

**“ALL ISRAEL WILL BE SAVED.”**

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**First Christian Reformed Church**

**June 1, 2025, 10:30 AM**

**Scripture Texts: Romans 11:24-32**

Holy Father, deliver us now from the distractions of the world and our flesh with its desires and the devil and his lies. May your eternal truth be our delight and desire, in Jesus name, Amen.

### **Introduction.**

This morning we come to the end of this challenging bridge section of Romans, chapters 9 to 11. There is one more paragraph in chapter 11 but it is really the conclusion of the first 11 chapters of Romans.

Our text this morning is the conclusion of Paul's wrestling with God's ways with the Jews.

Remember at the beginning of chapter 9 Paul was in great sorrow and deep anguish in his soul for his brothers, his kinsman, the Jews. He wished himself damned for the sake of their salvation. They were heirs to all the promises and gifts of God but not all Israel is Israel.

Then in the beginning of chapter 10 he pours out his heart's desire and prayer again that they be saved. He laments that the Jews sought to establish a righteousness of their own, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God by faith.

Then in chapter 11 he raises questions, has God rejected His people, have they stumbled to the point of being utterly lost? Are they cut off forever from their olive tree? Have they been replaced by the Gentiles?

Now Paul brings this to a conclusion by revealing the mystery to God.

**Deuteronomy 29:29** The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.

God is God. His thoughts and His ways are not our thoughts and ways, they are above our thoughts and ways. And if we are honest with ourselves we don't like that. We don't like being in the dark, we don't like not knowing what God is up to and why. We want to be in the know, knowledge is power, and we want that.

It all started with Adam and Eve, they wanted to know, they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil believing Satan's lie that then they would be like God, and we have been trying to do that ever since.

This week we are celebrating graduates and graduations, celebrating certain milestones in acquiring knowledge. And that is good, knowledge is good, wisdom is even better. But we must watch out for thinking too highly of ourselves and becoming proud.

Paul reminds us there are mysteries in our world, secret things that belong to God and are meant to keep us humble.

Whenever Paul uses the word *mystery*, he is talking about something prophesied in the OT that is now being revealed and made clear in the NT. Mystery in the NT is the Gospel of Jesus Christ which was hidden in the shadows and rituals of the OT but is now clearly revealed in the person of Jesus Christ and in the preaching of His Gospel.

Christians are given knowledge of mysteries that the rest of the world doesn't know or understand. The world doesn't know God made man in His image and He made Him male and female. The world doesn't know God made marriage to be between one man and one woman. The world doesn't know the mystery of marriage, the God created it to be a reflection of the relationship between Christ and His bride, the Church.

The world doesn't know God created the beautiful gift of sex to be preserved and protected and kept pure only within the marriage covenant. The world doesn't know that children are a gift from God, "... the fruit of the womb a reward" (Psalm 127:3-4).

Paul reveals another mystery of God's goodness. Salvation belongs to God and it has been revealed in His Son, the Messiah. And the revealing of this mystery is meant to humble us because God's ways are not our ways.

We feel this just in reading this passage. God's plans, God's purposes are not what we would expect. It is like we are on a see saw the way this goes back and forth between the Jews and the Gentiles, one is put down and the other is put up, and then the other comes back up. God blinds one so the other can see, God alienates one from salvation so salvation can be given to another.

To show pity to the Gentiles, God deprives the Jews. God uses disobedience and envy and jealousy to promote salvation. In all of this God is the active agent. Why does He do what He does the way He does it?

God is God. The secret things belong to God and what He wants us to know, He reveals.

A partial hardening has happened to Israel so rebellious Gentiles could be saved. God did this, this mystery is meant to humble us, so don't be proud. Are we proud of fact that we are Christians? Are we proud that God has chosen to us?

How can we boast? Our salvation is from the Jews, it is by the unmerited mercy of God, and when the *fulness* of the Gentile harvest has been gathered in, then the Jews will be gathered also. But their exclusion for now is for the sake of the Gentiles, so they should act like they have received a gift, for that is exactly what it is, pure gift, pure grace, pure kindness of God flowing out of God's severity to the Jews.

***God's plan is worldwide and it is completely tied to His people.*** The fortunes and hopes of our world are tied to the Jews and what God started with Abraham. Their sin leads to our salvation and their eventual repentance will lead to their salvation.

As I have said before there is no place for ***anti-Semitism*** in our hearts or words or actions. That is a sin against the grace of God and His Gospel and His redemptive purposes for the world. We have been grafted into their tree, their root, their promises, their Messiah.

Take the example of Paul as our model. Paul has regularly called out the sin and hypocrisy of the Jews. Paul has been running for his life from Jews trying to kill him. Paul knows their sin, their rebellion, their sinful rejection of Jesus. Paul is not blind or deaf to their sin and all that is wrong with the Jews. He had reason to hate the Jews.

Yet Paul was willing to be damned for the sake of the Jews and their salvation. Paul preached the Gospel to them and held out the mercy of God to them as should we. They will be saved only by the mercy of God we have received. We should live that out in such a way that they and anyone else watching would desire what we have. Our lives should make others jealous for our Gospel.

We were unfruitful, undeserving wild olive branches grafted into the Jewish olive tree, with a Jewish root and a Jewish Messiah, receiving the blessings and benefits of all the promises and covenants God made with Abraham. If we believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord, then we are the spiritual children of Abraham and we have his inheritance.

It is the strangest sin for Christians to be anti-Semitic. Talk about biting the hand that feed you.

That does not mean that we approve of everything Jews do. It doesn't mean we agree with everything the secular Israeli government does. We certainly don't have to agree with how they are waging war with their enemies. It doesn't mean turning a blind eye to Israel's injustices to the Arabs.

The geo-political nation of Israel is no different than any other nation. The Jews lost any claim on the Promised Land when they rebelled against God and denied His Son. Israel has broken covenant with her God and is living today in disobedience and unbelief in His Son and her Messiah.

They are sinners and they will only be saved by humbling themselves under the Gospel of Jesus Christ and repenting of their sin and confessing Jesus as their Savior and Lord. They will not be saved by rebuilding the Temple and starting the sacrifices again and having a High Priest.

They have lost their inheritance. The promises made to Abraham, including the promise of the Land, will be inherited as an everlasting gift only by true, spiritual Israel, not disobedient, unbelieving Israel. It belongs now to believers in Jesus, who will inherit the land when Jesus returns.

And the good news of the mystery Paul is revealing is that there is hope for the Jews.

From the perspective of Gospel, Jews are enemies, but this is God's doing for the sake of the Gentiles. It benefits you that they are enemies of God. ***But they are also beloved.*** How is that possible? Individually they are enemies, corporately they are beloved.

From the perspective of God's choice, the Jews are beloved for sake of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.

Jewish unbelief is not the end of the story. God is using their unbelief to bring salvation to the Gentiles and then God is using the mercy He is showing the Gentiles to stir up jealousy among the Jews to bring salvation to them.

With God you never know the end of the story until the last chapter is written.

***This is how God likes to write His stories.*** When something terrible happens, something that truly we didn't see coming, something totally negative, God takes that story and rewrites the narrative, rewrites the script into something powerfully beautiful for His glory.

Think of Joseph's brothers wickedly selling their brother into slavery in Egypt and making it look like an animal killed him.

Think of David committing adultery with Bathsheba and killing her husband, and God raises up a son in the line of the Messiah.

Think of Adam and Eve and their spectacular sin that becomes the seeds for the sending of a great Savior.

Think of the crucifixion of Jesus that leads to the salvation of the world.

Think of our sins and failures God has mercifully and redemptively turned around and used for His glory and as signs of His love and grace in our lives.

So God takes the story of the apostasy and rejection and rebellion of most of the first-century Jews, and turns it into a great blessing for the world, the reconciliation of the world.

Just as the death of Jesus opened the door of salvation for the world, so the rejection of the Jews and the destruction of the Jewish nation opened the door for the Gentiles.

Our rebellion against God is not hopeless. Don't be one of those who have no hope, for yourself or someone else. Don't say God has passed me by, or I am too far gone, or my sin is too great, or I am a lost cause. Don't refuse hope and don't refuse to hope. What does Paul say?

**Romans 11:32** For God has consigned all to disobedience, that he may have mercy on all.

God has consigned, shut up all in disobedience. Gentiles first for 2000 years since Abraham, and then the Jews now for 2000 years, everyone. Why? So that He can show mercy to all, to both Jews and Gentiles. God is the active agent, and mercy is the key word. God glorifies Himself in our disobedience. Mercy only makes sense in the light of disobedience. You can't earn it.

Are you disobedient? Are you in sin? Is the burden of your sin overwhelming to you, intolerable? Then you are on the path of your salvation. Sin is the path to our salvation.

“Yeah, but I have sinned and sinned again and repented and sinned again a hundred times. What about this sin or that sin or the other sin?”

Remember when Jesus was eating with sinners and tax collectors and riff raff and He was criticized, what did He say?

**Mark 2:17** When Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Are you sick in your sin, are you burdened by your disobedience? You are the only kind of person who is qualified to get mercy. Your disobedience qualifies you for it. You can't earn it.

Do you know someone else in this condition? Who seems like a lost cause? Remember, it is not the end of their story. As long as a person is alive, their story is not over. Some people are working on their testimony longer than

others. Never write people off as having no hope as long as they are alive. Don't judge too strongly, you don't know what God is doing.

How might God use the mercy He has given you to lead them to His mercy?

Has someone treated you so poorly, badly, wrongly? Has someone sinned against you to the point you have washed your hands of them? Remember you were no better before God, and He gave you mercy.

There is no one beyond the blood of Jesus. Not even the Jews who killed their own Messiah. Come to Jesus with your sin, and you will be saved and set free from the intolerable burden on your conscience. God will remove it when you surrender it, and heaven will rejoice, we will rejoice. Whatever your sin is, it doesn't matter, what matters is your salvation

**Romans 11:26-27** "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."

**I John 1:9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Prayer: Holy Father, use our disobedience to bring us to salvation by your mercy through the blood of Jesus. restore us to the joy of your salvations and may our joy overflow to others for the sake of their joy. For the sake of Jesus, Amen.