##### [00:00:00.210]

Well. I remember a few years back, I made a trip to Australia and to New Zealand, for those of you who have never been to Australia or New Zealand or anything at that side of the world. It takes a long time to get there. I think it was three different airline rides there and three different back. And you go across time zones when you get there, you don't know what day it is when you get back.

##### [00:00:38.280]

You don't know what day it is. But in each case, after about four or five days, you kind of figure it out. And on that on those trips, one night when I was in New Zealand, a dear friend and brother of mine and I went and spent an overnight and then a boat ride in the morning at a place called Milford Sound. Milford Sound. Is anybody ever heard of that? Milford Sound? It's one of the most incredible.

##### [00:01:07.320]

It's I think it's called a fjord, if I can say it right. Some people call it a lake. Some people call it a sound. It was an amazing, amazing time. We got there the night before our planned boat ride. It was pouring down rain. We had a light dinner. We bedded down for the night. We woke up the next morning. It was still raining. They actually postponed the boat ride for an hour until the rain started to dissipate.

##### [00:01:37.260]

And then as the rain turned into sprinkles and as the mist rose up off of Milford Sound and as the sun began to come in through the clouds off, we went on this incredible boat ride. It was amazing. Black Mountains on either side of Milford Sound, streams of water coming down from the mountain like little white rivers from the rain that had been there the night before and that morning. And as the boat ride was almost about to end. I remember just wanting to linger there for a while. And to soak in and to enjoy all the amazing and awesome and magnificent views that were all around me.

##### [00:02:33.770]

And I get the feeling. That the apostle Paul was feeling the same kind of thing as he came to the end of Chapter 11 in the Book of Romans. For 11 chapters. He had been doing the heavy lifting of explaining the good news. The gospel of God, as he refers to it in Romans 1:1. After all, we read that he was, quote "called to be an apostle". And "separated to the gospel of God." And think about all the things that he had written about.

##### [00:03:16.860]

The need for God's righteousness. That is an understanding of Gentile guilt and understanding of Jewish guilt and the conclusion that all are guilty before a just and holy God. He spoke of justification and God's righteousness with a description of righteousness, illustrations of righteousness in Abraham's life and the benefits of righteousness. The benefits of righteousness: peace with God, joy and tribulation, salvation from God's wrath. And he continues on with the contrast between righteousness on the one hand and condemnation on the other hand.

##### [00:04:06.970]

He continues with a demonstration of God's righteousness with these amazing truths. We are dead to the law, but alive to God. We are sanctified, sanctified by the Ruach HaKodesh, the Holy Spirit, who delivers us from the power of the flesh. Who gives us sonship, who assures us future glory and assures us final victory rests within. Paul then describes God's plans for both Jew and Gentile to be included into his kingdom in Romans chapters 9 and 10 and in Romans 11, which has been the chapter we've been studying these past few weeks.

##### [00:04:55.980]

We come to an end of his description and an end of our four part series. And now. As he's completed this part of his letter to the believers in Rome, to the congregation in Rome, can't you just see him pausing for a moment to dwell and to think about God's amazing greatness? I mean, maybe he just pauses for a few moments before he goes on to the last part of his letter. A part that will explain how the good news should impact the way that we live our lives day to day.

##### [00:05:40.350]

And I think that, well, in a way, Paul is inviting us to join him and to take some time to just sit back and marvel at the magnificence of God. We should just take a moment to stand in awe of God. And I think, unfortunately, that that act and that understanding, is rapidly becoming a lost art. In the body of Messiah. Sometimes in an effort to be relevant and to attract more people to Messiah, we've been guilty of making our faith just another form of self-help.

##### [00:06:34.190]

That will result in happy marriages, obedient children, contentment in our jobs. Even a healthy bank account. Now, I have no doubt that living out our faith in Yeshua can accomplish all of those things. But I believe, as I hope we will see this morning, that that is not our faith's primary purpose. And Paul's words: At the end of Chapter 11 are an important reminder that the good news in its final form is really not just about us.

##### [00:07:17.330]

In fact, it's about giving glory to the amazing, incomprehensible God who created us. And loves us. And so on this Shabbat morning. I want to take some time to explain some very important aspects from this short four verse passage that we'll be looking at. And I think that what this passage needs the most is to take some time to slowly read and meditate on it. And so let's begin by slowly reading it out loud together. And as we do that, I want you to take time to really listen as we read.

##### [00:08:07.820]

The words will be on the screen, and for those of you at home or those of you just want to read from your Bible, I'll be reading from the New King James version (NKJV). And so I'll be reading slowly. Would you read along with me, Romans 11 verses 33 to 36. Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out. For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become his counselor? Or who has first given to him, and it shall be repaid to him? For of him and through him and to him are all things to whom be glory forever.

##### [00:09:03.200]

Amen. Paul stands in awe of God. And I don't know about you. But I don't think that Paul ever wrote a more beautiful and wonderful passage, then this. These four verses. I mean, if you think about it in these four verses: theology turns to poetic beauty. And the searching of the mind turns to the adoration of the heart. and my hope and prayer this morning is that we would, like Paul, allow God to transform all the information that we have, all the knowledge that we've accumulated, all of it.

##### [00:09:56.990]

Into adoration of the one who is deserving of it all. Well, Paul begins this section of Chapter 11 with a simple two letter word. "Oh." Now, in the Greek, it's a note of exclamation. It's a note that is almost untranslatable into the English, it's its pause, awestruck, "oh". As he glories in his God and creation. And then he proceeds with what is essentially a nine line hymn constructed in a series of threes with one of those threes broken down into another three.

##### [00:10:47.100]

And so with that in mind, let's go through the passage one more time. Verse 1. Oh! The depth of the riches of the wisdom of and the knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments, his ways are past finding out? Paul begins his hymn by focusing on three attributes of God, one: His. He's deep. Two: he is unsearchable.And three, His ways are past finding out, they're inscrutable, they're incomprehensible. And he further breaks down the idea of God's depth when it comes to his riches, his wisdom and his knowledge. His riches, his wisdom and his knowledge.

##### [00:11:48.290]

So let me just make a few points here. While we can know God to the extent that He has revealed Himself to us, the idea of his depth means that He is far greater than we can ever understand. His riches and His wisdom. And His knowledge are so very deep that in this world, at least, we can never get to the very bottom of them. And as to his judgments, well they reflect the date they refer, rather, to the decisions that he makes. Including the one to make salvation available to all mankind.

##### [00:12:34.820]

Pretty good decision, if you ask me. And those decisions that God makes, well, they're all unsearchable in the sense that they are impossible for us to understand fully with our finite human minds. Maybe Paul had these words from Isaiah 40:28 in mind as he wrote these verses. Quote: "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the Earth. Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable."

##### [00:13:15.440]

His understanding is unsearchable. God's ways. Well, they refer to the actions he takes as a result of his judgments. And his ways are beyond understanding. They are, in fact, unsearchable. It's kind of like, I guess, like a hunter who's unable to follow the tracks of an animal he's hunting. The final pursuit is just plain unattainable. Next, Paul poses three rhetorical questions that reinforce the idea of our inability to fully understand our God and creator.

##### [00:13:58.310]

Number one: who has known the mind of the Lord? Who has known the mind of the Lord? Number Two: Who has become His counselor? Who has become His counselor? And number three: who has given to Him that it might be repaid? Who has given to Him, that it might be repaid? But you need to understand, like so many of Paul's questions in the Book of Romans, these questions are worded in such a way so as to expect a negative answer.

##### [00:14:34.930]

And the first two questions, well, they flow also from the Tanak, Isaiah, 40, verse 13, who has directed The Spirit of the Lord? Or as his counselor has taught Him? Isaiah wrote these words, by the way, during a time when Israel's rescue seemed almost impossible. But God was reminding Isaiah, to get his people to trust him and not to question his actions. And Paul seems to be drawing a parallel in his very day. In which salvation also, perhaps to many, seemed impossible.

##### [00:15:13.140]

He's reminding his readers and he's reminding us that God knows what he's doing, God knows what he's doing, even if they or we can't understand at all. And the third question that Paul asks comes from Job. Job, chapter 4 and verse 11. Who has preceded me that I should pay him? Everything under heaven is mine. The idea here is that there's nothing that anyone could give to God that would indebt God to us in any way, shape or form. God owes us nothing.

##### [00:15:59.530]

And finally, Paul ends with a three line doxology that points to God as the source, the sustainer and the significance of all things. Source, sustainer and significance. In verse 36, we find: for of Him, through Him and to Him are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen. Paul reaffirms here the sovereignty of God by reminding us that God is the source of all things, of Him. God is the sustainer of all things, through Him. And God is the significance of all things, to Him.

##### [00:17:02.010]

And so, as I was thinking about this sermon during the week. I was thinking about some applications for this message. But the more I thought. The more I felt that focusing on applications would actually hinder us from getting all that is written in. In other words, getting the essence of Paul's words here. In short, sometimes, and please listen, we don't need more information or application, we just need: more adoration. We just need more adoration.

##### [00:17:48.510]

And so as the worship team comes back to the bema. I'm going to read this passage once more. Slowly. And I don't want you to read it with me, I just want you to let the words that Paul writes here soak in. I want you to meditate on the words and experience, experience the awe and wonder of our God. Oh! The depth of the riches. Both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments? And his ways past finding out? For who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has become his counselor? Or who has first given to him and it shall be repaid to him?

##### [00:18:50.620]

For of Him. And through Him. And to Him. Are all things to whom be glory forever. Amen.