

ROMANS 11:33-36

Romans 9-11 ends with a acclamation of praise to the inestimable greatness and glory of God. The praise is based on the previous three chapters and specifically on how and a righteous and just God would provide a way for sinful and condemned people to find forgiveness of sin and a personal relationship with God. The wisdom and greatness of God is seen in that His plan favors no one - Jew or Gentile, man or woman, young or old, all can find the mercies of God in Messiah Jesus through the simple act of faith.

33 **O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!**

"O the depth..."

This captures the essence of this refrain - "the depth" when it comes to God is unsearchable by man. Isaiah captures the gap between God and man when he says:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9

For man to understand God is like a mouse swallowing an elephant.

"The riches of the wisdom of God"



God's wisdom is priceless and we are unable to fathom how great is His wisdom.

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding." Job 38:4

In response to Job's complaining that God is not fair, Job is rebuked.

"Job's solution was not to discover why he suffered, for he did not. Job was brought to his senses by the realization that he spoke as if he understood the course of life in this world when, in fact, he did not. He was in the dark. God knew all about his suffering; knew the reasons for it and when and how it would end. But Job did not. The recognition of how little we see, how little we understand, and how little we can explain is absolutely fundamental to that humility which is a chief part of true wisdom. And it is an essential ingredient in the faithful response to suffering on the part of the people of God. Why God has allowed this I do not know. I must put my hand over my mouth because I cannot explain God's ways. And why should anyone think that I could; he being so great and I being so small? But, because, like all things, it comes from God, there must be an excellent reason, however hidden that reason may be!" Rev. Dr. Robert S. Rayburn, *God's Answer to Job's Complaint*



Believers are commanded to pursue wisdom. This challenge is replete throughout scripture. Proverbs has 54 verses that reference wisdom.

"Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding." Proverbs 4:7

"How much better is it to get wisdom than gold!" Proverbs 16:16

James 3:

- 14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.
- 15 **This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.**
- 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.
- 17 **But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.**
- 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James 1:

- 5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.
- 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.



Wisdom is found ONLY in the word of God.

"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." 1 Corinthians 1:19-20, 24

God's wisdom is revealed in His word. "Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me." Psalm 119:98



Knowledge is to know something. Wisdom is the ability to apply the knowledge you know to your affairs of life.

There are things in life we will never understand - the death of a baby, the loss of a mother in the early years of her children, the entrance of evil into the an individuals or families life, etc.

In these situations, wisdom is recognizing "**the depth of the riches of God's wisdom,**" and accepting what is happening, not only not blaming or being bitter toward God, but realizing, albeit not understanding, that God's ways are so much greater than ours we humbly accept and praise Him for His love and faithfulness to us, His children.

"The riches of the knowledge of God"

gnosis from *ginosko* = to know especially experientially) in simple terms is the possession of information of what is known. *Gnosis* describes the comprehension or intellectual grasp of something.

God is omniscient, knowing everything in the past, present, and future.

"O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.

Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways.

For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.

Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it.." Psalm 139:1-6

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." 1 John 3:20

The reality of God's omniscient knowledge is unfathomable to us - "O the depth..."

"The unsearchableness of God's judgments"

"Unsearchableness"

This postclassical word means "inscrutable" and is used in Romans 11:33 for the mystery of God's way of judgment with Israel that leads to grace. The term implies that the question of the meaning of this judgment cannot be given any theoretical human answer.

Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans

Job 11:7

Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

8

It is as high as heaven; what canst thou do? deeper than hell; what canst thou know?

9

The measure thereof is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea.

"God's judgments"

Psalm 36:5-6

Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds.

Thy righteousness is like the great mountains; thy judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou preservest man and beast.

This has to do with the decisions He makes. Who are we to question God?

"The unsearchableness of God's ways"

"It [unsearchableness] offers a striking figure of speech. When following someone in the desert, all you have to do is to trace their footprints in the sand. From their footprints, you can discover where they came from and where they are. But, when it comes to the ways of God, there are no footprints in the sand. You must throw up your hands in defeat and say, "God's path is untraceable!" Dr. Randy Yeager comments "God's thoughts, His philosophy, the rationale behind His decrees defy human analysis. The hiss of the serpent can be discerned unmistakably in the effort to find a theology that man can understand in all of its parts. Unregenerate philosophers and theologians would never write what Paul has written here, and they are contemptuous of what he has written. Their theology is clear to them because it is the product of their own intellectual creation." Morey, R. A. The Trinity : Evidences and Issues. Iowa Falls, IA.: World Pub.

34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

For who hath known the mind of the Lord?

"Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." Psalm 40:5

who hath been his counsellor?

"Who hath directed the Spirit of the LORD, or being his counsellor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?" Isaiah 40:13-14

35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?

God is a debtor to no person. There is nothing man can offer to God for salvation (this is the context). Salvation is wholly of grace through faith. God's gift!

36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

In Paul's final thoughts on Romans 9-11, he make three observations and one conclusion.

All things are

Of Him	God is the source of everything
Through Him	God is the sustainer of everything.
To Him	Everyone ultimately answers to God

"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." Colossians 1:16-19

to whom be glory for ever God will be glorified forever

Amen It is spoken to express solemn ratification or agreement. It means "it is so" or "so it be."
Amen is derived from the Hebrew אָמֵן , which means "certainty," "truth," and "verily."

J. B. Phillips wrote a book a number of years ago entitled Your God Is Too Small exposing views of God that we all hold to that are woefully inadequate. The "Cosmic Policeman"- the view of God that he is standing around every corner just waiting for us to slip up with respect to the law. Or the "indulgent old man" - a little senile but very friendly, or the "frantic manager" - he's got sweat on his brow because the world is such a mess and he is trying to hold it all together, or the "parental hangover" - all the warts and scars in your parent's lives that you project unto God. Every single one of us has skewed views of God. Views of God that are skewed because of our background, and our experiences or perhaps just simply because of our ignorance. And we don't realize that we are actually worshipping an idol. Much of our lives and much of our time is spent worshipping a figment of our own imaginations and what we fail to realize is that God exists independently of our views of him. The God who is there exists as he is regardless of our woefully, inadequate views of him. And our goal as Christians ought to be to bring our understanding of God in line with the truth of who he really is.

AMEN!!!