

The Supremacy of God

Romans 11.36

[From *Typology to Doxology* by Andy Naselli inspired this sermon]

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Scripture Reader and Reading: Jake McNeil – Isaiah 40.12–14

Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg – Songs exalting God

Prelude:

I. In the opening chapter of the Book of Romans,

- A. Paul declared his readiness to preach the Gospel, because
- B. it has the power to save anyone.
 - 1. He then split humanity into two parts,
 - 2. showing how or why both groups need salvation.
 - a) First, he showed the sins of the Gentiles.
 - b) Then, he demonstrated the sins of the Jews.

II. Since both groups,

- A. need salvation, Paul proclaimed:

21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...

– Romans 3.21–23

- B. He then presented that by faith in Jesus Christ,
 - 1. we can have peace with God, for
 - 2. Jesus removed the sin problem separating us from God.

III. However, he had to deal with the issue of Jewish unbelief, because

- A. God used them to bless the world with this salvation.
- B. How do we explain or understand this problem?
 - 1. Chapters 9–11 cover that important subject.

IV. As he was finishing that section,

A. he talked about

1. how the Lord used Israel to bless the world and
2. how the Lord uses the world to bring Israel back.

B. He began his conclusion in this manner:

28 Concerning the gospel they [The Jews] are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they [Jews] are beloved for the sake of the fathers [Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob]. 29 For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. 30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their [Jews] disobedience, 31 even so these [Jews] also have now been disobedient, that *through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy.*

– Romans 11.28–31

C. Then Paul gave his grand conclusion for 9–11 and really for the whole book:

32 For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

– Romans 11.32

1. God showed that all people are guilty of disobeying him, and
2. God showed that to all people
 - a) that he might show mercy to all, because
 - b) he has no desire to condemn anyone.

V. Having surveyed how God worked in history to save man,

A. Paul broke forth with a wonderful praise and glorification of God:

33 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!

**34 “For who has known the mind of the LORD?
Or who has become His counselor?”**

**35 “Or who has first given to Him
And it shall be repaid to him?”**

**36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory
forever. Amen.**

– Romans 11.33–36

B. It is this magnificent exaltation of God the Lord that I wish to show you.

1. After looking at this passage,
2. I hope that you will see how
 - a) grand and mighty our God is, and
 - b) how insignificant and unimpressive we are!

Persuasion:

I. The Supremacy of God

A. We have mapped the genome and

1. now scientists have decided to map the human brain, but
2. no one can map the mind of God!

B. He is superior to everyone!

C. He is superior to everything!

II. Romans 11.33 • The Immensity of God

**33 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!**

A. How can we exhaust the grandeur of our Creator?

B. Consider the way the psalmist, Asaph, put it:

**19 Your way was in the sea,
Your path in the great waters,
And Your footsteps were not known.**

– **Psalm 77.19**

1. Imagine you follow someone's footsteps into the ocean.
2. Once the footprints enter the water,
 - a) where do you go from there.
 - b) You don't see footprints coming out of the water.
 - (1) Did the person go a little ways and turn left or right?
 - (2) Did this aquatic man walk all the way to the other side?
 - (a) How vast is the ocean?
 - (b) Yet, what is the ocean in comparison to God?
3. Picture the first people who came to America on either coast.
 - a) Upon entering the land,
 - b) would they have any idea of:
 - (1) Its size?
 - (2) Its variety?
 - (3) Its future?
 - (a) How vast is this nation that we call home?
 - (b) Yet, what is America in comparison to God who created it?

C. Job said it all:

**14 "Indeed these are the mere edges of His ways,
And how small a whisper we hear of Him!
But the thunder of His power who can understand?"**

– **Job 26.14**

III. Romans 11.34 • Why God Is Superior: Part 1

**34 "For who has known the mind of the LORD?
Or who has become His counselor?"**

A. Paul used the language of Isaiah in 40.13.

1. Let's look at verses 12–14 and see
2. of whom we speak.
 - a) Isaiah presented a series of questions.
 - b) See if you can answer them:

**12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand,
Measured heaven with a span
And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure?
Weighed the mountains in scales
And the hills in a balance?**

**13 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD,
Or as His counselor has taught Him?**

**14 With whom did He take counsel, and who instructed Him,
And taught Him in the path of justice?
Who taught Him knowledge,
And showed Him the way of understanding?**

– Isaiah 40.12–14

(1) I can only say: Not me!

(2) Nor do I know anyone, other than Almighty God himself.

B. Isaiah provided the answers by speaking of God:

**15 Behold, the nations are as a drop in a bucket,
And are counted as the small dust on the scales;
Look, He lifts up the isles as a very little thing.**

**16 And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn,
Nor its beasts sufficient for a burnt offering.**

**17 All nations before Him are as nothing,
And they are counted by Him less than nothing and worthless.**

– Isaiah 40.15–17

C. Who then is anyone that can give God advice?

1. People do it all the time.

2. Yet, if you ponder the truths of verses 12–17,
 - a) you will see how utterly foolish it is to do such.
 - b) Great leaders of the earth need counselors, but
 - (1) not the Creator of
 - (a) the earth,
 - (b) the great leaders, or
 - (c) their counselors.
 - (2) Do we know fully what it means that he is God?

IV. Romans 11.35 • Why God Is Superior: Part 2

35 “Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?”

- A. Here, Paul alluded to God’s words in Job 41.11a.
- B. Job demanded his day in court with God because
 1. he had questions for God.
 2. Job expected answers.
- C. God asked Job questions about creation
 1. that Job could not answer,
 2. showing that he was just a puny creature
 - a) who did not know what he was saying, but
 - b) that God made and controls all things.
- D. Then God had Job consider a confrontation with Leviathan,
 1. a dangerous sea-going reptile of some kind.
 2. List to how God pictures this creature and the application:
 - 1 “Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook,
Or snare his tongue with a line which you lower?**
 - 2 Can you put a reed through his nose,**

- Or pierce his jaw with a hook?**
- 3 Will he make many supplications to you?
Will he speak softly to you?**
 - 4 Will he make a covenant with you?
Will you take him as a servant forever?**
 - 5 Will you play with him as with a bird,
Or will you leash him for your maidens?**
 - 6 Will your companions make a banquet of him?
Will they apportion him among the merchants?**
 - 7 Can you fill his skin with harpoons,
Or his head with fishing spears?**
 - 8 Lay your hand on him;
Remember the battle—
Never do it again!**
 - 9 Indeed, any hope of overcoming him is false;
Shall one not be overwhelmed at the sight of him?**
 - 10 No one is so fierce that he would dare stir him up.**

Who then is able to stand against Me?"

– Job 41.1–10

- a) You can't have a successful confrontation with Leviathan, Job, and
- b) you think you want to confront me?
 - (1) Then God wanted Job to understand
 - (2) that he was not obligated to Job:

**11 "Who has preceded Me, that I should pay him?
Everything under heaven is Mine."**

– Job 41.11

- (a) What did God owe Job?
- (b) God owns everything.
 - i) The reverse is true.
 - ii) Job owed God.

E. What God did from Job 38–41 is show

1. that God was too small in Job's eyes,
2. that Job was too large in his own eyes, and
 - a) that God was not obligated to Job, truly,
 - b) God did not even owe answers to Job's questions.

F. Go back to Romans 11 to see how Paul expands on verse 33:

**33 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!**

**34 "For who has known the mind of the LORD?
Or who has become His counselor?"**

**35 "Or who has first given to Him
And it shall be repaid to him?"**

– Romans 11.33–35

1. The knowledge of God is deep (33a), because
 - a) he is incomprehensible (34a).
2. The wisdom of God is deep (33b), because
 - a) he has no need for counselors (34b).
3. The riches of God are deep (33a), because
 - a) he has no need for creditors (35).

G. Therefore, here what Paul said next...

V. Romans 11.36 • Why He Is God

36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

A. Of him are all things:

1. He begins everything.
2. He is the Creator of all.

B. Through him are all things:

1. He sustains everything.
2. He is the Provider of all.

C. To him are all things:

1. He ends everything.
2. He is the Judge of all.

D. To him belongs eternal glory:

**11 “You are worthy, O Lord,
 To receive glory and honor and power;
 For You created all things,
 And by Your will they exist and were created.”**

– Revelation 4.11

E. Meditate on what Paul said here:

1. “Of him,” God is the source of all things.
2. “Through him,” God is the means of all things.
3. “To him,” God is the goal of all things.
 - a) He is the beginning of all things.
 - b) He is the middle of all things.
 - c) He is the end of all things.

Exhortation:

I. Do you agree with Paul?

II. Therefore,

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.”

– A. W. Tozer

A. What comes into your mind when you think about God?

B. I hope that Romans 11.33–36 has expanded your thoughts of God.

III. As grand and as magnificent as he is,

A. then ponder the fact

B. that he stoops down to bless us,

1. namely, by offering a way of salvation.

2. This is the message of the Book of Romans.