

Romans 11:25-36

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. ²⁶ 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”;*

²⁷ *“and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.”*

²⁸ *As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. ³² For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.*

³³ *Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!*

³⁴ *“For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his counselor?”*

³⁵ *“Or who has given a gift to him
that he might be repaid?”*

³⁶ *For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.*

Romans 11:25-27

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. ²⁶ 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”;*

²⁷ *“and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.”*

“Lest you be wise in your own sight,” is worthy of addressing by itself. One of the mistakes we can make is to come up with reasons in our minds why God does what He does. In Job 38:2, God says, *“Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?”* We should not presume to understand God or to judge His choices; He is the Creator, and we are His creation. It is an tempting option for the curious mind to arrive at such conclusions, but when we remember Isaiah 55:9, how His thoughts and ways are higher than our thoughts and ways, we are put in our rightful place as a creation that accepts what comes down from God’s sovereign hand.

Another one of the mistakes we make is to think we see ourselves with accuracy. Paul had wisdom from the Lord to recognize this fact. In 1 Corinthians 4:3-4, he says, *“But with me it is a very small thing that I*

should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. ⁴For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted. It is the Lord who judges me." He understood that his mind will easily pass over and excuse his own "small sins" and but put a magnifying glass on another's "big sins." That describes each of us. Our members, our minds, and emotions, are still wired to assign fault to someone else for our shortcomings. We cannot trust our judgement or evaluation of ourselves because we do not see ourselves accurately; we either fall far short of who we are or think too much of who we are. We may think we are wise in figuring life, faith, parenting, marriage, but our God the Father and God the Son both called us sheep in need of a shepherd. Sheep are incredibly stupid animals and would quickly die without their shepherd. I think that is a fair comparison of us as His creation to God as Creator.

Next, Paul says, *"I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers."* He wants us to be aware and yet at the same time, recognize that this hardness of the Jews for the sake of the Gentiles is a mystery. Here we have something we don't understand but that does not make it any less true. The mystery to which he is referring is *"a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in."* Paul uses the term, "partial hardening" because there are still those who came to Christ, and those who are coming to Christ in this time before Christ's second coming. The "fullness of the Gentiles" is a way of saying that God has determined when all the Gentiles that He has chosen to come in – it will be full or complete with the Gentiles.

Then in verse 26, Paul makes a statement "all Israel will be saved". If we take this verse by itself, it implies that every person who is Jewish will be saved, or another interpretation – the nation of Israel will be saved with no regard to individual faith. But scripture must support scripture so we seek to read other scripture to properly understand this piece of scripture. First, within Romans itself, Paul has made very clear in chapters 3 through 8 that *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by His grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"*. Given this, Paul would not contradict himself, so then what is he referring to? He is referring to those that God has chosen within the nation of Israel, within the Jews. He quotes a passage from Isaiah 59:20-21 which says, *"And a Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression," declares the Lord.* ²¹ *"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."*

We recognize from reading the New Testament that this did not occur with Jesus' first coming, and therefore it must refer to a later time. Gotquestions.com addresses "all Israel" by providing insight with other prophetic scriptures into the timeline:

"The details of this deliverance are filled out in passages such as Zechariah 8—14 and Revelation 7—19, which speak of end-times Israel at Christ's return. The key verse describing the coming to faith of the future remnant of Israel is Zechariah 12:10, "I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They

will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son.” This occurs at the end of the tribulation prophesied in Daniel 9:24–27. The apostle John references this event in Revelation 1:7. The faithful remnant of Israel is epitomized in Revelation 7:1–8. These faithful ones the Lord will save and bring back to Jerusalem “in truth and righteousness” (Zechariah 8:7–8, NASB).”¹

Romans 11:28-32

As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy. ³² For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

Paul shows here that not responding to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior puts the Jews in a position of being enemies with God, but it is only for the sake of the Gentiles who are to come into the family of God. God still sees His beloved elect, His chosen people beginning with Abraham and through whom His Son was born. The gifts which are the promises and covenants He made with Israel are irrevocable – they cannot be taken away. God is faithful even when they are not. Verse 29 is another verse that is frequently taken out of context and used to refer to the spiritual gifts we receive, and the calling God places upon our lives. The irrevocable gift that we have experienced as Gentiles is the gift of eternal life through our ongoing faith in Christ Jesus.

Verses 30-31 speak to the Gentiles as having been disobedient by having other gods that were worshipped, and their cultural traditions that elevated man-made idols over the true living God. Yet in God’s plan, He had chosen some of these to be drawn to His Son Jesus, and His promises are never void nor are they ever overturned. And because this was His plan, there were and still are some who receive His mercy and come to faith in Jesus. In that same way, the Jews who have been given the promise will also experience His mercy when their time of disobedience is over.

Then we read verse 32, *For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.* Again, it is important that we read this verse in context to everything else Paul has been saying. Here is what BibleRef.com says about this passage:

“This verse is a profound declaration of truth, but it must be understood in the narrow context of this specific passage. Paul is not teaching that *every single person*, of all time, will receive God's mercy. This idea, known as universalism, would contradict what Paul has written previously: that the only way to be saved is by accepting Christ (Romans 10:9–10). Paul has made abundantly clear that the opportunity to receive God's mercy, instead of the deserved

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/all-Israel-saved.html>

payment for our sin (Romans 6:23), is something accessible only through Jesus Christ.

Instead, the word "all" should be understood in reference to the two people groups Paul has been discussing throughout this chapter: the Jews and the Gentiles. God has turned both groups—"all"—over to their disobedience for a time so that people from both groups may receive mercy from Him in the right time through faith in Christ. What does it mean that God consigned each group to disobedience? In Romans 1, Paul described God's reaction to the sinful unbelief of the Gentiles. He gave them up or turned them over to their own sinful desires (Romans 1:24, 26, 28). In a similar way, God is described as having hardened the Israelites in their initial unbelief in Christ for a season (Romans 11:25). In the end, though, God will show mercy to people in both groups— to "all"—by His grace and through their faith in Christ.”²

Romans 11:33-36

³³ Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

*³⁴ “For who has known the mind of the Lord,
or who has been his counselor?”*

*³⁵ “Or who has given a gift to him
that he might be repaid?”*

³⁶ For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Paul stands back and admires the attributes of the Lord our God. He reminds us that we cannot possibly understand how God works, that we cannot guess His next move. We have never been nor will ever be able to counsel or offer advice to God. Everything flows from His completeness and fullness; He needs nothing. And for this reason alone, all glory belongs to Him. Sometimes, we want to only give Him honor, praise, and glory when He has done something with us, through us or for us but He is worthy of all because He is the One True God whom we cannot fathom, comprehend nor understand.

² <https://www.bibleref.com/Romans/11/Romans-11-32.html>