

THE RESTORATION OF ISRAEL AND ITS SURETY ROMANS 11:25–36

Introduction

Israel's history is a surety. God loves man with an infinite love, and God's love is unchangeable. Therefore, any person can be restored to God if the person will call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and ask Christ to save him. This is clearly seen in the history of Israel. Israel's restoration is a surety and, as such, stands as a prime example of the unchangeable love of God toward man.

- I. Surety 1: God's great revelation about the Jews (vv. 25-26).
- II. Surety 2: the promise of Scripture — God's Deliverer, Jesus Christ, shall turn Israel and take away their sins (vv. 26-27).
- III. Surety 3: God's pleasure with Israel's forefathers (vv. 28-29).
- IV. Surety 4: the believer's mercy and witness to the Jews (vv. 30-31).
- V. Surety 5: God's holiness and mercy (v. 32).
- VI. Surety 6: God's glorious plan for the world (vv. 33-36).

I. *Romans 11:25–26 The Restoration of Israel*

The first surety is God's great revelation about Israel. The revelation comes from Paul. Note three significant facts.

1. The revelation had been an unknown mystery until Paul. The word "mystery" (musterion) in the Bible is not used as most men use the word, as something mysterious or difficult to understand. *A Biblical mystery means that...*
 - something that was unknown is now revealed.
 - something that was hidden is now made known.
 - something that was a secret is now told.

The future of Israel is now revealed and made known to men. Note exactly why God revealed the future of Israel: that we not be ignorant of Israel's future, and that we not be wise in our own conceits or imaginations. This last reason can mean two things.

- => Gentiles become guilty of looking down upon the Jews because the Jews are so different from the rest of us. They have rejected Jesus Christ and are opposed to Christianity to such a degree that they remain almost exclusively among themselves. Gentiles face the danger of becoming puffed up, of thinking that they are more acceptable to God because they look with favour upon Jesus Christ and are more open in professing Him. There is the danger of being prideful and arrogant, of lording it over the Jews.
- => A Gentile, especially a Gentile believer, can begin to think that his idea of Israel's destiny is the correct idea and that he and the followers of his position are the persons
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who have a full understanding of the truth. All other understandings are incorrect. There is the danger of becoming “conceited.”

2. Israel’s blindness is only partial, only “in part.” There were Jewish believers who followed Christ in His day and there have been Jewish believers who have followed Christ down through the centuries. The blindness and hardness of Israel to the gospel is not total; it is only partial. Granted, just as Scripture says, so many Jews have rejected and still do reject Christ that it is as though all *Israel as a nation* has stumbled and fallen over Him (see vv. 8-9). However, there have been and always will be some Jews who believe. Israel’s blindness is only partial.
3. Israel’s blindness is only temporary. Two statements clearly show this.
 - a. Israel’s blindness is only “until the full number of the Gentiles has come in.” Note a significant point. *It does not matter how a person interprets this clause*, when the full number of the Gentiles is completed, *Israel’s blindness will be removed* according to Scripture. Just what “the full number of the Gentiles” means is open to different interpretations, but it does not change what is to happen to Israel. It only affects *when* the blindness is to be removed from Israel. Israel’s blindness is to continue *only* until the full number of the Gentiles comes. Now what does this event mean? The full number of the Gentiles can mean...
 - a certain number of Gentile converts are to be saved, to fill up the “broken off branches of Israel” (v. 17-21).
 - the end of the Gentile age, a time when the emphasis of salvation will no longer be upon the Gentiles, but upon the Jews.
 - the end of the Gentile age, a time when God will rapture the church (all believers) and cause a revival among the Jews who will then become the primary witnesses for Him.

The point is worth repeating. No matter what the phrase “the full number of the Gentiles” means, it does not change the event of Israel’s revival. The blindness of Israel will be removed.

- b. “All Israel will be saved.” The fact could be stated no clearer:
 - => Israel’s blindness is only temporary.
 - => The restoration of Israel is a surety.
 - => Israel shall experience a revival.
 - => Israel shall turn to God’s Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thought 1. There is hope for every person. Note two critical facts:

- 1) A person’s blindness to the Lord Jesus Christ is only partial. As long as a person is alive, he can still turn to Christ.

- 2) A person's blindness is temporary *only* if the person turns to the Lord Jesus Christ. Unless a person believes and commits his life to Christ, his blindness becomes permanent, and he is lost forever.

John 3:19 *This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.*

Col 1:13-14 *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*

2 Tim 1:10 *But it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

1 John 1:5-7 *This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light: in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

ROMANS 11: 25–26 RESTORATION OF ISRAEL

*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, as it is written: "The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob." **Romans 11: 25–26***

There are many reasons for taking this passage at its face value, that is, as a prediction of the Jewish people's conversion as a nation.

1. The whole context favours this view. The conversion of the Jews as a probable event has been described in the plainest and simplest of terms.
2. The nation was rejected, not as individuals but as a community or nation. Therefore, it is only natural to say that when God speaks of a restoration, He is speaking not only of individuals being restored, but of the community or nation as being restored (v. 11, 15).
3. Paul speaks of a great event, something that will attract universal attention.
4. Paul says this is a "mystery." The gradual conversion of a few Jews would be no mystery. When speaking of the mystery of the Gentiles (Eph. 1:9; 3:4), Paul is speaking of the Gentiles as a community being admitted into the church of God. Therefore, it is only natural to assume that when Paul speaks of the mystery of the Jews, he is speaking of a great event, of a great movement of Jews into Christ.

5. The words “all Israel” (v. 26) cannot mean the spiritual Israel. Such an interpretation would do violence to the use of the word “Israel” throughout this whole context. It simply means Israel as a nation, as a community of people. This is also clear from the warnings that are given throughout this passage to both Gentile and Jew.

However, “all Israel” looks at the nation en masse. It does not necessarily have to mean every single individual. Note a very significant fact: when the nation became hardened, Scripture speaks of the nation, that is, of all Israel being rejected. However, not every single person was rejected. There were a few individuals who still believed and who comprised a remnant (see Rom. 11:1-10). Every single individual was not lost, so the same is probably true when the nation is restored. There will be a large number of Jews who will become open and tender to the gospel, but not necessarily every individual. In one simple statement: Israel will be open to the gospel just as the Gentiles are open to the gospel. Many Jews will begin to be saved just as many Gentiles are now saved.

Deu 30:3 Then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you.

Isa 1:26 “I will restore your judges as in days of old, your counsellors as at the beginning. Afterward you will be called the City of Righteousness, the Faithful City.”

Isa 11:12 He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth.

Isa 27:13 And in that day a great trumpet will sound. Those who were perishing in Assyria and those who were exiled in Egypt will come and worship the Lord on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

Isa 33:20 Look upon Zion, the city of our festivals; your eyes will see Jerusalem, a peaceful abode, a tent that will not be moved; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its ropes broken.

Isa 40:2 Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins.

Isa 49:22 This is what the Sovereign Lord says: “See, I will beckon to the Gentiles, I will lift up my banner to the peoples; they will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.”

Isa 60:10 “Foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you. Though in anger I struck you, in favour I will show you compassion.”

Jer 23:3 “I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number.”

Jer 24:6-7 *My eyes will watch over them for their good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them up and not tear them down; I will plant them and not uproot them. I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord. They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their heart. (see Jer. 31:7-8)*

Ezek 14:22 *Yet there will be some survivors — sons and daughters who will be brought out of it. They will come to you, and when you see their conduct and their actions, you will be consoled regarding the disaster I have brought upon Jerusalem — every disaster I have brought upon it.*

Ezek 20:40 *For on my holy mountain, the high mountain of Israel, declares the Sovereign Lord, there in the land the entire house of Israel will serve me, and there I will accept them. There I will require your offerings and your choice gifts, along with all your holy sacrifices.*

Ezek 36:8 *“But you, O mountains of Israel, will produce branches and fruit for my people Israel, for they will soon come home.”*

Ezek 37:10 *So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet — a vast army.*

Micah 2:12 *“I will surely gather all of you, O Jacob; I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people.”*

Zep 2:9 *“Therefore, as surely as I live,” declares the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, “surely Moab will become like Sodom, the Ammonites like Gomorrah — a place of weeds and salt pits, a wasteland forever. The remnant of my people will plunder them; the survivors of my nation will inherit their land.”*

Zec 1:17 *“Proclaim further: This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘My towns will again overflow with prosperity, and the Lord will again comfort Zion and choose Jerusalem.’”*

Zec 10:6 *“I will strengthen the house of Judah and save the house of Joseph. I will restore them because I have compassion on them. They will be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the Lord their God and I will answer them.”*

Zec 14:11 *It will be inhabited; never again will it be destroyed. Jerusalem will be secure.*

Mal 3:4 *And the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the Lord, as in days gone by, as in former years. □*

II. *Romans 11:26–27 Jesus Christ's Restoration of Israel*

The second surety is the promise of Scripture. God's great Deliverer, Jesus Christ Himself, shall turn Israel. Scripture gives a glimpse into the future of Israel's restoration in this verse, but note that it is only a glimpse. Just how Israel will be restored is not discussed in this passage. Only two major things are given.

1. Some great manifestation of Christ the Deliverer will cause Israel to turn to the gospel.

Mat 23:39 "For I tell you, [Israel] you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

Acts 3:19-21 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you [Israel] — even Jesus. He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.

Rom 11:25 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.

2 Cor 3:14-16 But their minds [Israel] were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Psa 14:7 Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When the Lord restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!

Isa 59:20-21 "The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins," declares the Lord. "As for me, this is my covenant with them," says the Lord. "My Spirit, who is on you, and my words that I have put in your mouth will not depart from your mouth, or from the mouths of your children, or from the mouths of their descendants from this time on and forever," says the Lord.

Isa 27:9 By this, then, will Jacob's guilt be atoned for, and this will be the full fruit of the removal of his sin: When he makes all the altar stones to be like limestones crushed to pieces, no Asherah poles or incense altars will be left standing.

Jer 31:34 "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."

Hosea 3:4-5 For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or idol. Afterward the Israelites will return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They will come trembling to the Lord and to his blessings in the last days.

Zec 12:10 "And 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 first-born son.”

2. The great Deliverer, Jesus Christ, will do two things for Israel.
 - a. Jesus Christ will turn away godlessness from Israel (see Isa. 27:9).
 - b. Jesus Christ will fulfil God’s covenant with Israel: He will take away their sins (see Isa. 59:21; 27:9).

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 5:31 God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

Acts 13:38 “Therefore, my brothers, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you.”

Eph 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace.

Isa 43:25 “I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.”

Isa 44:22 “I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.”

Isa 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

III. Romans 11:28–29 God’s Promise to the Patriarchs

The third surety is God’s pleasure with Israel’s forefathers or patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).

1. The statement “they [the Jews] are enemies on your account” sounds as though God predestined Israel’s rejection. However, God does not cause sin (Jas. 1:13-14); God does not cause people to reject His Son and His will. What the statement means is this: the word “enemy” (*echthroi*) has both an active and passive meaning. It means either hostile or hated by, and it means either hating or being hated. It is possible that in this particular passage it is to be read both ways. The Jews were hostile to God; they had refused the offer of God’s righteousness in Jesus Christ, and they had refused to be the missionary force for God’s Son. Therefore, they had aroused God’s displeasure. They hated God; consequently, God was displeased with them.

Note that God did what He had to do. He turned to the Gentiles. Israel had refused to be the missionary force for God’s Son, so God had to turn to the Gentiles. Among the Gentiles, God found a receptive people. The Gentiles accepted the offer of God’s righteousness in Jesus Christ, and they have become the missionary force for Christ

to the world. It is critical to remember something, however: this does not mean that every Gentile is saved. Most are not, but a fair number of them have accepted and still do accept Jesus Christ. We must remember this: in this passage God is speaking *nationally, not individually*.

- => A few Jews do accept Christ as the Messiah, but the number is small. The number is so small that God can say that Israel as a nation has rejected Christ.
- => A far greater number of Gentiles accept Christ as their Saviour. However, as is clearly evidenced by the unholy lives of most Gentiles, the majority reject Christ; but the number who do accept Him is fairly large. It is large enough for God to say that the Gentiles as a *community* do accept His offer of salvation in Christ.

Thought 1. The point is that God is speaking *nationally, not individually*. And we must remember this, for it is absolutely essential for everyone to make a *personal decision* to receive Christ and to follow Him by living a pure life.

Titus 2:11-14 *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.*

2. The statement “they [the Jews] are loved on account of the patriarchs” shows that God still loves Israel. As a people they are still very precious to Him. How can this be when they have been so hostile to God’s Son, Jesus Christ, and against the missionary force of God’s Son? There are two reasons why God still loves Israel.
 - a. The forefathers or patriarchs of Israel were a godly people, a people of unusual faith in God. (See Rom. 11:16; also see *Israel, Seed of Abraham*, Rom. 4:1-25.) There were people such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Ruth, Elijah — the list could go on and on. As Scripture says:

Heb 11:32-38 *And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated — the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.*

Such godly men and women knew God — knew Him personally and intimately — and God would never forget a people who loved Him so greatly. Keep this in mind as well: godly people are a praying people, a people who pray for their families and neighbours, for their nation and world. And God hears and answers the prayers of His people. God would never turn His back upon Israel for this reason alone.

b. There is a second reason why God still loves Israel: God Himself is *unchangeable in His gifts and calling*. God called and promised some very special gifts to the patriarchs, the forefathers of Israel, and God is unchangeable; therefore...

- every purpose for which God called Israel shall be fulfilled in the lives of many Jews.
- every gift God promised Israel shall be given to many Jews.

The point is striking. God does not change His mind. He is constant, immutable, unchangeable. He shall perfectly fulfil His calling and gifts to Israel.

Psa 33:11 But the plans of the Lord stand firm forever, the purposes of his heart through all generations.

Psa 102:27 But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

Psa 135:13 Your name, O Lord, endures forever, your renown, O Lord, through all generations.

Psa 145:13 Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The Lord is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made.

Mal 3:6 “I the Lord do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.”

Heb 1:12 “You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.”

Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Rev 1:8 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

IV. Romans 11: 30—31 Mercy and Witness of Believers

The fourth surety is the believer’s mercy and witness to the Jews. These two verses are speaking historically. Very simply, history shall be repeated.

=> In times past — before Christ ever came — the Gentiles did not know and obey God, but the Jews did.

=> Eventually, the Jews rejected God which is ultimately seen in their killing God’s Son, Jesus Christ. They, too, failed to believe (obey God).

=> Therefore, God turned to the Gentiles.

Now note: if we came to know God through the unbelief of the Jews, how much more shall the Jews be shown mercy through the mercy of the Gentiles! To word the matter another way...

- if mercy resulted from unbelief, how much more shall mercy result from mercy?
- if mercy to the Gentiles came through the unbelief of the Jews, how much more shall mercy to the Jews come through the mercy of the Gentiles?

The point seems to be this: we truly know the mercy of God through Jesus Christ our Lord; therefore, we want the world to experience the same mercy and forgiveness of sins. In particular, we feel indebted to the Jews, the people through whom God gave us His Word, His Son, and His promises. Therefore, Scripture predicts that the evangelistic efforts to reach the Jews will someday bear fruit. The Jews will be reached by the mercy of God; they shall believe and obey Jesus Christ as Lord. The Jews shall be restored into the favour of God.

Thought 1. Every believer who knows the mercy of God should share the mercy of God. God hates exclusiveness, prejudice, partiality. The world desperately needs the gospel, the Jew as well as the Gentile, and God demands that His mercy be shared with the world.

John 20:21 *Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*

2 Cor 5:19-20 *That God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.*

1 John 1:3 *We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.*

V. Romans 11:32 Mercy and Holiness of God

The fifth surety is God's holiness and mercy. The word "bound" (sunekleisen) means to shut up in a place, to close up, to lock up. This is an unusual idea: God has taken men, both Jews and Gentiles, and shut them up to disobedience (apeitheian). This is the judicial judgment of God (*see Judicial Blindness and Rejection*, Rom. 11:7-10; Rom. 1:24; *Unbelief, Judicial Judgement*, Jn. 12:39-41). It is the picture of God using sin and events for good. God takes sin and works it out for the good of the world. Man has chosen sin, choosing to go his own way in life, so God allows man to do his own thing. God locks man up in his own world of selfishness, allowing man to roam around in his world of sin. Why? So that man's true nature of sinfulness will be clearly seen, and thereby cause the honest and thinking man to seek God. God wishes and will have mercy upon all, both Jew and Gentile; but before men can come to God, they must confess two things:

=> that they are sinful and dying creatures in desperate need of God.

=> that God exists and that He will have mercy upon the person who diligently seeks Him.

Now note: all men, both Jew and Gentile, are shut up in their world of sin. Why? That God may have mercy upon both. The holiness and love of God assures that the Jews will be saved and restored to the mercy of God. All that is needed is for the Jews to begin seeking God. God will have mercy upon any who genuinely seek Him.

Heb 11:6 *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

Deu 4:29 *But if from there you seek the Lord your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul.*

2 Chr 7:14 *If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.*

Psa 103:17 *But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children.*

Prov 8:7 *My mouth speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness.*

Jer 29:13 *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*

Lam 3:22 *Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassion never fail.*

Joel 2:13 *Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.*

Micah 7:18 *Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.*

VI. Romans 11:33–36 God's Glorious Plan for the World

The sixth surety is God's glorious plan for the world. Note four points.

1. God's glorious plan for the world involves four great acts of God.
 - a. His infinite wisdom and knowledge: knowing how to do everything perfectly; knowing how to create and arrange, order and govern everything so that all things work out perfectly. Note how God's wisdom and knowledge are said to be deep and rich: "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God." God's wisdom and knowledge are so deep and rich...
 - That angels desire to look into them (1 Pet. 1:13).
 - That they are infinite (Eph. 3:18).

- That they are too wonderful for man (Psa. 139:6. This one verse alone shows just how great God’s mercy is toward us.)
 - that they include thoughts more numerous than the grains of sand in the world (Psa. 139:17-18).
- b. His infinite judgments and ways: His judgment in planning and deciding everything, and His ways in executing His purposes and decisions. Note that His judgment and ways are said to be unsearchable and past finding out.
- ⇒ Secret things belong to God (Dut. 29:29).
- ⇒ God is glorified by His infinite judgments and ways (Pr. 25:2).
- ⇒ The great things of God are unsearchable and without number (Job 5:9; 9:10).
- ⇒ Man cannot discover God by searching (Job 11:7).
- ⇒ There is no searching of God’s understanding (Isa. 40:28).
2. No man can grasp God’s plan. No man can know the mind of the Lord; no man can be a counsellor to God. Note two significant points.
- a. No man can grasp God’s plan. Scripture makes this abundantly clear.
- 1 Tim 6:16 [Jesus Christ] who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honour and might forever. Amen.*
- Job 11:7 “Can you fathom the mysteries of God? Can you probe the limits of the Almighty?”*
- Eccl 3:11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.*
- b. Believers do, however, *have the mind of Christ*. This does not mean that believers understand God and His ways perfectly, but it does mean that God reveals Himself and the truth to believers — enough of Himself and His ways to save them from sin, death, judgment and hell.
- 1 Cor 2:16 “For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.*
- 1 Cor 2:12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.*
- John 7:16-17 Jesus answered, “My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God’s will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.”*
- John 8:31-32 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

John 17:3 “Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”

Col 1:9-10 We have not stopped praying for you...that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God.

Hosea 6:3 “Let us acknowledge the Lord; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth.”

3. No man can earn God’s gift. Note two facts about this verse.
 - a. No man can put God in debt to him. No man can give anything to God and claim that God owes him something in return. God owes man nothing. Man has rejected and rebelled against following God, choosing to go his own way. Man is committing high treason against God. Man does not deserve nor can he earn any favour from God. If man is to receive a favour from God, God has to freely give the favour.

Mat 7:22-23 “Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”

Gal 2:16 Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

Eph 2:8-9 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.

Titus 3:4-5 But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.

- b. Man’s depravity should silence his boasting. It does not, but it should (see Rom. 3:19-20.)
4. God alone is the source, the mean, and the end of all things. Therefore, God is to be glorified forever and ever.
 - => All things are *from God*: all things were created by and find their source in God.
 - => All things are *through God*: all things come through His wisdom and knowledge, His judgments and ways.
 - => All things are *to God*: all things exist for God, for His goodness and pleasure.

Rev 4:11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

Psa 22:23 *You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honour him! Revere him, all you descendants of Israel!*

Psa 145:10 *All you have made will praise you, O Lord; your saints will extol you.*

1 Cor 6:20 *You were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your body.*

John 15:8 *“This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.” ■*