

Motivational Gift of Mercy

Romans 12:8 He who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Defined:

Hebrew - "Hesed" = "Unfailing kindness; loyal, unchanging & steadfast love"

Greek - "Eleos" = "Compassion by word and deed, mercy; Cheerfulness, readiness of mind"

Description:

The motivational gift of mercy is the special ability God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to feel genuine empathy and compassion for individuals, both Christian and non-Christian, who suffer distressing physical, mental or emotional problems; and the ability to translate that compassion into cheerfully done deeds which reflect Christ's love and alleviate the suffering.

Matthew 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

People With This Gift Show:

- Empathy
- Attentiveness
- Caring
- Compassion
- Comfort
- Deference
- Fairness
- Meekness
- Gentleness
- Sensitivity
- Responsiveness
- Tolerance
- Kindness



Characteristics:

1. Express love, grace and dignity to those facing hardships or crisis.
2. Have sensitivity to what the need is - the surface *and* the root needs.
3. Desire to remove the hurts of others.
4. Serve in difficult or unsightly circumstances, and do so cheerfully in spite of the undeserving nature of the needy without grudging or complaint.
5. Serve others with extraordinary patience.
6. Concern themselves with individual or social issues in which people are treated unjustly.
7. The least noticed, but most appreciated gift (along with the ministry of helps).
8. The ability to feel genuine pity and compassion for people in trouble.
9. Has the God-given ability to sense the pain of individuals and groups, often by just walking into a room.
10. Emphasize mental and emotional relationships in helping those in need.
11. Measure acceptance by physical closeness and quality time together.
12. Those with the motivational gift of mercy can discern, feel, and on occasion, actually *suffer* the distress of other people - especially affliction or adversity which is undeserved. They identify with and adapt their own feelings to the feelings of others. They may actually take on themselves the hurts and heartaches of others.

Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

13. The gift of *service* seeks to meet the needs of others by giving *practical* help, but the gift of *mercy* meets the *emotional* needs of those in difficulty.
14. Tolerant of individual differences.
15. Very sensitive to words and actions that may hurt others.
16. Desire for Christians stop hating and hurting one another.
17. Enjoy being with others who are mercy-motivated.
18. Attract people with the motivational gifting of prophecy.
19. Are loyal in friendships and expect the same from others.
20. Easily detect insincerity or wrong motives.
21. Are attractive to those who were hurting.

Matthew 9:27 When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!"

Scriptural Examples:

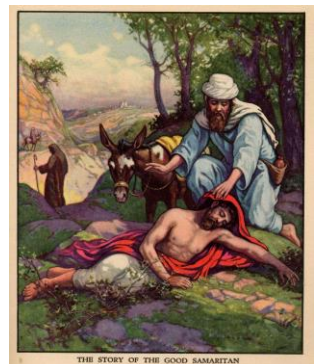
1. Jesus empathized with the needs of the crowds when He saw they were harassed and faint with their troubles. They were helpless, cast down and dejected by their affliction. They were as sheep without a shepherd to guide them out of their misery. The gospels indicate that Jesus was stirred to mercy and compassion whenever He saw people afflicted by disease, injustice, grief, hunger, or loneliness.

2. Dorcas (Acts 9:36)

"At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did".

3. Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

"And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?"²⁷ So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'"²⁸ And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."²⁹ But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"³⁰ Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from



THE STORY OF THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. ³³ But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' ³⁶ So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"

³⁷ And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

4. Apostle John (1, 2 & 3 John)

5. Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:15-18)

"This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me, among whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶ The Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain; ¹⁷ but when he arrived in Rome, he sought me out very zealously and found me. ¹⁸ The Lord grant to him that he may find mercy from the Lord in that Day—and you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus."

6. Hosea (Book of Hosea)

7. Joseph (the "legal" father of Jesus) Matthew 1:16-24; 2:13; Luke 1:27; 2:4-5; 3:23; 4:22; John 1:45; 6:42.

Misuses:

- 1. Becoming an enabler to those who need to make some difficult changes in their life. Can be clouded by emotions, sympathizing with those who directly violate God's laws.**
- 2. Need to be objective to the situation (versus subjective to the emotions of the event).**
- 3. Need to guard against feeling unappreciated, since some of the people helped will not show or express any appreciation.**
- 4. Because it is the most tender and sensitive of all gifts, it is easy to become ultra sensitive and offended. They may sever fellowship with those who reflect insensitivity or harshness, especially towards their friends. They must learn to always walk in forgiveness**

Colossians 3:12-14 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.

- 5. They react deeply to criticism from others and tend to close their spirit to those who try to correct them, especially if they sense a lack of sensitivity and understanding.**
- 6. Often have a lack of firmness; an inability to say "no" to others. Mothers who have this gift may have trouble disciplining their children or saying "no" to harmful things the child does. They need to be sure to follow through on discipline. Failure to be firm will cause greater harm.**
- 7. This lack of firmness may be misinterpreted by others as indecisiveness, weakness of character or lack of courage. Assertiveness training can help.**
- 8. A mercy-motivated person seldom confronts, yet they need to learn to speak the truth with love. They can learn from someone prophetic motivated realizing they are not their enemy, but their complimenting gift from God.**
- 9. They can sometimes attract people who have been corrected and are rebellious toward church leadership. They may coddle, continue to listen to them, and take up their cause and offense. They must not allow themselves to be taken advantage of and become a verbal dumping ground for those walking in offense.**
- 10. Attraction to the troubled can be misinterpreted by opposite sex as having a romantic interest rather than spiritual service. Must be sure to avoid allowing improper affections from those of the opposite sex.**
- 11. Can take on too many issues of others and get caught up in their problems - resulting in depression. They must rely upon God's strength and give mercy with cheerfulness. They must carry other people's burdens only long enough to place them in God's hands and into His provision. They need to keep their own emotional and spiritual tank full with consistent devotions. The motivational gift of mercy operates at its best when one is filled with and led by the Holy Spirit. Apart from Him they can do nothing.**

Lamentations 3:22-23 Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.

- 12. They must not allow themselves to be guided by their emotions. Their gift is to our emotions, but they must learn to control their own feelings, or problems such as depression and confusion will arise.**
- 13. Emphasis on immediate priorities (people's needs) may appear as disorganization.**
- 14. Can react negatively to God's purposes in allowing people to suffer. Unlike exhorters who look at suffering as a means of growing spiritually, those with the gift of mercy find it hard to believe that God would not allow a person to suffer for any good purpose. Their main concern usually is to remove the cause of suffering as soon as possible. They need to understand God's timing. (Example: Bailing people out of jail before they have repented).**
- 15. Need to understand that an important avenue to receive mercy is through repentance. Repentance is a positive word.**

Proverbs 28:13 He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.

Isaiah 55:7 Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the LORD, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

Practical Wisdom:

1. **Don't go to a prophet for mercy. While they may have it, don't place unrealistic expectations upon them. But don't go to a mercy person when you know you need to be "adjusted", corrected or exhorted.**

90% will be won with compassion. 10% need the spiritual mace.

2. **Every Christian is expected to be merciful. This is a role that reflects the fruit of the Spirit.**

We are to behave mercifully, even though we may not be thoroughly motivated to do so by our own gift.

Luke 6:35-36 But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. ³⁶ Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

Enemies of Mercy:

- **A Religious Spirit**

Matthew 23:23-24 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. ²⁴ Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! "

- **A Judgmental Spirit**

James 2:13 "For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment."

Promises To Those Who Are Merciful:

Proverbs 11:17 "The merciful man does good for his own soul, but he who is cruel troubles his own flesh."

Proverbs 14:21 "He who despises his neighbor sins; But he who has mercy on the poor, happy is he."

Proverbs 14:31 "He who oppresses the poor reproaches his Maker, but he who honors Him has mercy on the needy."

Proverbs 20:28 "Mercy and truth preserve the king, And by loving kindness he upholds his throne."

Ministries:

- **Ministering to children**
- **Deacon/deaconess**
- **Counseling**
- **Community services**
- **Hospital visitation**
- **Nursery ministry**
- **Outreach to poor**
- **Prison ministry**
- **Providing meals**
- **Healing**
- **Recovery groups**

Complementing Gifts:

- **Helps**
- **Hospitality**

Job's Response To Friends Who Lacked Mercy:

Job 16:2 "I have heard many such things; Miserable comforters are you all!"

Scriptures that give a revelation of the mercies of God:

Psalms 103:8 "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. "

Psalms 107:1 "Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. "

Psalms 145:9 "The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works. "

Hosea 2:23 "Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, and I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; Then I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they shall say, 'You are my God!' "

Micah 7:18-19 "Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in mercy. ¹⁹ He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. "

Psalms 103:11-12 "For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; ¹² As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. "

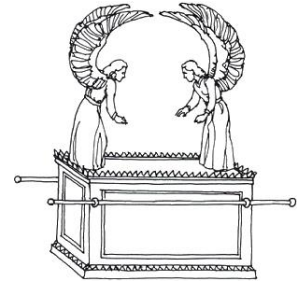
Hebrews 4:16 "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."



MERCY SEAT A Gold slab placed on top of the ark of the covenant with cherubim attached to it on either end, termed the “mercy seat” in many English versions of the Bible (cf. Ex 25:17–22). The Hebrew word for which “mercy seat” is the translation is technically best rendered as “propitiatory,” a term denoting the removal of wrath by the offering of a gift. The significance of this designation is found in the ceremony performed on the Day of Atonement, held once a year, when blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat to make atonement for the sins of the people of Israel (Lv 16). Because of the importance of this covering on the ark and the ceremony associated with it, the Holy of Holies in which the ark was housed in the temple is termed the “room for the mercy seat” in 1 Chronicles 28:11 (rsv). The term “mercy seat” came into English use from Luther’s German rendering of the Hebrew term, which is difficult to translate appropriately from the Hebrew (cf. NIV “atonement cover” and NLT “Ark’s cover”).

Exodus 25:17 “You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width.”

Leviticus 16:2 “...and the LORD said to Moses: “Tell Aaron your brother not to come at just any time into the Holy Place inside the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark, lest he die; for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.”



The Mercy Seat—A Lid or Cover on the Ark of the Covenant

The mercy seat measured two and a half cubits (45 inches, or 114.3 centimeters) by one and a half cubits (27 inches, 68.6 centimeters). The cherubim on each end were also made of gold and faced each other with their wings spread upward over the ark. It was in this space above the ark that the Lord’s presence with his people was localized in a special sense, and from which the Lord made his commandments known to Moses (Ex 25:22; cf. also Lev 16:2). Because of the close association of the Lord’s presence with the space above the ark, he is said to be enthroned between the cherubim (1 Sam 4:4; 2 Sam 6:2). The ark itself contained the tables of stone inscribed with the Ten Commandments that summarized the covenantal obligations of the Israelites to their divine King. When the children of Israel fell short of their covenant obligations by sinning against God and breaking his commands, the blood of the sacrifice sprinkled on the mercy seat made atonement for their sin and reconciled them with God.

The propitiatory or mercy seat points forward to Jesus, who is termed by Paul (Rom 3:25) the “means of propitiation” through faith in his blood for all who have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Here in Romans 3:25 the Greek term translated “propitiation” is the same Greek word consistently used in the Septuagint and in Hebrews 9:5 to translate the Hebrew word for mercy seat in the OT.

Tyndale Bible Dictionary

Conclusion:

Zechariah 7:9 “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Execute true justice, Show mercy and compassion everyone to his brother.’”

Hosea 12:6 “So you, by the help of your God, return; Observe mercy and justice, and wait on your God continually.”

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