

Romans 11.22-36

"Soli Deo Gloria"

Frederick the Great > King of Prussia > questioned truthfulness of the Bible
 Asked CHAPLAIN "So often, when I have asked for proof of the inspiration of the Bible, I have been given some large tome which I have no time or desire to read. If your Bible is really from God, you should be able to demonstrate the fact simply."
 CHAPLAIN "Your Majesty, I can give you that proof in one word"
 FREDERICK "What is that magic word which carries such a weight of proof?"
 CHAPLAIN "Israel" – the King was SILENT

History of ISRAEL > Amazing story of SURVIVAL > God's Purposeful Protection

Historian ARNOLD TOYNBEE called Israel a "Fossil Civilization"
 NEVER COULD FIT ISRAEL INTO ANY OF HIS THEORIES OF HISTORY

Chs. 9-11 > Question > Why did majority in Israel reject Jesus their Messiah?
 Ch. 9 > Past: God's Election // Ch. 10 > Present: Israel's Rejection
 Ch. 11 > Future: God's Restoration

1. Warnings from God - 2. Witness for God - 3. Worship of God

OLIVE TREE > Hosea > ISRAEL'S "splendor will be like an olive tree" 14.6
 Paul speaking about PLACE OF ISRAEL IN GOD'S PLAN > not Individuals

1. Warnings from God

a. Holiness God does not NEED Jew OR Gentile > both branches may be cut off

11.20 "Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either."

PAUL "I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow"
 1 Corinthians 3.6,7

v. 30-31 Just as you who were at one time disobedient to God have now received mercy as a result of their disobedience, so they too have now become disobedient in order that they too may now receive mercy as a result of God's mercy to you.

NONE ARE OBEDIENT > Disobedient 3 X's > Jew AND Gentile
 3 X's credit for Salvation > God's MERCY > Salvation ALL OF GRACE

v. 24 “wild by nature” > HS in Uganda Rowdy Auditorium > “you’re wild!”
 SILENCED > Offended > Chaplain: “Now they will not listen to you”
 My Def: Steve Martin “wild and crazy guy” / Them: beastly, savage, sub-human

THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY THAT ANYONE CAN ESCAPE THEIR SIN
 v. 32 “For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy
 on them all.” > without distinction > Jew and Gentile
 BUILT OUR OWN PRISON of Sin / Only God’s Mercy can SET US FREE

SIN Lowers EVERYONE to Same NEEDY LEVEL / Only God’s Mercy can Lift

b. Humility

v. 18 “do not boast” / v. 20 “do not be arrogant” / v. 25 “you may not be conceited

v. 22 Consider the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but
 kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also
 will be cut off.

MURRAY “There is no security in the bond of the gospel apart from perseverance

POSSIBLE Lampstand Removed – Jesus to Church at Ephesus – Revelation 2.5
 If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place.

SURVEY of Church History > Take Warning against Presumption Seriously

GREAT CHURCHES of 1st C > Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus,
 Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea > ALL GONE
 RUINS of WHAT USED to be > Today Turkic World is Least Reached by Gospel

CENTER of FAITH Shifted to North Africa > GREAT HEROES of FAITH
 Cyprian, Origen, Tertullian, Athanasius, Augustine
 ISLAM SWEEP ACROSS N. Africa > Knocked down Church like House of Cards

NESTORIANS founded churches in CENTRAL ASIA > into EAST ASIA
 One Russian pastor bragged about Stone Crosses found on bottom of Lake Issykul
 USE THIS FOR APOLOGETICS / DEFENSE OF OUR FAITH
 Double Edged Sword > TRUE Christianity was in Central Asia long before Islam
 WHY Gospel Symbol thrown to bottom of a Lake? Little Glory down in the Kelp

EUROPE > Great Cathedrals now Museums > No longer houses of Living Faith

BEWARE OF PRESUMPTION > Apostle Peter says to us even today 2 Pt 1.10

“my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure”

TRUE KNOWLEDGE leads to Humility > Humility is Honesty not Hypocrisy

STOTT “The complete antidote to pride is truth”

If Jew and Gentile see their true position before God > No Room for Boasting

TRUE FOR CHURCHES / ALSO FOR INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIANS

Massive Oil Tankers that sail world’s oceans > Need 10 miles to FULL STOP

Perhaps you look like your going full speed ahead / Engines cut 5 miles back

CALVIN “It is not enough to have embraced only once the grace of God, unless during the whole course of your life you follow his call. Those who have been enlightened by the Lord must always turn their minds to perseverance.”

c. Hope

UNBELIEVABLE IMAGE > Ezekiel 37 “dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones!”

Prophet Preached to Valley of Dry Bones > AMAZING RESTORATION

bone by bone, sinew by sinew > they came to life and stood on their feet!

PICTURES PAUL’S PROPHETIC PROMISE v. 26 “all Israel will be saved”

ONLY POWER OF GOD COULD BRING DRY BONES TO LIFE

11.1 “Did God reject his people? By no means!”

11.11 “Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all!”

v. 25 “I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved”

DRUMROLL PLEASE!! Paul wants attention “I do not want you to be ignorant”

MYSTERY – not UNKNOWABLE, or Secret for Initiated / Mystery Cults

// Masonic Lodges of 1st Century> Secret Handshakes, Oaths & Funny Clothes

But an OPENED SECRET > Truth from God now Publicly Revealed

PRIVILEGED POSITION > v. 27 “covenant” / v. 28 “election” “the patriarchs”

v. 29 “God's gifts and his call are irrevocable.”

9.4 “The people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises.”

v. 23 “God is able to graft them in again” > EMPH “power of God”

v. 24 If the wild branches could be grafted in HOW MUCH MORE
can the Natural Branches BE RESTORED to their OWN TREE

THERE IS NO ROOM FOR DESPAIR > Hope in Faithful, Covenant God

PROMISE OF JESUS “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.” John 6.37

JESUS WEPT OVER JERUSALEM saying “I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’” Luke 13.35

In Sadness > HOPE > THEY WILL SEE HIM AGAIN! THEY WILL BELIEVE

“Israel” = THROUGHOUT ROMANS has meant Ethnic or National Israel

9.3,4 PAUL: “my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel”

“All” = not every single one but the GREAT MASS OF JEWISH PEOPLE

F.F. BRUCE “‘All Israel’ is a recurring expression in Jewish literature where it need not mean ‘every Jew without a single exception’ but ‘Israel as a whole.’”

2. Witness for God

a. One People Only ONE Olive Tree > both Jew and Gentile Believers BELONG

4.16 “Abraham...is the father of us all”

GRAFTING – Odd for farmer to graft wild branch into a domesticated plant

PAUL > calls this grafting UNNATURAL v. 24 “contrary to nature”

ABNORMAL - Drastic Action for Sick and Fruitless Trees

Sir William RAMSEY – “In exceptional circumstances it is customary to reinvigorate a fruitless olive tree by grafting it with a shoot of wild-olive so that the sap of the tree enriches this wild shoot and the tree begins to bear fruit again”

IMAGE SHOWS > Destiny of Jews and Gentiles are INTERRELATED

b. One Purpose > 5 X's in Ch. 11 > sequence Jew-Gentile-Jew-Gentile

Vs. 11-12 Israel's transgression > salvation to Gentiles > Israel envious > “much greater riches” for Jew and Gentile > FULLNESS – bringing in of ALL ELECT

Vs. 13-16 Israel's rejection > Reconciliation of the World > Israel's Acceptance > Life from the Dead

Vs. 17-24 Breaking Natural Branches of Olive Tree (Jews) > Grafting of Wild Shoots (Gentiles) > Natural Branches REGRAFTED > Wild Grafts continue in God's Kindness

Vs. 25-26 Temporary, Partial Hardening of Israel > Fullness of Gentiles > Salvation of All Israel > Climax of History, Blessing of World (IMPLIED)

Vs. 30,31 Disobedience of Jews > Mercy to Gentiles > Mercy to Disobedient Gentiles > Mercy to Disobedient Jews

v. 14 GENTILES SHOULD “arouse the Jews to envy” / Story of Gentile Failure

v. 28 “As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs”

ENEMIES > they handed over their Messiah for Roman Execution

LOVED > God has not abandoned Israel, faithful to His Covenant Promises

LEON MORRIS “Instead of showing to God's ancient people the attractiveness of the Christian way, Christians have characteristically treated the Jews with hatred.”

ROME > Jews were Tolerated and Protected by Law

BUT Undercurrent of ILL WILL by Gentiles/ Occasional outbursts of Violence

Paul CONFRONTS Gentile Anti-Semitism v. 13 “I am talking to you Gentiles”

JEWs were DESPISED People of the Middle Ages in Europe
 REFORMERS– especially Luther – Never ROSE ABOVE that Prejudice & Hatred

Even Hitler could quote Luther’s words against Jews to Justify his Atrocities

c. One Person

Since HOLOCAUST > Many Jews have demanded end to Xtian Missionary Work
 Thinking Jewish Evangelism = Anti-Semitic, Disrespectful to Jews

I Handed out Tracts with Jews for Jesus at Macy’s Thanksgiving Parade in NYC
 FURIOUS OPPOSITION of Many Jews> Shouted & Spat Upon / Too big to hit!

“All Israel will be SAVED” meaning of word clear from context of Romans

NO SUGGESTION about Rebuilding Temple or Resuming Sacrifices
 NOTHING SAID ABOUT AN EARTHLY DAVIDIC KINGDOM

NOT a National Salvation or a Political Salvation > Repentance & Faith in Jesus

Not a Reference to LAND of POLITICAL STATES – Paul not aware of the
 modern nation called Israel > More Jews in NYC today than in Israel

10.1 my heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved

10.9 if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that
 God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

5.9 “Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be
 saved from God's wrath through him!”

Three Passages quoted in vs. 26,27 from Isaiah and Jeremiah

“Deliverer will come from Zion” > Prophecy of first coming of Jesus

WHAT WILL HE DO? “turn godlessness away from Jacob”
 ATONEMENT and REMOVAL of Sin

HE WILL Establish God’s Covenant which Promised FORGIVENESS of Sins

THIS IS NONE OTHER THAN JESUS > Messiah of the Old AND New Covenant

“Full number of Gentiles will come in” AND ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED
FULL NUMBER OF GOD’S ELECT – Jew and Gentile – will come to Him

NO ALTERNATIVE MEANS of Salvation for Jews > only Messiah is Jesus

MOST Anti-Semitic thing you could do is REFUSE to Preach Jesus to the Jews

A Devoted Jew named Peter said in Jerusalem “Salvation is found in no one else,
for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

That NAME > that PERSON > is JESUS

GRAND CLIMAX of 9-11> God of Mercy – forgives and restores Disobedient
God of History > Orders all things according to His Perfect, Predetermined Plan

3. Worship of God

STOTT “The worship of God is informed and inspired by the vision of God.
Worship without theology is bound to degenerate into idolatry...On the other hand
there should be no theology without doxology...God is not an appropriate object
for cool, critical, detached, scientific observation and evaluation. No...
Our place is on our faces before him in adoration.”

PAUL > Theology leads to Doxology > God’s Truth leads to God’s Praise
ENDS DISCUSSION of Deep Truths of God > Standing in Awe of Him

DO WE THINK SUCH DEEP THOUGHTS ABOUT GOD?

WHEN WE WANT TO THINK ABOUT GOD > and that is not often enough
IT IS NOT AN EASY THING TO DO > because God is so Unlike Us

“Word of the LORD came to Ezekiel: ‘I saw an immense cloud with flashing light-
ning- surrounded by brilliant light. The center of the fire looked like glowing metal

CLOSER he comes to God’s Throne > LESS SURE his words Become
“Spread out above...was what looked like an expanse, sparkling like ice, and
awesome...I heard the sound...like the roar of rushing waters, like the voice of the
Almighty, like the tumult of an army”

SOUNDS LIKE “Valley Girl” version of Bible > word “Like” in every verse
 “like an expanse, like ice, like the roar of rushing waters, like the voice of the Almighty, like the tumult of an army”

CLEAREST LANGUAGE Mortal Man can use to describe IMMORTAL GOD
 How can the FINITE EVEN IMAGINE THE INFINITE?

STANDING Before the Throne of God Himself: “he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire...Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. *This was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD.”
 verses from Ezekiel 1

Paul sees GLORY OF GOD of Ezekiel in the FACE OF JESUS CHRIST
 God has Revealed to Paul the PUREST GOSPEL > Magnificent Salvation

a. All Wise v. 33 “Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!”
 PAUL MAGNIFIES GOD’S WEALTH AND WISDOM

J.I. PACKER “Wisdom is the power to see, & the inclination to choose, the best & the highest goal, together with the surest means of attaining it...it is found in its fullness only in God”

Judgments > what God thinks and decides
 Paths > what God does and where He goes

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

A.W. TOZER “God has never learned from anyone. God cannot learn. Could God at any time or in any manner receive into his mind knowledge that he had not possessed from eternity, he would be imperfect and less than himself...God knows all instantly and effortlessly all matter and all matters, all mind and every mind... all personalities, all things visible and invisible in heaven and on earth... Because God knows all things perfectly, he knows no thing better than any other thing, but all things equally well. He never discovers anything, He is never surprised, never amazed. He never wonders about anything.”

God's Wisdom revealed in Romans -

1-4 He Justifies Sinful Man and REMAIN JUST > by sending His Own Son
TO FULLFIL THE JUST DEMANDS OF HIS OWN LAW

Jesus dies our Death / Pays our sin's Penalty / Fulfills God's Righteousness
Who would imagine that Creator would die in place of His Creatures?

5-8 Demand Man's Obedience even though Salvation is Gift of Grace
Grace = Our works have no part of Salvation, no Merit, Undeserved
Wisdom of God > He SAVES and SANCTIFIES > Redeems & Regenerates
New Record and New Heart / Blood of Christ and Fullness of Holy Spirit
God who Freely Saves now demands Faithful Service
Obedience becomes the EVIDENCE that one is SAVED BY GRACE

9-11 Wise God choose the Family of Abraham / Nation of Israel
But they played the harlot / became "disobedient and obstinate people"
THEIR SIN opened Door of Salvation FOR ALL NATIONS
MERCY to Nations / Provokes GOSPEL ENVY among Chosen Jews
ALL WISE God could quote words of Joseph to His own wayward people:
"You intended to harm me, but I intended it for good to accomplish what is now
being done, the saving of many lives." Genesis 50.20

b. All Sufficient

v. 34,35 "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?
Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?"

His THOUGHTS are UNSEARCHABLE / WAYS are INSCRUTBALE

LUDICROUS & ABSURD to think we could Teach or Give God Anything

Perhaps DAVID COULD HAVE CLAIMED God should repay him

Since not allowed to build Temple / Gathered Materials for son Solomon
HIS OWN GIFT > 3000 talents of Gold, 7000 talents of silver
= 110 metric tons Gold / 260 metric tons Silver = 100's of millions of Euros
Perhaps largest religious offering IN ALL TIME

"David praised the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly, saying, "Praise
be to you, O LORD, God of our father Israel, from everlasting to everlasting.

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours... Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things... Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.” 1 Chronicles 29.9-14

We are NOT GOD’S COUNSELOR or GOD’S CREDITOR

Really? Is that true? Haven’t we tried to teach God? Don’t we know more?

MARTIN LUTHER “We admit freely that God is more powerful than we are, but not that he is wiser...we say he is, but when it comes to a showdown, we do not want to act on what we say”

God made me TOO SHORT or TOO TALL / “I should be better looking”
Why did God stick me in this Dead End JOB > here in Kazakhstan!
God made a mistake not giving me a husband > or in giving me this one!
WE REALLY ARE GOD’S COUNSELORS > or we think we are!

WE try to IMPROVE ON GOD’S JUSTICE >
It’s NOT RIGHT that I am sick / Not Right I did not get that Scholarship
NOT RIGHT that I did not Pass that Exam > God IGNORED my Prayers

“Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?”

c. All in All v. 36 “For from him and through him and to him are all things.”

ALL THINGS come from God > Material and Spiritual > THROUGH God

Where is everything going? > TO God > Creator, Sustainer, and Heir of All
He is the SOURCE, the MEANS, and the GOAL

R.A. TORREY > preaching in Melbourne, Australia > man give him note
“Dear Mr. Torrey, I am in great perplexity. I have been praying for a long time about something that I am confident is in accord with God’s will, but I do not get it. I have been a member of the Presbyterian Church for 30 years, and have tried to be a consistent one all that time. I have been Superintendent in the Sunday School for 25 years; and yet God does not answer my prayer and I cannot understand it. Can you explain it to me?”

TORREY read this note from the platform: “The answer is easy, he is praying in his own name. God is not obligated to hear our prayers because of our works.”
 Man came to Torrey afterward: “You are right. I see my mistake.”

STOTT “He is the Alpha and Omega, and every letter in between”

d. All Glorious v. 36 “To him be the glory forever! Amen.”

Watchwords of Reformation > Solus = Only > Sola Scriptura
 Only Scripture > Christ > Grace > Faith > Glory only to God! > Soli Deo Gloria

French Theologian ROGER NICOLE “In the 16th century...the church had succumbed to deep corruption...In many ways it was a cesspool of iniquity. People did not know how to remedy the situation. They tried councils, internal purges, monastic orders. None of these things seemed to work. But God again raised up to his glory men who proclaimed the truth of his sovereignty, the truth of his grace. In proclaiming this truth they brought a multitude of his children to a new sense of dependence upon Christ...They are small, these men of the Reformation. They had little money, little power, and little influence. One was a portly little monk in Germany. Another was a frail little professor in Geneva. A third was a ruddy but lowly little man in Scotland. What could they do? In themselves, nothing. But by the power of God they shook the world.”

All things from God, through God, and to God > thus Glory is His Alone

NO PLACE FOR OUR PRIDE > denies our utter dependence on Him

Wm Beebe: biologist, explorer, author / friend of 26th US Pres Theodore Roosevelt
 Often visited TR at his home on Long Island, NY / talked late into evenings
 THEN went out and looked to Sky > faint spot of light beyond lower corner of the great square of Pegasus > then one of them would recite: “That is the Spiral Galaxy in Andromeda. It is as large as the Milky Way. It is one of a hundred million galaxies. It consists of one hundred billion suns, each larger than our sun”
 TR’d grin at Beebe and say: “Now I think we are small enough, let’s go to bed!”