



Kindness

Session 9 • Romans 11:11-24



ENGAGE

PREPARE: Display **Pack item 2** (*Poster: Outline of Romans*). Make copies of **Pack Item 14** (*Handout: Jewish and Gentile Believers in Rome*). Write the word *Invitation* on the whiteboard.

DIRECT: Read the opening paragraph on page 77. Highlight the word “Invitation” on the whiteboard. Note that people send invitations in many ways today. Point out that sometimes we are the ones inviting others, while at other times, we are the ones receiving the invitation.

ASK: When was the last time you received an unexpected invitation to something? (p. 77)

SHARE: *Paul understood the tension between the Jews and the gospel. But he also knew that God wasn't done with the Jewish nation. He was living proof that God's invitation for salvation was still open to Israelites—as well as to Gentiles.*

EXPLAIN: Summarize this content from page 77 to highlight God's universal offer of salvation:

- “Paul stressed that God had not turned His back on Israel. His mercy toward the Jews would never be smothered. Quite the

opposite, His abiding love for them would always fuel the fire of His mercy toward them. . . . God showed his mercy to Jews and Gentiles alike.”

TRANSITION: Direct attention to **Pack Item 2** (*Poster: Outline of Romans*) and highlight Romans 9–11, “The Mystery of Israel.” Remind adults that the last session examined verses from chapters 9–10. Share that this session concludes this section on the nation of Israel by looking at chapter 11.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

READ: Ask a volunteer to read **Romans 11:11-16**, listening for how Israel's rejection of the gospel benefited the Gentiles.

REVIEW: Distribute copies of **Pack Item 14** (*Handout: Jewish and Gentile Believers in Rome*). Direct adults to work in pairs to scan the article and to highlight things that resonate with them. Lead a brief discussion on how the themes in the article connect to Romans 11:11-16.

EXPLAIN: On a whiteboard write *Jews reject, Gentiles believe, Jews jealous*. Highlight Paul's desire to share the gospel with Gentiles and the impact it could have on Jews who needed to come to Jesus. Note that seeing God at work in the lives of Gentiles

through Christ would prompt the Jews to turn back to Him.

REVIEW: Summarize this information to explain the relationship between the Gentile's acceptance of the gospel and Paul's hope for the Jews:

- **(11:15)** Through the rejection of the Jews, God brought reconciliation to the world. The Gentiles had the opportunity to receive Christ even as the Jews rejected Him. Paul also believed that the acceptance of the Gentiles meant life from the dead for the Jews. It is a cycle of grace. Because the Jews rejected Christ, the Gentiles received Him. Because the Gentiles received Him, the Jews would move toward a spiritual awakening of faith. Israel's faith would move them from being dead in their sin to being made alive in Christ.

ASK: If God's plan of salvation embraces all peoples, what is one next step—prayer, conversation, hospitality, giving, or going—you will take to participate in that plan this week? (p. 79)



God's People

Paul compared Israel to a cultivated olive tree, with Gentiles as wild branches grafted onto the original.

READ: Read aloud Romans 11:17-22 as the group listens for the imagery and process of grafting. Share that the olive tree is a common Old Testament symbol for Israel, God's people.

GUIDE: Explain that grafting connects an outside branch to an existing tree. Note that over time, the grafted branch becomes a vital part of the tree to which it was grafted. Share how Paul used this image to explain the Gentiles' place in God's kingdom:

- **(11:17)** Paul compared the Gentiles to a wild olive branch that God grafted in so they might flourish as His people. The root, in turn, evoked God's life-giving presence among His people. The grafted branch thrived because it shared in the same nourishment that had sustained the cultivated olive tree—an image Paul clearly intended to represent the Jewish people.

DISCUSS: Write the word *boasting* on the board or a large sheet of paper. Lead a brief discussion on why Gentiles might be inclined to boast after being grafted into God's people. Use the following information to supplement the discussion.

- **(11:19-21)** The Gentiles' boast would be that the branches were broken off so wild branches could be brought in. The rejection of the Jews led to the grafting of the Gentiles. However, Paul emphasized that the broken branches resulted from unbelief (v. 20), while the grafting was the result of faith. God didn't favor one group over the other. He saved members of both groups as they came to Him in faith.

SAY: *Paul reminded the Gentiles that God had not spared the original branches from being broken off when they were disobedient. That meant He would use the same standard and judgment for them if they became arrogant.*

ASK: When might we feel boastful of our spiritual blessings? How can we turn from spiritual pride to genuine care? (p. 79)

READ: Invite a volunteer to read

Romans 11:23-24 as the group listens for words that indicate hope for the future that comes through repentance and faith.

DISCUSS: Write the word *grace* on the board. Lead a brief discussion on how these verses demonstrate God's grace.

REVIEW: Summarize the following information to emphasize God's ability to save anyone who comes to Him in faith.

- **(11:23-24)** Paul had already said God was willing to save Israel (Rom. 10:21); here he emphasized that God was able to do so. God has the power to graft broken branches back in, but unbelief—not His ability—stood in the way. God would not force them to return; they had to believe in Jesus. Jews and Gentiles share the same path to salvation: repentance and faith in Christ. When they turn to Him, God is able to restore them to His family.

ASK: What do you learn about God's heart from His willingness to restore those who previously rejected Him? How might that influence the way you view people who have walked away from faith? (p. 79)

HIGHLIGHT: Focus on Romans 11:33 as this session's memory verse. Note that this verse calls believers to praise God for His grace. Direct the group to read the verse aloud chorally. Allow time for them to paraphrase the verse in their own words.

TRANSITION: *Paul acknowledged that God's grace provides hope for restoration for both Jews and Gentiles who put aside their unbelief and put their faith in Christ.*

CHALLENGE

SUMMARIZE: Review these points from this week's Bible study passage:

- We can be assured that the gospel is for all people.
- As members of God's family, believers should embrace humility and resist spiritual pridefulness.
- Believers can take comfort in knowing God has the power to save those who repent.

REFLECT: Organize the group into small teams of three or four people each. Direct the groups to read and discuss the **Apply the Text** activity on page 79. After a few minutes, review responses and highlight the importance of humility in sharing the gospel with others.

PRAY: Encourage adults to think of people or groups they might consider unreachable, and to ask God to change their heart this week. Close the session in prayer.

AFTER THE SESSION

Reinforce the session by sending a text or email to the group. Encourage them to ask God to open their eyes so they can see people who might need to hear about Christ's power to restore them to God.