

God's mercy is hidden when the moment in history looks hopeless

Romans 11:1–10

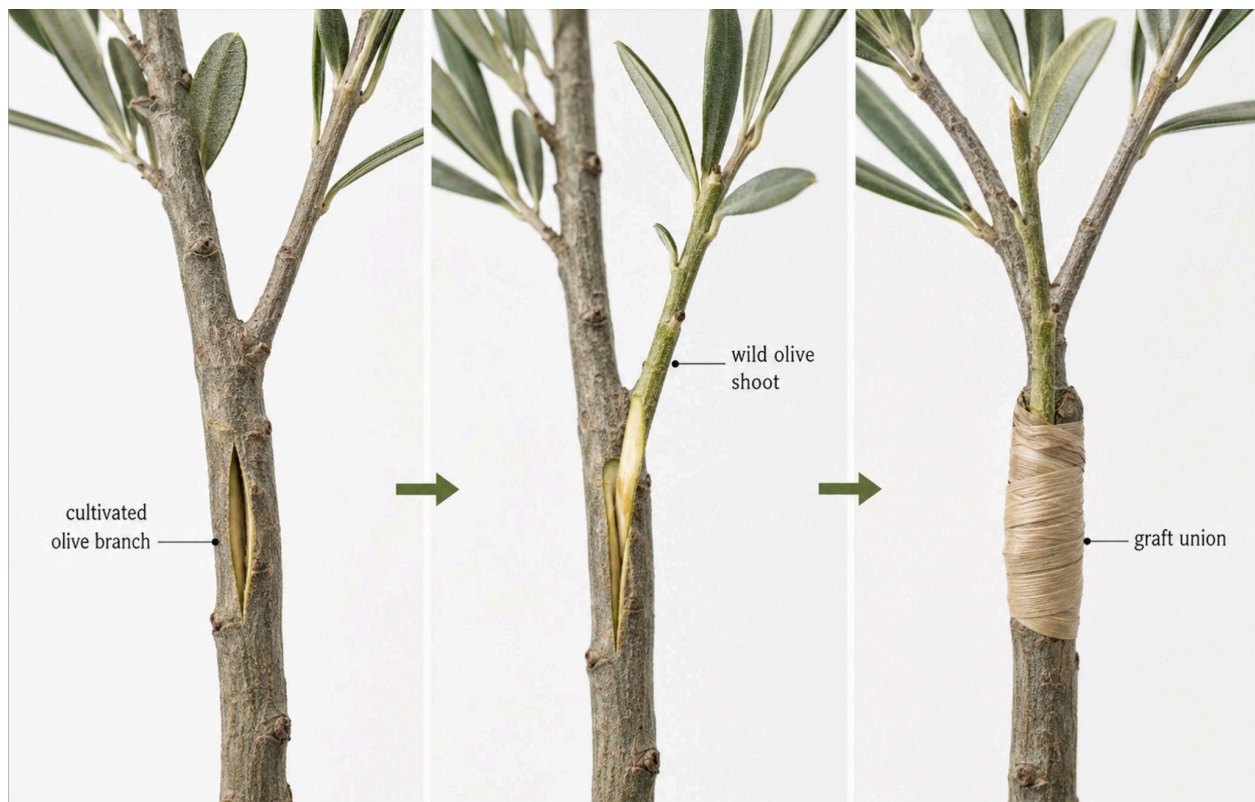
“I mention these only because while these details may sound terrible to us, this was part of the heroism of the ancient world ... Homer does not account for our modern sensibility and the reason for that is that our modern ethical assumptions have a very distinct biblical tone to them... We can assume that tossing babies off of walls, killing unarmed civilians, [assaulting] and enslaving, torturing and dismembering, are things people ought not to do ... But we think this because of the last 2 thousand years of Christian ethics whispering in our ears. People of the past may have thought these acts heroic, not horrific.”

- Wes Huff

<https://churchleaders.com/news/2211060-wes-huff-christopher-nolan-the-odyssey.html>

God's mercy comes to outsiders without making them superior

Romans 11:11-21



God's mercy is severe enough to humble us and kind enough to save us

Romans 11:22-32

Discussion Questions for Home Groups and Family Dinner Tables

1. Re-read the story of Elijah in 1 Kings 18-19. Elijah thought he was alone, but God told him there were still 7,000 who had not bowed to Baal. Why is it hard for us to trust God's hidden work when the moment looks hopeless?
2. Romans 11:5-6 says the remnant is "chosen by grace," and if it is by grace, it is not by works. What are some ways religious people can still try to make salvation about performance, pedigree, knowledge, or "being better"?(see also: Ephesians 2:8-9)
3. Paul says Gentile believers are like wild olive branches grafted into Israel's tree. What does this picture teach us about being an "outsider" welcomed by grace? Where do you personally need to receive that mercy?
4. Romans 11 warns Gentile Christians not to become arrogant toward Jewish people or toward anyone else. How can grace itself get twisted into pride?
5. Romans 11:22 says to consider both the kindness and severity of God. Which one are you more likely to minimize: God's kindness or God's severity? What happens to our faith when we lose either one?
6. Read together the doxology at the end of Romans 11 and pray. In that time, give thanks to God for specific acts of mercy that he has highlighted through this chapter and sermon.