

Asking For a Friend

Part 4

Key Scriptures: Romans 11:1-6; Genesis 12:1-3; Zechariah 2:8-9

1. Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- "What's the most surprising or interesting thing you've learned about Israel, either from history or the Bible?"
- "Why do you think a small nation like Israel has such a significant impact on world events today?"

2. Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- **Read Romans 11:1-6.** Paul asks, "Did God reject His people?" What does Paul's own story as an Israelite teach us about God's plan for Israel?
- **Romans 11:11** asks if Israel has stumbled beyond recovery. How does this passage challenge the idea that God has given up on Israel or anyone who turns away from Him?
- **Genesis 12:1-3** promises blessings to those who bless Israel and curses to those who curse it. As part of "all peoples on earth", what does this mean for how we should view Israel today?
- **In Zechariah 2:8**, God says Israel is the "apple of His eye." How does this shape our understanding of Israel's spiritual importance in God's plan?
- How does Paul's metaphor of grafting in Romans 11:17-24 speak to God's plan for Jews and Gentiles alike?

3. Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- Have you ever felt like you've stumbled too far for God to forgive? How does Israel's story reassure you of God's enduring grace?
- Have you ever struggled with feeling rejected by God? How do Paul's words in Romans 11 challenge that feeling?
- How can we as Christians support Israel today while also caring about justice and peace in the region?

4. Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

- Pray for peace in the Middle East, for protection over Israel, and for God's purposes to prevail in the conflict.
- Pray for the salvation of Israel, that more would come to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, as described in Romans 11.

5. Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- This week, commit to praying daily for Israel, using the scriptures discussed today (Romans 11, Genesis 12, and Zechariah 2) as a guide.