

Discussion Guide

Romans 11:25-36

Opening Prayer

Guided Prayer: Pray asking for the Holy Spirit's guidance in understanding and applying the truths discussed.

Recap

Recap of the Sermon and Summary of the Text

In Romans 11:25-36, Paul discusses a profound mystery concerning Israel and the Gentiles. He reveals that Israel's hardening is partial and temporary, lasting only until the full number of Gentiles has come in. This hardening serves the purpose of opening salvation to Gentiles, and ultimately, it will lead to the salvation of all Israel, as prophesied in the Scriptures. Paul emphasizes that God's gifts and calling are irrevocable, showing that God has not abandoned His covenant with Israel despite their current unbelief. The passage culminates in a doxology that praises the depth of the riches of God's wisdom and knowledge, reflecting on the inscrutable and merciful nature of God's judgments and ways. This section underscores the complexity of God's plan and His sovereign mercy in saving both Jews and Gentiles.

Understanding the Text

1. **The Mystery of Israel's Hardening:** What is the mystery Paul reveals about Israel's hardening? How is it both partial and temporary?
2. **Salvation of the Gentiles:** How does Israel's hardening contribute to the salvation of the Gentiles?
3. **All Israel Will Be Saved:** What does Paul mean by "all Israel will be saved"? How does this fit with the prophetic scriptures he references?
4. **Irrevocable Gifts and Calling:** What does Paul imply when he says God's gifts and calling are irrevocable?
5. **Praise for God's Wisdom:** What leads Paul to break out in praise of God's wisdom and knowledge at the end of this passage?

Practical Application

1. **Reflecting on God's Mercy:** How does understanding the interplay between Israel's hardening and Gentile inclusion enhance your appreciation of God's mercy?
2. **Endurance in Faith:** Knowing that God's plan includes merciful outcomes for both Jews and Gentiles, how does this affect your perseverance in faith during difficult times?
3. **Attitude Towards Others:** How can the knowledge that God's calling is irrevocable shape our attitude towards those who currently do not believe?
4. **Prayer for Israel:** In light of Paul's teaching, how might we pray for unbelieving Jews and for the full inclusion of the Gentiles?
5. **Admiration of God's Nature:** How can meditating on the depth of God's riches, wisdom, and knowledge impact our daily life and ultimately our worship?

6. **Unity in the Church:** Considering the unity Paul emphasizes between Jewish and Gentile believers, how can we foster a spirit of unity within our own church community?

God Has More to Say

Romans 11:25-36 concludes Paul's discussion of God's plan for Israel and the Gentiles with a profound doxology celebrating God's wisdom and knowledge. This section discusses the "mystery" of Israel's partial hardening until the full number of Gentiles comes in, and it ultimately foresees all Israel being saved, according to prophecy. Here are related biblical passages that illuminate these themes:

1. **Isaiah 59:20-21:** Quoted directly in Romans 11:26-27, this passage prophesies the Redeemer coming to Zion and to those in Jacob who turn from transgression. It supports Paul's assertion that all Israel will be saved as part of God's covenant.
2. **Jeremiah 31:31-34:** This passage about the new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah underlines the themes in Romans 11 regarding God's ongoing covenant relationship with Israel, including their eventual full inclusion.
3. **Ezekiel 36:24-28:** Ezekiel's prophecy about God cleansing Israel and giving them a new heart and spirit complements the theme of renewal and restoration discussed in Romans 11.
4. **Zechariah 12:10:** This prophecy about the spirit of grace and supplication being poured out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, leading them to mourn for the one they pierced, ties into the discussion of Israel's future repentance and salvation.
5. **Acts 15:14-18:** James cites the prophets to support the inclusion of the Gentiles, which he links to God's promise to rebuild David's fallen tent, indicating that this was part of God's plan to include Gentiles before fully restoring Israel.
6. **Luke 21:24:** Jesus talks about Jerusalem being trampled by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, which parallels Paul's statement about Israel's hardening until the full number of Gentiles comes in.
7. **1 Thessalonians 2:14-16:** Paul discusses the wrath coming upon the Jews at last for killing Jesus and the prophets and driving out the Christians, similar to the "hardening" discussed in Romans 11.
8. **Ephesians 3:1-6:** Paul writes about the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit: that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members of one body.
9. **Revelation 7:9-10:** The vision of a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne in white robes, praising God, aligns with the universal scope of salvation Paul describes in Romans 11.
10. **Revelation 11:15:** The kingdom of the world becoming the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever, underlines the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises to both Jews and Gentiles.

Prayer - End with prayer, focusing on specific requests related to the sermon's themes, personal struggles, and applications.