

THE EPISTLES TO THE ROMANS

ROMANS 9:1-11:36, VINDICATION OF GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

INTRODUCTION

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B. Introductory notes on Romans 11:25-32

1. Thomas Constable, *Paul previously laid the groundwork for this section. His point so far was that God is able to restore Israel. Now we learn that He is not only able to do it, but He will do it. This section is the climax of everything that Paul wrote in chapters 9–11.*
2. Everett Harrison, *The same mercy that has overtaken the Gentiles who were formerly disobedient will finally overtake the now disobedient Israel.*
3. Warren Wiersbe, *Men may dispute about prophecy and differ in their interpretations, but let every man realize that he is dealing with God's people, Israel.*

ROMANS 11: 1-36, THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

ROMANS 11:25-32, ASSURANCE OF ISRAEL'S RESTORATION

A. The revealing of God's plan for Israel (25-27)

1. Paul affirms a mystery (25), ***Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.***
 - a. Paul addresses Gentile Christians (the entire congregation, men and women) concerning a mystery.
 - 1) A *mystery* is a truth not previously revealed but now proclaimed by revelation.
 - a) Ephesians 3:9, *and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things,*
 - b) Colossians 1:26, *the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.*
 - c) C. E. B. Cranfield on *mystery*, *...something which could not be known by men except by divine revelation, but which, though once hidden, is now revealed in Christ and is to be proclaimed so that all who have ears to hear may hear it.*
 - d) John Walvoord, *The outworking of God's present purpose of calling out both Jew and Gentile on an equal basis to form the body of Christ was not anticipated in the Old Testament. Its major features were mysteries, that is, truth that was not revealed in the Old Testament but which is revealed in the New Testament...In God's program the project of calling out His church of both Jews and Gentiles must be completed first...*
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, *For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*
 - 2) Ephesians 1:22-23, *And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

- 2) Paul's reason for disclosing the mystery was to keep the Gentile Christians from conceit.
 - a) He solidifies his call against pride as noted in Romans 11:17-21.
 - b) Douglas Moo, *...an attitude of ethnic pride and exclusiveness.*
 - c) John Witmer, *God's sovereign plan to put Israel aside temporarily in order to show grace to Gentiles is no basis for conceit on the part of the Gentiles; it is designed to display further the glory of God.*
 - d) John Stott, *He has already warned them against boasting (18) and arrogance (20), and now against conceit. 'Not ignorant so that not conceited' is the essence of what he writes, for he knows that ignorance is the cause of conceit.*
 - e) Grant Osborne, *...they were spiritual racists and proud of themselves, an attitude seen too often in our churches as well, as we Westerners tend easily to lord it over Christians from Africa or Asia or Latin America.*

- b. The content of the mystery revealed.
 - 1) It concerned a *partial hardening of Israel.*
 - a) 2 Corinthians 3:14, *But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away.*
 - b) John Stott, *The 'hardening' takes the form of spiritual insensitivity. In the case of Israel it is the same as the 'veil' which Paul elsewhere says lies over their hearts and minds.*
 - c) Grant Osborne, *Only unbelieving Israel has been hardened, and that is not eternal but a present judgment making way for the Gentile mission.*
 - d) Israel's rejection of Jesus as Messiah is temporary and will end when God's chosen number of Gentiles has been saved, note Mark 13:10, *And the gospel must first be proclaimed to all nations.*
 - e) Thomas Constable, *When all the Gentiles whom God has chosen for salvation during the present age of Israel's rejection have experienced salvation, God will precipitate a revival of faith within Israel.*

 - 2) *until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in*
 - a) It was a time for non-Jews to receive God's grace by faith.
 - b) Acts 15:14, *Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name.*
 - c) Ephesians 3:6, *This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*
 - d) Douglas Moo, *...the Gentiles' "fullness" involves a numerical completion: God has determined to save a certain number of Gentiles, and only when that number has been reached will Israel's hardening be removed.*
 - e) The Belgic Confession on when the fullness will take place, *Finally we believe, according to the Word of God, when the time appointed by the Lord (which is unknown to all creatures) is come and the number of the elect complete, that our Lord Jesus Christ will come from heaven, corporally and visibly, as he ascended, with great glory and majesty to declare himself Judge of the living and the dead, burning this old world with fire and flame to cleanse it.*

- c. Three stages of God's plan of salvation as seen in verse 25-27, followed by a summary in verses 28-32.
 - 1) Disbelief by the majority of Israel (25b).
 - 2) The completion of the coming in of Gentiles (25c).
 - 3) The salvation of "all Israel"(26-27).

2. God's plan for Israel (26-27), ***And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob"; "and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins."***
 - a. *in this way*
 - 1) It means *with reference to that which precedes.*
 - 2) C. E. B. Cranfield, *In this way...is emphatic: it will be in this way, and only in this way, that is, in the circumstances which are indicated by the first two parts of the statement..will be saved.*
 - 3) Paul is looking back specifically to Romans 11:25, which gives the way in which Israel will be saved.
 - 4) Douglas Moo, *...God imposes a hardening on most of Israel while Gentiles come into the messianic salvation, with the Gentiles' salvation leading in turn to Israel's jealousy and her own salvation.*

- b. *all Israel will be saved*
- 1) Douglas Moo, *The first clause of v. 26 is the storm center in the interpretation of Romans 9–11 and of NT teaching about the Jews and their future.*
 - 2) There are a number of interpretations for this statement.
 - a) It is all Jews living on earth in the end-time when Christ returns.
 - b) It is the total number of the elect throughout history, Jews and Gentiles.
 - c) It is the total number of elect Jews, all of Israel's *remnants*.
 - d) Preferred meaning: It is the *deliverance* (salvation) of all Jews from the Tribulation by the Messiah (the Deliverer)
 - 1] Romans 11:26b-27 is cited from Isaiah 59:20-21 (and others), "*And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression,*" declares the LORD. "*And as for me, this is my covenant with them,*" says the LORD: "*My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or out of the mouth of your children's offspring,*" says the LORD, "*from this time forth and forevermore.*"
 - 2] John Walvoord, *The reference to Israel being saved is not in respect to freedom from guilt of sin or the redemptive truth, but rather that Israel will be delivered from their enemies at the time of the Second Coming... As brought out in the quotation in verse 26 that a Deliverer will come, this assures, on the one hand, a completion of God's purpose for the Gentiles, and, on the other hand, assures Israel's restoration after this period is over.*
 - 3] Henry Thiessen, *Nor do these promises mean that all Israelites that ever lived will be saved, for the Jew who dies without saving faith is lost as surely as the Gentile. They merely apply to those Israelites who will be left after the rebels have been purged out from among them (Ezekiel 20:37f.). In that day Israel will repent and turn to the Lord (Zechariah 12:10-13:1).*
 - 3) The time when this will take place.
 - a) John Walvoord, *What is being predicted here is that after the purpose of God for His church has been fulfilled, then God will deliver Israel (Romans 11:25-26). ...When the church is taken out of the world in fulfillment of God's purpose for the church, Israel's present experience of hardening will also be removed and revival will come to Israel (v. 25). The fulfillment predicted in Romans 11:25-27 is in keeping with the Abrahamic Covenant which promises that Israel will endure as a nation forever and they ultimately will be restored spiritually and to their land politically...Israel has a future as a nation and that future is linked to the second coming of Christ.*
 - b) John Witmer, *Many of them (Jewish rebels) will not be saved, as seen by the fact that the judgment of Israel, to follow soon after the Lord's return, will include the removal of Jewish rebels (Ezek. 20:34–38). Following this judgment God will then remove godlessness and sins from the nation as He establishes His New Covenant with regenerate Israel (cf. Jer. 31:33–34).*
 - c) After the Rapture of the Church when the Lord returns, Zechariah 12:10, *And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn.*

B. A summary of God's sovereign plan for Israel (28-32)

1. God's election (28), ***As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers.***
 - a. Unbelieving Jews are enemies of the Gospel for the sake of Gentiles.
 - 1) Romans 11:11, *So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous.*
 - 2) Grant Osborne, *When the natural branches were broken off, the wild shoots were grafted in (v. 17). God's plan of salvation was at work—the rejection of the Jews leading to the inclusion of the Gentiles, which in turn produces jealousy on the part of the Jews, leading to their conversion as well.*
 - 3) Israel became an enemy of the Gospel by temporarily rejecting Jesus as Messiah.
 - 4) John Stott, *...the Jews are not only rejecting the gospel but actively opposing it and doing their best to prevent you Gentiles from hearing it.*
 - 5) Douglas Moo, *...the Israel now at enmity with God because of the gospel is nevertheless the Israel to whom God has made irrevocable promises of blessing.*

- b. Jews are elected by God for the sake of the patriarchs.
 - 1) Deuteronomy 10:15, *Yet the LORD set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all peoples, as you are this day.*
 - 2) Romans 9:5, *To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.*
 - 3) Warren Wiersbe, *Election means grace, not merit.*
 - 4) God's love for Israel is not based on their works but on the patriarchs chosen by God's gracious promises.
2. God's faithfulness (29), ***For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.***
- a. *Gifts*
 - 1) These are Israel's privileges or gifts.
 - 2) They are noted in Romans 9:4-5, *They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.*
 - b. *Calling of God*
 - 1) 1 Corinthians 1:26, *For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.*
 - 2) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...we may understand God's calling of Israel to be His special people, to stand in a special relation to Himself, and to fulfil a special function in history.*
 - 3) Thomas Constable, *They have intimate connection with God's calling of Israel for a special purpose...He did not choose Israel for her goodness, and He will not abandon her for her badness.*
 - c. *Irrevocable*
 - 1) It means *not to take back, not repent or change one's mind.*
 - 2) 2 Corinthians 7:10, *For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation **without regret**, whereas worldly grief produces death.*
 - 3) Hebrews 7:21, *but this one was made a priest with an oath by the one who said to him: "The Lord has sworn and will **not change his mind**, 'You are a priest forever.'"*
 - 4) Romans 3:3, *What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God?*
 - 5) Grant Osborne, *His call is corporate; he will remain faithful to the nation. His judgment and rejection are reserved for individuals. He is faithful to the nation even though he has to condemn many within it.*
 - 6) C. E. B. Cranfield, *The ground of Paul's certainty that the Jews are still beloved of God, though under His wrath because of their unbelief and opposition to the gospel, is the faithfulness of God, that faithfulness, steadfastness, reliability, without which God would not be the righteous God He is.*
3. God's mercy
- a. It connects Jews and Gentiles (30-31), ***For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy.***
 - 1) Paul reminds Gentile Christians that they were brought to faith by God's mercy.
 - a) Ephesians 2:11-13, *Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called "the uncircumcision" by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*
 - b) Grant Osborne on disobedience of Gentiles, *They were indicted because of their refusal to follow God and their constant yielding of their minds and bodies to fleshly pursuits; note Romans 1:18-32.*
 - c) Because of the nation of Israel's rejection of Messiah, the Gospel was made available to the Gentiles, Romans 11:17-18, *But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.*
 - d) John Stott, *...it is because of disobedient Israel that disobedient Gentiles have received mercy,*

- 2) Jewish disobedience brought mercy to Gentiles which is now available to the nation of Israel.
 - a) John Witmer, *...the disobedience of the Jews enables God to show mercy to the Gentiles. Then, when that purpose is achieved, He will again show mercy to Israel corporately.*
 - b) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...the final destiny of the still disobedient Jews is that they too, like those Gentile Christians who were once disobedient, should receive mercy.*
 - c) Douglas Moo, *The Jews' disobedience, precisely because it leads to the inclusion of the Gentiles, has the purpose that they, too, might receive mercy...The salvation experienced by the Gentiles means that Israel is "now" in the position to experience again God's mercy.*
 - d) John Stott, *...it is because of this mercy to disobedient Gentiles that disobedient Jews will receive mercy too.*
 - e) Grant Osborne, *... the ongoing mission to the Jews in the present is an anticipation of the final harvest at the end of the age.*

- b. It is available to everyone (32), ***For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.***
 - 1) *consigned*
 - a) It means *close up together, hem in, enclose*. Literally, it is like a *fish in a net*.
 - b) In Romans 11:32, God has given them over to disobedience.
 - c) Note Galatians 3:22-23, *But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.*
 - d) Douglas Moo, *...this "enclosing" probably involves God's decision to "confine" people in the state that they have chosen for themselves.*
 - e) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...men are imprisoned in their disobedience in such a way that they have no possibility of escape except as God's mercy releases them.*

 - 2) The universality of sin
 - a) Proverbs 20:9, *Who can say, "I have made my heart pure; I am clean from my sin"?*
 - b) Romans 3:9, *What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin,*
 - c) Romans 3:23, *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

 - 3) The availability of mercy
 - a) John Stott, *For God's mercy is shown to the disobedient.*
 - b) Thomas Constable, *As everyone has been disobedient, Gentiles and Jews alike, so God will show mercy to all as well.*
 - c) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...mysterious though God's ways are and dark and indeed forbidding though they may sometimes now seem to us to be, the end of them is mercy, mercy pure and uncompromised.*
 - d) John Stott, *Paul has been at pains to argue that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles either in sin (3:9, 22) or in salvation (10:12). Now he writes that, as they have been together in the prison of their disobedience, so they will be together in the freedom of God's mercy.*

 - 4) *mercy on all*
 - a) Douglas Moo, *Paul is not saying that all human beings will be saved. Rather, he is saying that God has imprisoned in disobedience first Gentiles and now Jews so that he might bestow mercy on each of these groups of humanity. How many from each of these groups will ultimately be saved Paul does not say.*
 - b) John Stott, *...this expression (the all) in its context refers to the two groups who are contrasted throughout the chapter, and especially in verses 28 and 31, namely the 'they' and the 'you', the Jews and the Gentiles.*
 - c) There is mercy for all groups of people because of God's mercy which is received by placing faith in Christ alone.
 - d) F. F. Bruce, *...(mercy) on all without distinction, rather than on all without exception.*

DOXOLOGY

- A. Paul concludes Romans 9:1-11:32 with a doxology, a praise to God (33-36).
- B. He supplied a doxology at the end of the previous section (Romans 6:1-8:39), as well.
- C. The former section focused on sanctification of the people of God whereas the later focuses on the righteousness of God.
- D. Comments concerning Paul's doxology.
 - 1. C. E. B. Cranfield, *They* (verses 33-36) *are an eloquent expression of wonder and adoration before the mystery of God's ways, the majesty of His mercy and wisdom. For Paul at any rate the unflinching contemplation of the mystery of divine election cannot lead to gloom or fatalism, but must lead rather to a hymn of wondering praise, because, for him, election is a matter of the freedom and faithfulness of the merciful God.*
 - 2. Douglas Moo, *We should, then, perhaps understand Paul's praise to be motivated not so much by the hiddenness of God's ways but by the (admittedly partial) revelation of those mind-transcending ways to us.*
 - 3. John Stott, *Paul's horizons are vast. He takes in time and eternity, history and eschatology, justification, sanctification and glorification. Now he stops, out of breath. Analysis and argument must give way to adoration.*
 - 4. Grant Osborne, *God's incredible mercy and the conversion of people from every segment of humanity are more than Paul can handle, and so in the depths of religious ecstasy he composes a hymn to the grace and mercy of God. Far from frustration, he exhibits wonder and asks his readers to join him in rejoicing at the mystery of the inscrutable mind of God.*
 - 5. Warren Wiersbe, *Having contemplated God's great plan of salvation for Jews and Gentiles, all Paul could do was sing a hymn of praise. As someone has remarked, "Theology becomes doxology!"*
 - 6. William Barclay, *God gave us minds, and it is our duty to use those minds to think to the very limit of human thought. But it is also true that there are times when that limit is reached, and all that is left is to accept and to adore.*

ROMANS 11:33-36, PRAISE FOR GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO ISRAEL

- A. Praise for God's incomparable nature (33)
 - 1. Paul seems to be breathless as he considers the majesty of God (33a), ***Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!***
 - a. *Oh, the depth...*
 - 1) It carries the meaning of *inexhaustible, an emotional assertion of awe.*
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 2:10, *these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.*
 - 3) The depth is like one looking down into the Grand Canyon or up to the never ending sky.
 - b. He focuses on aspects of God's character as relating to humankind.
 - 1) *of the riches*
 - a) Ephesians 2:7, *so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*
 - b) Romans 2:4, *Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?*
 - c) Romans 9:23, *in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—*
 - d) Romans 10:12, *For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him.*
 - e) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...while it is possible that Paul had in mind here God's infinite resources generally, it is rather more likely that he was thinking specially of the abundance of His mercy and kindness (cf. vv. 31 and 32).*
 - f) It is hard not to think that Paul is contemplating God's grace poured out on both Jew and Gentile alike.
 - 2) *and wisdom*
 - a) It means *knowledge which makes possible skillful activity or performance, correct understanding.*
 - b) Ephesians 3:10, *so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.*
 - c) Thomas Constable, *God's "wisdom" is His ability to arrange His plan so it results in the good of all concerned and His own glory.*

- d) William Hendriksen, *God's wisdom is his ability to select the best means for the attainment of the highest goal. One might call it the divine efficiency evident in all his works.*
- e) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...the wisdom which informs God's purposes and His accomplishment of them.*
- f) Douglas Moo, *God's wisdom is an extremely rich biblical theme. But Paul is undoubtedly thinking of God's wisdom as it has been revealed and expressed in his plan for the salvation of human beings, note Colossians 2:2-3, that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

3) *and knowledge*

- a) It means *knowledge as an attribute of God.*
- b) Here, this knowledge is God's knowing us, not our knowing Him.
- c) Douglas Moo, *...God's knowledge here is that special relational "knowing" which comes to expression in his election of individuals to salvation (and perhaps also of Israel to her corporate blessing).*
- d) Note God's knowing in Galatians 1:15, *But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace,*

2. Paul is overwhelmed by God's working in creation (33b), ***How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!***

a. *Unsearchable*

- 1) It means *impossible to understand on the basis of careful examination or investigation, unfathomable.*
- 2) It is only used here in the New Testament.
- 3) Thomas Constable, *His decisions spring from logic that extends beyond human ability to comprehend.*

b. *Judgments*

- 1) It includes *decisions, decrees.*
- 2) It would include God's provision of grace worked out in and through Jews and Gentiles.
- 3) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...the judgments of the merciful God designed to further His purposes of mercy (cf. v. 32), do not conform to men's, even believing men's, preconceptions and defeat our efforts to keep track of them.*

c. *Inscrutable*

- 1) It may be translated *unsearchable* as is the previous word.
- 2) It means *incomprehensible, not to be tracked out* in regards to God's ways.
- 3) Thomas Constable, *His procedures are so complex that humans cannot discover them without the aid of divine revelation.*

d. *Ways*

- 1) It means *path, road.*
- 2) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...the ways which He takes in the accomplishment of His purposes, so His works or deeds...*

3. Understanding the relationship of 33a to 33b.

- a. The key words are interchangeable with the statement being parallel as in Jewish literature.
- b. Paul is making his statement in two ways in order to emphasize the majesty of God which can only be comprehended through divine revelation.
- c. Deuteronomy 29:29, *The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.*
- d. Douglas Moo, *...the second and third lines of Paul's hymn extol God's providential control of salvation history as something beyond human understanding.*
- e. Grant Osborne, *God knows us, but we do not understand God. All we can do is trust his greater wisdom as we encounter the mysteries of life. We will never solve them, but he will lead us over the rough roads.*

- B. God is self sufficient (34-35)
1. God can't be fully understood by anyone (34), ***“For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?”***
 - a. Paul cites Isaiah as an affirmation of verse 33.
 - 1) Isaiah 40:13, *Who has measured the Spirit of the LORD, or what man shows him his counsel?*
 - 2) Paul cites it again in 1 Corinthians 2:16, *“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?”*
 - 3) The questions raised are all rhetorical with Paul expecting an emphatic **no person except Jesus Christ.**
 - b. The answer to the first two questions is that mankind is not capable of instructing God.
 - 1) Job 36:22-23, *Behold, God is exalted in his power; who is a teacher like him? Who has prescribed for him his way, or who can say, ‘You have done wrong’?*
 - 2) Thomas Constable, *No one can know God’s mind fully. God is so wise that He has no need of counselors.*
 - 3) John Witmer, *...God is the sole Designer of His wise plan. No one knows His mind or gives Him advice.*
 - 4) John Stott, *We are not God’s counselor; he is ours.*
 2. God is in debt to no man (35), ***“Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?”***
 - a. Paul cites Job 41:11, *Job 41:11, Who has first given to me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is mine.*
 - b. The answer to the third question is that no man is owed anything by God.
 - 1) Thomas Constable, *The fact that God makes people His partners in executing His will in the world does not mean that He cannot get along without us. He can.*
 - 2) John Witmer, *God is indeed the Sovereign of all things, the One to whom all creatures are accountable and whom all should glorify. He is under no obligation to repay anyone, for no one has ever given Him anything.*
 - 3) C. E. B. Cranfield, *The purpose of the quotation is to underline the impossibility of a man’s putting God in his debt.*
 - 4) John Stott, *We are not God’s creditor; he is ours.*
 3. A strong affirmation by John Stott, *We depend entirely on him to teach and to save us. The initiative in both revelation and redemption lies in his grace. The attempt to reverse roles would be to dethrone God and to deify ourselves.*
- C. God is the center of all of His creation and due all glory (36), ***For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.***
1. Our creator God is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, all encompassing.
 - a. Consider other doxologies written by Paul.
 - 1) Colossians 1:16, *For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.*
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 8:6, *yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.*
 - b. Thomas Constable, *God is the source from which all things come, the means by which all things happen, and the goal toward which all things are moving. He is the originator, sustainer, and finisher of everything ultimately...*
 - c. John Witmer, *God is the first Cause, the effective Cause, and the final Cause of everything.*
 - d. John Stott, *If we ask where all things came from in the beginning, and still come from today, the answer must be, ‘From God.’ If we ask how all things came into being and remain in being, our answer is, ‘Through God.’ If we ask why everything came into being, and where everything is going, our answer must be, ‘For and to God.’ These three prepositions...indicate that God is the creator, sustainer and heir of everything, its source, means and goal.*
 2. The only appropriate response from God’s creatures is to give Him glory.
 - a. Consider other passages concerning glorifying God.
 - 1) Romans 16:27, *to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.*
 - 2) Ephesians 3:21, *to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*
 - 3) 1 Timothy 1:17, *To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*

- b. Douglas Moo, *What should be our response to our contemplation of God's supremacy in all the universe? Like Paul's, doxology.*
- c. John Stott, *It is because all things are from, through and to God that the glory must be his alone. This is why human pride is so offensive. Pride is behaving as if we were God Almighty, strutting round the earth as if we owned the place, repudiating our due dependence on God, pretending instead that all things depend on us, and thus arrogating to ourselves the glory which belongs to God alone.*
- d. Grant Osborne, *It is our privilege to magnify his name and to enjoy his loving presence every moment...here on earth.*

CONCLUSION

- J. Lanier Burns, *Ethnic Israel has a future, because God will accomplish salvation for Israel according to his new-covenant promise. This awaits the fullness of the Gentiles, when Israel's hardening will be removed and when Gentile provocation will have taken its course. All Israel will be saved in such a way that God's mercy will be evident to all.*
- Warren Wiersbe, *When Israel recovers from her "fall" and enters into her "fullness," the world will experience the riches of God's grace as never before. When Jesus Christ returns and sits on David's throne to reign over His kingdom, then Israel will be "reconciled" and "received," and it will be like a resurrection!*