

Title: A Mysterious Future for God's People

Text: Romans 11:25-27

So much of life is shrouded in mystery.

1. How does the earth hang in space just the right distance from the sun? Mysterious!
2. How can the lungs process oxygen in our bodies to keep all of the necessary functions moving day after day, week after week, and year after year? Mysterious!
3. How come my wife never knows what restaurant she wants to eat dinner at? Mysterious!

Main Idea: God Has A Glorious Plan For His People!

What is this plan?

Paul reveals this plan in these verses...

1. God's Plan is Mysterious (vs. 25)

Romans 11:25 ESV

Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

Paul, in these verses, is talking to the church in Rome, comprised of both Gentile Christians as well as Jewish Christians.

Now, I need to remind you that at this stage in the salvation process, all Christians, regardless of nationality, station in life, or gender, are equally Christian.

Galatians 3:28 ESV

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

And we know today that the church is largely comprised of Gentile believers. However, there is no doubt, there are believers of Jewish descent in the church today. They were saved by grace, through faith, just like every Christian has been since Pentecost.

So, what is Paul talking about here in verse 25. This whole chapter is dealing with the point that God is not done with the Nation of Israel. God LOVES His people, and He has a plan that the entirety of the Old Testament has talked about.

And frankly speaking, especially after having walked in the land of God's chosen people, it is hard to imagine that God will not fulfill all the specific promises He made to them regarding their deliverance and possession of the Promised Land.

Dr. John MacArthur - Now, beloved, let me just tell you that's why there are still Jews in the world. That's why there is still a nation. The covenants of God sworn in the oath of God have demanded the preservation of the people of God. For if Israel went out of existence, there would be no way for God to fulfill His covenants. And so God has caused perpetuity in the

Jewish stock. He has caused those people to outlive all other peoples contemporaneous with them in ancient times. They are a phenomenon. They are not God's ancient people Israel, they are God's present people and God's future people to whom He must fulfill His covenants, He must fulfill His promises. Therefore He must maintain their existence. God has a plan for Israel. His character depends on it. His integrity depends on it. His trustworthiness and faithfulness depend on it.

And to sum up God's promise to Israel is to say ultimately He promises to redeem them, to give them a glorious kingdom, to give them peace from all their enemies and the fullness of blessing. And that will come in the future, that is God's promise. <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/45-82/has-god-cancelled-his-promises-to-israel-part-1>

Psalm 94:14 (ESV)

For the LORD will not forsake his people; he will not abandon his heritage;

Psalm 89:31–37 (ESV)

³¹ if they violate my statutes and do not keep my commandments, ³² then I will punish their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes, ³³ but I will not remove from him my steadfast love or be false to my faithfulness. ³⁴ I will not violate my covenant or alter the word that went forth from my lips. ³⁵ Once for all I have sworn by my holiness; I will not lie to David. ³⁶ His offspring shall endure forever, his throne as long as the sun before me. ³⁷ Like the moon it shall be established forever, a faithful witness in the skies." Selah

God is not finished with the Jews!

Will He abandon them? No!

Will He chasten and discipline them? Yes!

But remember, God is not finished with the Jews!

So, the church ought not to become arrogant about its position with God. Paul is warning the church not to have the same proud spirit the Jews had regarding their position with God.

Paul does not want the church to be ignorant about the future of the nation of Israel.

God is not done with them!

This is the mystery that Paul mentions!

And it manifests in two ways in this verse...

1. Israel experienced a partial spiritual hardening...
2. This hardening will only last for a specific period of time...

Why do they need to understand this mystery? So, they do not become proud. And so they remember God has a chosen people that He will deal with in the future. He has not rejected

them. They can come to faith in Christ like a gentile today, and he will save the nation in the future.

But today, according to Paul, there is a partial hardening of Israel.

What is a partial hardening of Israel? It means that God's people were **hardened** or **blinded** to the place where they rejected God's plan of redemption through the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

So, as a result, God set them aside for a season. And you ought to be glad He did because that same salvation that was offered to the Jews is now offered to you.

God, in a sense, took his focus of grace off the children of Israel and is treating them like His enemy. Some theologians refer to Israel as "**God's Beloved Enemies.**"

And they will remain in this state until "The fullness of the Gentiles comes in."

When is the "fullness of the Gentiles?"

Romans 11:25–27 (HNTC Ro): But when might that happen? How long will Israel remain "cut off" from the root through which their salvation and blessings had flowed since their beginning? The short answer is, Until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. The longer answer, that Paul wants his Gentile readers (brothers) to understand, is that Israel's hardening is not complete, it is only in part. It is not permanent, it is only temporary—until the elect among the Gentiles are saved. Paul does not want the Gentile believers in Rome to become conceited or arrogant in their new-found position of blessing. Israel is waiting in the wings to enter back into covenant fellowship with God, as the prophets had declared.

When will this happen? When will the "fulness of the gentiles" take place?

I believe what Paul is teaching us here is God knows when that last person will bow the knee and surrender his or her life to the Lord. And when that happens, it ushers in a series of events that will lead to the second coming of Christ.

When that last gentile gets "saved," I think [1 Thess 4:13ff](#) kicks in...

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 ESV

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

This is the beginning of what the Bible refers to as "The Day of the Lord." And the Day of the Lord starts with the catching away of the church (aka the Rapture), which then ushers in what

the Bible calls this the Great Tribulation, where the Antichrist is revealed and then defeated at the battle of Armageddon. And after all of this takes place, Jesus will set up his literal kingdom on this earth and rule and reign for 1000 years. He will literally rule on David's throne as prophesied in the Old Testament Scriptures.

Now, this isn't meant to be a sermon on eschatology, but it is important to understand what Paul is talking about here. God will, when the church is removed from the scene, begin to focus on His chosen People once again.

I get it! This is a mysterious plan! God's plan would have seemed very mysterious to the gentiles and the Jews of Paul's time.

But you must understand this, God deeply desires to save His people. We don't always understand the how's and whys, but we do understand God's heart for his people, both Gentiles and Jews.

"Regeneration is God's mysterious prerogative." - John Blanchard

"God moves in a mysterious way/His wonders to perform;/He plants his footsteps in the sea,/And rides upon the storm." - William Cowper

While this isn't a sermon on eschatology (what the bible teaches about the end of time), let me ask you what is the point of eschatology? Why is it worth our careful study?

Matt Emerson - "Eschatology is important because it provides the context and motivation for missions." <https://secundumscripturas.com/2014/05/06/the-importance-of-eschatology/>

Allow the reality of the end of time to motivate you to share the gospel with those who need to hear it. This was the doctrine that drove me to Christ. It will drive others as well.

Review - God Has A Glorious Plan For His People!

1. God's Plan is Mysterious

2. God's Plan Includes Israel (vs. 26)

Paul has already alluded to this in verse 25, but he makes himself crystal clear in verse 26. God will not abandon his chosen people. They will, as a nation be saved. Look at what Paul says in verse 26...

Romans 11:26 ESV

And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob";

"And in this way..." In what way? When the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. The fullness of the Gentiles comes in and results in their removal of the church of Christ from the earth, and then the Great Tribulation starts - one of the purposes of the Great Tribulation is for God to focus on the national salvation of deliverance of the Jewish nation.

Warren Weirsbe said it this way...

Romans 11:26 (BEC): The reference here is [Isaiah 59:20–21](#); and you ought to read [Isaiah 60](#) to complete the picture. God has promised to save His people, and He will keep His promise. There are those who interpret this as meaning salvation to individuals through the Gospel, but it is my conviction that the prophet has national conversion in mind. “All Israel shall be saved” does not mean that every Jew who has ever lived will be converted, but that the Jews living when the Redeemer returns will see Him, receive Him, and be saved. [Zechariah 12–13](#) give the details. It seems to me that there are too many details in these Old Testament prophecies of national restoration for Israel for us to spiritualize them and apply them to the church today.

So, one of the points of the future tribulation is to position Israel for a national, corporate salvation. Not all Jews, but all the Jews who repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in that future day, will be saved and thus fulfill this prophecy foretold by God.

Who is the deliverer? See [Isaiah 59:20](#)

Isaiah 59:20 ESV

“And a Redeemer will come to Zion,

to those in Jacob who turn from transgression,” declares the LORD.

This is very specific land language that indicates the Redeemer working in the future to deliver His people and fulfill the promises given in the Old Testament.

The Redeemer (The Messiah, Jesus) will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression.

And while this certainly happened in part at Jesus’ first coming, Christ will be accepted as Messiah by His people, on masse during the Day of the Lord before Jesus’ Millennial reign.

Folks, I just want to remind you that at Jesus’ first coming, what did his disciples want more than anything once they found out that Jesus was Messiah?

They wanted him to establish his kingdom.

[Matthew 17](#) after the Transfiguration - Will you now establish your Kingdom?

[Luke 17:20](#) the Pharisees asked Jesus when the Kingdom would be established

Look at [Acts 1:6](#)

Acts 1:6 ESV

So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”

Every good Jew was looking for the re-establishment of the Kingdom. They were looking for an earthly kingdom that would allow them to be the dominant world power once again as in the time of David.

They had a temporary earthly focus. God's mysterious plan was much bigger than they could ever imagine.

Did you know at the end of the Tribulation period is the battle of Armageddon, where the remaining wicked world comes to battle Jesus Christ?

Revelation 19:11–21 ESV

Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great." And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

After this, all the wicked are dead. But the redeemed nation of Israel (He will banish ungodliness from Jacob), along with the believing saints who survived the Great Tribulation, as well as the Church who accompanied Christ from heaven to do battle at Armageddon, will all populate the Millennial Kingdom. Where Jesus will rule and reign physically, and bodily for 1000 years.

Isn't that amazing!?

God's plan includes Israel. But what about you? Are you redeemed? Are you born again?

Review - God Has A Glorious Plan For His People!

1. God's Plan is Mysterious
2. God's Plan Includes Israel

3. God's Plan Will Happen Because of God's Covenant (vs. 27)

Can I give you a word of encouragement this morning? God is a God of his word.

Romans 11:27 ESV

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

First of all, what is a Covenant?

COVENANT (בְּרִית, *berith*; διαθήκη, *diathēkē*). A sacred kinship bond between two parties, ratified by swearing an oath. Covenant making was a widespread custom throughout the ancient Near East and Graeco-Roman culture, serving as a means to forge sociopolitical bonds between individuals or groups. God’s covenants are prominent in every period of salvation history. Divine covenants reveal the saving plan of God for establishing communion with Israel and the nations, ultimately fulfilled by the death and resurrection of Christ. - LBD

And God made a covenant, first with the Jews, that we, the church, are beneficiaries of.

Look at the text...

Jeremiah 31:31–34 ESV

“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

This is best understood for the Jews as taking place in the Millennial Kingdom!

“Noteworthy in the biblical revelation of covenant is divine initiative: humans do not, as pagans do with idols, imagine a covenant; instead, God breaks into history with a revelation of relationship in terms of covenant.” - Kevin J. Vanhooer

For the church, we have this from Pentecost forward.

For Israel, it will happen when God gloriously redeems them corporately at the end of the tribulation period.

This is God’s covenant with the nation of Israel. Do you think that God goes back on his word?

I walked the ground of the promised land. The Jews are blind to their need for Jesus. Yet I find it hard to believe that God is done with them. That all the promises for the Nation of Israel regarding land and the like are spiritualized in the church. I do not believe that Israel becomes the church. I believe Paul is saying in this text that He will again work with the Jews as a nation, and they will enjoy their preeminent place in his kingdom again along side of the Church.

And all of this rests on God’s gracious act of redemption for His people. Both the Church of Christ and God’s chosen people, Israel.

"The new covenant, is not founded on works at all, it is a covenant of pure unhinged grace." - Charles Spurgeon

There is a new covenant. Not through the blood of bulls, goats, and sheep, but by the blood shed through Jesus Christ.

Now listen, we can argue and fuss about Covenant Theology versus Dispensational Theology and all the variations within each perspective. But let's not land there this morning. Let's land in a much more poignant place.

A place that should impact you today.

Conclusion

God has a glorious plan for you!

Now I'm talking to the one who doesn't know God this morning.

God desires to have a relationship with you. Not through the Law because the Law doesn't save...

God desires to have a relationship with you through the New Covenant in His Blood. What does this mean?

Jesus willingly shed his blood, died in your place to pay your sin debt that you owe to God...

Respond by faith

Romans 10:9-10 ESV

because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

God made a covenant to provide the means of salvation from His wrath. Your part is to confess that Jesus is Lord (explain) and believe Jesus did what he said He would do (explain faith).

If this is you, you are saved!

Review - God Has A Glorious Plan For His People!

1. God's Plan is Mysterious
2. God's Plan Includes Israel
3. God's Plan Will Happen Because of God's Covenant

Action - God is on a rescue mission to save male and female, Jew and gentile, slave or free!

Would you become His today?

Friends, the title of the sermon is A Mysterious Future for God's People.

But it doesn't have to be a mystery.

1 John 5:13 ESV

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

Connection Group Reflection Questions

1. What is the mystery that Paul is referring to?
2. Why is it important that we see God still has a plan for His people, the Jews?
3. What is the New Covenant? Why is the new covenant important to the Jews and the Gentiles?
4. How does this passage motivate you to live for Christ and share this truth with others?