as we pick up in chapter 12.

Let's pray Father, thank You for Your word. That is magnificent. Your word that we cannot even fully comprehend -- the depths of Your mind -- the depths of who You are. The knowledge that You have is too great and too grand for our minds. Father, forgive us when we try and play god and think that we know the way things ought to be. Lord, help us to study Your Word, to learn Your Word, to grasp more things in Your Word, so that we would be people who think biblically -- so that we can have Your mind as You have revealed these truths to us in Your Word. We know that we can never fully comprehend the fullness of Your mind. But what You have revealed to us in Your Word, other help us to know it, to

plant it in our hearts... deep in our hearts. That we would not only know it, but that we would live it out. And as we talked about, that we would do it all for Your glory, and Your glory alone. We pray in Christ's name, Amen.