

Paul reveals that Israel is partially hardened until all the Gentiles come in, then Israel will be saved by Zion's Deliverer, who will remove Jacob's sin fulfilling God's covenant faithfulness (Romans 11:25-27).

[G] ²⁵ [For]

[Ft] [M] I don't want [PAI] you to be ignorant [PAN] of this mystery, brothers and sisters,
[Ed] so that you will [PAS] not be conceited [I]:

[In] [That] 1.) [A partial hardening has come upon [RAI] Israel]

2.) [until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in [AAS]].

3.) [P] ²⁶ And in this way all Israel will be saved [FPI], [I] as it is written [RAI],

a.) The Deliverer [PMP] will come [FAI] [from Zion];

b.) he will turn [FAI] godlessness away [from Jacob].

a.) ²⁷ And this will be my covenant with them

b.) when I take away [AMS] their sins.

Israel's rejection benefits the Gentiles, but it won't always be like that since they are elect, and God, who's call is irrevocable, shows mercy to the disobedient (Romans 11:28-32).

a.) ²⁸ [Regarding the gospel], they are enemies [for your advantage],

b.) [A] but [regarding election], they are loved [because of the patriarchs],

[G] ²⁹ since 1.) God's gracious gifts

2.) [S] and calling are irrevocable.

[G] ³⁰ [For] [I] As a.) you once disobeyed [AAI] God

b.) [A] but now have received mercy [API] through their disobedience,

[I] ³¹ so they too a.) have now disobeyed [AAI],

b.) resulting in mercy to you,

[I] so that they also may now receive mercy [APS].

[G] ³² For [C] God has imprisoned [AAI] all [in disobedience]

[E] so that he may have mercy [AAS] on all.

The mystery of Israel's election and mercy provoke praise and glory to God (Romans 11:33-36).

a.) ³³ Oh, the depth of the riches

a.) and the wisdom and the knowledge of God!

b.) How unsearchable his judgments

b.) and untraceable his ways!

a.) ³⁴ For who has known the mind of the Lord?

a.) Or who has been his counselor?

b.) ³⁵ And who has ever given to God,

b.) that he should be repaid?

a.) ³⁶ For from him and through him

b.) and to him are all things.

c.) To him be the glory forever. Amen.

This is how I parse Greek verbs:

- I use a three-letter combination in square brackets (e.g. [PMI] for Present, Middle, Indicative) after a verb, which I underline.
 1. First letter indicates the tense. Tense deals both with time and kind of action.
 2. Second letter indicates the voice. The relation of the subject or agent to the action.
 3. Third letter indicates the mood, participle, or infinitive.
- Tense:
 - P: present, continuous or linear action.
 - I: imperfect, continuous action in the past.
 - F: future, both progressive and punctiliar action.
 - A: aorist, expresses punctiliar action that has happened.
 - R: perfect, represents an action that is complete but has an ongoing resultant state of being.
- Voice:
 - A: active, reflects the subject that performs the action.
 - M: middle, the agent participates in the results of the action.
 - P: passive, subject is being acted upon by someone or something else.
- Mood/participle/infinitive:
 - I: indicative, reality, that which is actually occurring.
 - S: subjunctive, likely to occur.
 - M: imperative, a command that is possible.
 - P: participle, participles are verbal adjectives that behave like a verb and an adjective..
 - N: infinitive, verbal nouns that use the preposition "to", and they can also be used with "ing".

This is how I indicate the function of conjunctions:

- I put a letter in square brackets before a clause to indicate a logical relationship.
 - [S] - SERIES, Each proposition makes an independent contribution to the whole (and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [P] - PROGRESSION, Each proposition is a further step toward a climax (then, and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [A] - ALTERNATIVE, Each proposition expresses an opposite possibility arising from a situation (or, but while..).
 - [W] [Ed] - WAY-END (ACTION-MANNER), Statement of an action and one which tells more explicitly what is involved in carrying out this action (in that, by).
 - [I] [I] - COMPARISON, Statement that clarifies an action or idea by showing what it is like (even as, as...so).
 - [-] [+] - NEGATIVE-POSITIVE, The relationship between two alternatives in which one is denied so the other is enforced, implicit in contrasting statements (not...but).
 - [Gn] [Sp] - GENERAL-SPECIFIC, Statement of a whole and one or more statements which set forth parts of the whole.
 - [Ft] [In] - FACT-INTERPRETATION, Statement and clarifying statement; does not set forth a distinguishable part of the preceding whole.
 - [G] - GROUND, Statement followed by the argument or reason on which it stands; supporting proposition follows the supported proposition (for, since, because).
 - [I'] - INFERENCE, Supporting statement followed by the conclusion drawn from it; supporting proposition precedes the supported proposition (therefore, wherefore, consequently).
 - [C] [E] - CAUSE-EFFECT (ACTION-RESULT), One action and another action which results from the first as an automatic consequence (that, so that, with the result that).
 - [C?] [E] - CONDITIONAL, Like cause-effect except existence of the cause is only potential (if...then, if, except...).
 - [M] [Ed] - MEANS-END (ACTION-PURPOSE), One action and another that is intended as the goal or purpose of the first (in order that, that, lest, to the end that).
 - [T] - TEMPORAL, Proposition and the occasion when it occurs (when, after, before).
 - [L] - LOCATIVE, Proposition and the place where it can be true (where, wherever).
 - [Adv] - ADVERSATIVE, Main clause that stands despite a contrary statement (although, yet, but, nevertheless).
 - [Q] [A] - QUESTION-ANSWER, Statement of question and answer to that question (question mark ?).
 - [S] [R] - SITUATION-RESPONSE, The relationship between a situation in one clause and a response in another.
 - [B] [L] - BILATERAL, A proposition which supports propositions in both directions, rarely used.

This is how I use colour highlighting:

- **Orange**: structure indicator, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- **Yellow**: verbs, Greek, and Scripture reference.
- **Green**: keywords.
- **Red**: repeated words.
- **Pink**: imperatives.
- **Blue**: main idea.

On my sermon preparation sheet, these are the questions and an explanation:

1. How has the author organised this passage?

- a) An outline: The author's organization (or structure) is a way of talking about the shape or form of a biblical passage. Beneath the surface of each passage is an underlying arrangement of material and a logic that the author has used to organize the passage. And each part of the passage has a role to play in that structure.
- b) Tools: Identify the text type, and any grammatical tools used to identify the structure.
- c) The emphasis: The structure will reveal an emphasis that the author is making.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?

- a) Literary context: How do the passage that comes before and the passage that comes after relate to your passage?
- b) Historical context: The historical situation or circumstances experienced by the first audience at the time when the book was written.
- c) Cultural context: The setting in the daily life of the people/characters in the book and how that will have been understood by the first audience. This is distinct from historical context in that it does not relate to a particular audience in a particular place at a particular time, but the details of life that the people/characters in the text had in common. Anything that requires extra-biblical knowledge should be treated skeptically.
- d) Biblical context: Is the author citing or alluding to some previously written Biblical passage? What connections could the author have reasonably expected his first audience to make.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

The author's main point is a way of talking about the aim of a passage as a whole. It can be descriptive or prescriptive. It is not simply a summary statement. But rather, it is the idea of which the author is trying to persuade his audience. As you work on articulating the author's argument, please keep in mind that it needs to be specific enough to the passage that it clearly comes from the particular passage (and not any other passage), it is for the first audience, it should be one single sentence that is both short and clear, and captures the argument of the passage.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

What part of the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) is in view? Every part of the Bible, every passage of Scripture, in some way relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ. What parts of the passage connect to the gospel? The connection must be legitimate and textually driven.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

6. What applications will you make? a) To believers, b) To unbelievers.

The main point of a sermon is the fundamental statement of what you, as a speaker today, are trying to convince your audience today. It will certainly be intimately related to the author's main point for his original audience and it will consider the gospel connection. It should be well reasoned and, perhaps, articulated as the result of proof (so depending on premises and building arguments).

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.

On my sermon preparation sheet, this is how questions relate to one another:

- 1 a) should be driven by the text.
- 1 c) should be driven from the outline in 1 a).
- 2) should be directly relevant to 1 c).
- 3) cannot be disconnected from 1 c), and should be clarified by 2).
- 4) must be found in the text.
- 5) cannot be disconnected from 3), and should be driven by 4).
- 6) should flow from 5).
- 7) should structurally relate to 1 a), and make the argument in 5).

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Romans 11:25-36

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) *An outline*, b) *Tools*, c) *The emphasis*.

a) 1) Paul reveals that Israel is partially hardened until all the Gentiles come in, then Israel will be saved by Zion's Deliverer, who will remove Jacob's sin fulfilling God's covenant faithfulness (Romans 11:25-27).

2) Israel's rejection benefits the Gentiles, but it won't always be like that since they are elect, and God, who's call is irrevocable, shows mercy to the disobedient (Romans 11:28-32).

3) The mystery of Israel's election and mercy provoke praise and glory to God (Romans 11:33-36).

b) I identified discourse and used syntax analysis. Paying attention to the verbs, conjunctions, and prepositions. The structure emerged from the repetition of the word all in Romans 11:26, 32, 36, creating a 3 part division where all Israel will be saved (Romans 11:25-27), God has imprisoned all so that he may have mercy on all (Romans 11:28-32), and to him are all things (Romans 11:33-36).

c) It is God's plan that both Gentiles and Israel will be saved, as a display of His mercy, compelling all to praise His glory.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage? a) *Literary*, b) *Historical*, c) *Cultural*, d) *Biblical*.

a) In Romans 9-11, Paul deals with God's righteousness in His dealings with Israel. Romans 11:25-36, resolves the tension between God's promises and Israel's current state. This matters because God, who fulfils His promises, is worthy of praise. In Romans 11:25-36, Paul brings a long discourse on salvation to a close. Then in Romans 12, Paul lists a series of practical exhortations. This matters because as it shows that salvation results in practical Christian living.

b) The Roman church likely composed of both Jewish and Gentile believers, with Gentiles in the majority. This matters because, Paul's warning against boasting is not theoretical, but a pastoral response to ethnic-spiritual pride. Paul writes so they will not be conceited.

c) Jews expected exclusive covenant blessing. Gentile perception of Jewish privilege and stubbornness. The idea of a temporary hardening upon Israel and salvation coming to Gentiles would have been counter-intuitive. This matters because it shows the plan is entirely God's, from His mercy, and for His glory.

d) Romans 11:26-27a cites Isaiah 59:20-21. In Isaiah 59, the prophet describes a scene of rampant sin and injustice in Israel, creating a separation from God. The Lord Himself is appalled and intervenes as a divine warrior to bring salvation and redemption because there is no human intercessor. In Romans 11, Paul's deliverer is Jesus, who comes to a sin-stricken people from the heavenly Zion to effectively turn godlessness away from Jacob.

Romans 11:27b cites Isaiah 27:9. In Isaiah 27, there is a prophecy about the future restoration, specifically that the punishment and atonement for Jacob's sin will result in the removal of idolatrous altars. In Romans 11, godlessness will be turned away, grounding Israel's future salvation in atonement not national privilege.

Romans 11:34-35 cites Job 41:11 and Isaiah 40:13. In Isaiah 40:13, God's unrivalled power and wisdom as the Creator is utterly beyond human comprehension or counsel, and is celebrated. In Job 41:11, God's absolute sovereignty is over all creation, everything under heaven belongs to Him and He owes nothing to anyone. In Romans 11, Paul builds a case for God's sovereign freedom and our response to praise His glory.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

God's plan to save both Gentile and Jew puts His mercy on display compelling all to praise His glory.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

The Deliverer from Zion is the crucified and risen Jesus, the agent through whom God enacts His sovereign mercy, taking away the sins of both Jew and Gentile and, in doing so, displays His unsearchable wisdom.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

God's mysterious plan of mercy in Christ compels us to worship His majesty.

6. What applications will you make? a) *To believers*, b) *To unbelievers*.

a) As you learn more about God's saving mercy in Christ, your life must be transform towards habitual praise.

b) You need to be delivered from the sin separating you from God, so turn to Christ the deliverer, who, in mercy, stands at the ready to save.

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) *Sermon outline*, b) *Sermon title*.

b) Mystery, mercy, and majesty.

a) 1) Mystery revealed (Romans 11:25-27).

2) Mercy given (Romans 11:28-32).

3) Majesty praised (Romans 11:33-36).

Pray

Romans 11:25-36

²⁵ For I don't want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you will not be conceited: That 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 turn godlessness away from Jacob.

²⁷ And this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.

²⁸ Regarding the gospel, they are enemies for your advantage, but regarding election, they are loved because of the patriarchs, ²⁹ since God's gracious gifts and calling are irrevocable. ³⁰ For As you once disobeyed God but now have received mercy through their disobedience, ³¹ so they too have now disobeyed, resulting in mercy to you, so that they also may now receive mercy. ³² For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may have mercy on all.

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

³⁴ For who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has been his counselor?

³⁵ And who has ever given to God,
that he should be repaid?

³⁶ For from him and through him
and to him are all things.

To him be the glory forever. Amen.

Introduction

This week, the world watched as a new ceasefire was signed between Israel and Hamas. A moment of fragile, earthly peace that still leaves us with profound, spiritual questions. When we see Israel in the news, we are inevitably driven to ask, What is God doing? Is this all just politics, or is He still working out a purpose for His ancient people?

These are not new questions. In fact, they are the very questions the Apostle Paul unlocks for us in **Romans 11:25-36**. He gives us no political forecast, but a divine revelation. He pulls back the curtain on God's eternal plan to answer our doubts, humble our pride, and capture our worship.

This morning, I want to argue to you that God's mysterious plan of mercy in Christ compels us to worship His majesty.

To see this, we will follow the God-given structure of the text.

First, in **Romans 11:25-27**, we will witness the Mystery Revealed. God's hidden timetable for Israel and His promised Deliverer.

Second, in **Romans 11:28-32**, we will discover the Mercy Displayed. The stunning, sovereign engine of grace that powers this entire plan.

And finally, in **Romans 11:33-36**, we will be led to Majesty Praised. The only fitting response to such an unsearchable God.

So this morning, let's look beyond the fleeting headlines and look into the eternal word of God. Let's turn together to **Romans 11:25**.

1) **Mystery revealed** (Romans 11:25-27)

Paul reveals that Israel is partially hardened until all the Gentiles come in. Then Israel will be saved by Zion's Deliverer. Who will remove Jacob's sin fulfilling God's covenant faithfulness.

Paul confronts ignorance head on. He unveils a mystery. A mystery in Scripture is not a riddle to be solved. It is a truth, once hidden in the Old Testament, now revealed in the New.

The mystery is, a partial hardening has come upon Israel. What does this mean? As a nation Israel has rejected Jesus as their messiah. Their heart as hard. But it is a partial hardening, in that, there has always been Jews saved in every age. As a nation they have largely reject Jesus as their messiah. And so, the nation of Israel cannot be said to presently be in a favourable position with God.

But has Israel ceased to be the apple of the Lord's eye? No. Hear the word of the Lord in **Amos 9:8**, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob. Or **Romans 11:2**, God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Or **Romans 11:29**, God's gracious gifts and calling are irrevocable. God has a promised plan for his chosen people. A glorious future for them. A national salvation for them.

How? Their hardening is temporary. Until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. God is saving a people for himself from every tribe and tongue. And when that number is complete... then... all Israel will be saved.

How will this happen? It will happen by Zion's Deliverer. Zion's Deliverer is Jesus Christ. The crucified one. The risen one. He was sent from the heavenly Zion. And He came to redeem His people. That people includes His people Israel. And indeed all who call upon His name.

And so he died for their sins. And in the future... when they accept him as their Lord and Saviour... he will remove their sins. He will turn godlessness away from Jacob. He will fulfil the covenant promises of God to them. The New Covenant. The covenant of grace. The promise of a land. A king. And an everlasting kingdom.

This is the mystery revealed. Not nullification, but confirmation. Not a failed plan, but a unfolding plan. God's covenant faithfulness stands. His word is sure. And in this mystery, we already see the edges of His mercy.

How is this possible for a people so hardened? How can a stubborn nation be saved? The answer is not found in their potential, but in God's character. The answer is mercy. And that mercy is what we must now see.

2) **Mercy given** (Romans 11:28-32)

Israel's rejection benefits the Gentiles, but it won't always be like that since they are elect, and God, who's call is irrevocable, shows mercy to the disobedient.

Israel's present rejection is to our advantage. Their no to the Messiah swung heaven's door open. In this age, this dispensation of grace, God beckons the nations. He calls Gentiles to enter in. A profound benefit. A glorious truth.

But this age will end. It is temporary. When the full number of Gentiles, the complete tally of those God intends to save, are gathered in, His salvific focus will turn once more to Israel.

Why? How can we be sure? Because His people are elect. And God will have His elect. His purpose is fixed. His will is unstoppable. Not even human rebellion will thwart Him. National hardening can not void His choice. He will have them. He will bring them into His fold of grace.

God's gracious gifts and calling are irrevocable. The gifts. The law. The covenants. The temple. The patriarchs. The Messiah Himself. The gifts were given. Not earned. And His call. His effectual summons. To Abraham. To Isaac. To Jacob. His invitation. His word. Still stands. For He is faithful.

Irrevocable. It means He will not take it back. He will not call it in. His gifts are not temporary loans. His call is not a tentative offer. Unchangeable. Unalterable. Un-revocable. They stand. They are firm. They are forever.

This is the divine engine of mercy. What is mercy? Mercy is God withholding from what we deserve. We deserve wrath. Judgment. But God's nature is to show mercy to the disobedient. Why? Because there is no one else to show mercy to. All have sinned. All are disobedient. You. Me. Israel. The Gentiles. God has bound all men over to disobedience. He has imprisoned every soul in the cell of its own rebellion. Why? So that he may have mercy on all.

So here is the glimmer of light for every soul in darkness. You have disobeyed. You are in the prison of your sin. But God's character is clearer. He is a God who shows mercy. The door of your prison is opened by mercy. And mercy has a name. Jesus Christ. You cannot save yourself. Not by effort. Not by performance. Not by perfection. But you can cry out to the one who shows mercy. You can turn to the Deliverer. For He stands ready. Ready to save.

This mercy is no theory. It is a triumph. A triumph of grace so profound... so vast... so unsearchable... that it can only end one way. It ends in awe. It ends in worship. It ends in the outburst of praise that awaits us in our final point.

3) Majesty praised (Romans 11:33-36)

The mystery of Israel's election and mercy provoke praise and glory to God.

We have seen the mystery. We have received the mercy. Now... we meet the majesty. The only rightful response is unashamed... unrestrained... praise.

Behold the chain of grace. The deep mystery of God's plan... the stunning mercy of God's heart... these perfections provoke our praise. When we truly see who God is... what He has done... praise is not a duty. It is an eruption. It is the only sane response to sovereign grace.

This is the pattern of Scripture. True theology leads to doxology. Moses saw God's power at the Red Sea... and he sang a song of triumph. David considered God's steadfast love and majesty... and his psalms burst into blessing. Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up... and he cried out in worship. The twenty-four elders in Revelation see the Lamb who was slain... and they fall down and cast their crowns before Him. And here... Paul... grasping the unsearchable plan of God... does the same. He erupts. Oh, the depth! He does not analyse. He adores. He does not systematize. He worships.

Consider the depths of God. The depth of His riches. His wisdom. His knowledge. We stand at the cliff edge of His being... and we peer into an ocean that has no floor. His judgments are unsearchable. You cannot fathom them. His ways are untraceable. You cannot map them.

And so Paul asks the questions that humble every human intellect. Who has known the mind of the Lord? No one. Who has been His counselor? No one. Who has ever given to God that God should owe him? No one. We are the recipients. Not the initiators. We are the debtors. Not the creditors.

For from him are all things. He is the source. The fountainhead of existence. Through him are all things. He is the sustainer. Holding every atom together. To him are all things. He is the goal. Why creation exists. From Him. Through Him. To Him. All things. All history. All salvation. All mystery. All mercy. It all ends in His praise. To him be the glory forever. Amen.

This is the final destination of God's great plan. Not just a saved Israel. Not just a redeemed Gentile. But a satisfied God. A glorified God. A God praised by the very vessels of mercy He created from nothing.

So let the mystery silence your doubt. Let the mercy humble your soul. Let the majesty thrill your heart. This is your God. Stand in awe. And worship.

This is the God we proclaim. This is the gospel we preach. The mystery, the mercy, the majesty. It all converges at the cross.

How does the passage connect to the gospel?

This is the God we proclaim. This is the gospel we preach. The mystery, the mercy, the majesty. It all converges at the cross.

The mystery is a Person. The Deliverer from Zion is Jesus. Mercy has a name. It is Jesus. God withholds from us what we deserve because His Son stands in our place and absorbs the wrath of the Father. God's mysterious plan of mercy in Christ compels us to worship His majesty.

Believers, how ought you to live?

You have beheld the majesty. Now you must be changed by it. This truth is for Monday morning. Your life must transform towards habitual praise.

Cultivate awe in your heart. Your life is a living doxology. Make it sound like one. Start here. Sing with your whole heart. Then, let it spill into your week. Give thanks for your coffee. Acknowledge His grace in a closed deal. Whisper a prayer of awe at a sunset. Speak of His mercy to your children. Let your life become a continuous eruption of praise for the majesty you have seen. This is your purpose. This is your privilege.

Unbelievers, how ought you to respond?

You have heard of a deep mystery. A vast mercy. A breathtaking majesty. This is not a theory for you to consider. It is a person for you to confront.

You are the disobedient one. You are imprisoned in the cell of your own rebellion. You have tried effort. You have trusted performance. You have chased perfection. And you know the cell is still locked. Your potential is not the answer. Your résumé is not the key.

But God's character is the answer. And He is a God who shows mercy.

Behold the Deliverer. Jesus Christ. He came from heaven's Zion to break into your prison. The cross is where He took the wrath you deserve. The empty tomb is where He proved the mercy He offers.

The door is open. It is opened by mercy. And mercy commands you now.

Turn from your sin. Turn to the Saviour. Cry out to the one who shows mercy. You cannot save yourself. Not by effort. Not by performance. Not by perfection. But you can call on the name of the one who can.

He stands ready. He will not cast you out. Come to Christ. Receive the mercy that compels eternal praise. Walk the sawdust trail. Bend the knee. Come now.

Conclusion

And so we see that the week's headlines of a fragile peace are understood only in light of heaven's unshakable plan.

We have seen that God's mysterious plan of mercy in Christ compels us to worship His majesty.

We have witnessed the Mystery Revealed in God's timetable for Israel, discovered the Mercy Displayed to all the disobedient, and been led to the Majesty Praised as the final goal of all things.

Believers, let this compel your life of habitual praise.

Unbelievers, let this compel you to turn and receive this mercy.

The God who holds the mystery of nations in His hands holds out His mercy to you tonight. Receive it. Worship Him.

The benediction

Romans 11:33-36,

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

³⁴ For who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has been his counselor?

³⁵ And who has ever given to God,
that he should be repaid?

³⁶ For from him and through him
and to him are all things.

To him be the glory forever. Amen.