

Beatitudes 19 May 2019

The Beatitudes

Mt 5:1–12

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

² And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

⁵ “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

⁷ “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

⁸ “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰ “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

A. Introduction

Gospel of the Kingdom

- This is what Jesus proclaimed – Matthew 4:23
- Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit

Sermon on the Mount

- Chapters 5 to 7 an example of Jesus preaching the ‘gospel of the Kingdom’
- Teaches about the way of the Kingdom
- Teaches about righteousness
 - How the Kingdom shows up in our being in the world
 - Head, heart and hands
- Deliberate echoes of the Old Testament
 - The fulfilment of the law – Righteousness of God, of His Kingdom
 - Proclaiming a change of focus for the Kingdom
 - Not territorial anymore – not about the land
 - Gospel – Kingdom coming on earth in salvation and working that out on earth

- Contrasts 'righteousness' of the Pharisees (legalism, self-righteousness) with the righteousness of the Kingdom
 - He raises the bar
 - You have heard it said... but I tell you...
- Ungrieved Spirit – R. T. Kendall

B. First four beatitudes

Poor in spirit

- Awareness of and acknowledgement of our neediness
- Poverty without God

Mourn

- Because our sin separates us from God

Meek

- Humility before God
- Dependence on Him
- Faith in His provision
- Submission to his will and way

Hunger and thirst for righteousness

- Alignment of all we are with Him – who He is, His will, His ways
- Seeking first the Kingdom

C. Mercy

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.”

Why show mercy

- God is merciful
- Part of being like Him – worship
- Because we have received mercy
- Part of loving righteousness

God is merciful

- **Jeremiah 9:23-26** (*ḥesedh*, one of the words translated and ‘mercy’, which is sometimes rendered “lovingkindness”; it includes the qualities of kindly affection)
- **Isaiah 30:18** (*raḥamîm*, another word that is sometimes translated as ‘mercy’. Literally, “bowels” and so, figuratively used of compassion or tender affection. To meet with love)
- **Ex 34:4–9** (Both *raḥamîm* and *ḥesedh*)

Part of being like Him

- Worship
 - Imitating Him
 - Delighting Him
- **Luke 6:34-36** (*eleēmōn* – not simply possessed of pity but actively compassionate, is used of Christ as a High Priest, Heb. 2:17)
- **Matthew 9:9-13**
- **Hosea 6:6** (*ḥesedh*)
- **Micah 6:6-8**
- **Matthew 12:1-8**
- Mercy seat (*kappōreth*) – **Exodus 25:17–22**
 - In the Holy of Holies – where the glory of God dwelt
 - Only High priest went once a year
 - Could not look on God’s glory
 - Had to be ‘clean’ himself
 - The Hebrew word *kappōreth* is connected with the verb *kipper*: to cover up or wipe out and hence to atone for offenses, to forgive
 - Covers over the ark but distinct from the ark
 - Always called the mercy seat – never the cover
 - Covered the law (tablets)
 - Blood of atonement sprinkled there – propitiation: payment for sin
 - Considered to be the footstool of God’s heavenly throne
 - Shadow of the reality that is in heaven (Heb 8:1-6)
 - Central message of the gospel – God who is holy, Himself provided for our atonement, in mercy
 - His mercy depends entirely on who He is and not on anything external to Him
 - In Jesus we have the propitiation of sin through His blood that is now sprinkled before the Mercy Seat in heaven – in the holy places (Heb 9:11-14)

- Every blessing we have in the Kingdom comes to us because of this
- We are beneficiaries of His mercy

Because we have received mercy

- We fall short of His glory
 - Are undeserving
- **Romans 2:4**
- Is at the heart of the gospel
 - **Ephesians 2:1–10** – But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ

Part of loving righteousness

- At the heart of our fellowship with the Father
- A specific and practical external expression of righteousness in the beatitudes (along with being a peacemaker and how we respond to persecution)
- Mercy will show up in the whole of our life

D. How mercy shows up

- Not giving people ‘what they deserve’
- Giving what they don’t deserve and can’t earn
- Examples in the Sermon on the Mount
 - Love your enemies
 - Giving to those in need – are poor in one way or another
 - **Matthew 6:2-4**
 - The gospel
 - In practical ways
 - **James 2:1-13**
 - Not being judgemental or condemning – **Matthew 7:1-2, Luke 6:37**
- Watch Jesus
 - Woman caught in adultery
 - Prostitute who washed his feet
 - Clearly does not condone their sin
 - But is kind, forgiving, compassionate
 - Is not judgemental

- Does not condemn
- Came to save – to bring God’s mercy to us – **John 3:17**
- Laid down His life for His enemies – Romans 5
- Love kindness and show this toward others in action and not merely in thought
 - **James 3:17-18**
 - Comes through in our way of speaking to them
 - Comes through in our behaviour to them
- Forgive others easily
- Do not be judgemental or condemning
 - **James 2:1-13**
 - Different to seeking justice or judging what is true / righteous from God’s perspective
 - Do need to judge and to have discernment
 - Which has to do with truth and righteousness
 - Being judgemental has pride and prejudice in it
 - An element of ‘I am better than...’
 - Actually clouds godly judgement
 - And lacks mercy
 - **Romans 2:1-11**
- Should be ready to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom
 - Because we have received mercy
 - Because we are those who love to show mercy

E. What to do

- Meditate on who God is
 - Spend time in His presence
- Watch Jesus at work
- Consider the mercy you have, and continue to received (**Lam 3:21-23**)
- Go back to the first three beatitudes
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to help
- Then go to the fourth
 - Align the whole of your life with the Kingdom and His righteousness
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to help
- Be merciful
 - Head, heart and hands

Jeremiah 9:23-26

23 Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, 24 but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practices **steadfast love**, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the LORD." 25 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will punish all those who are circumcised merely in the flesh- 26 Egypt, Judah, Edom, the sons of Ammon, Moab, and all who dwell in the desert who cut the corners of their hair, for all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart."

Isaiah 5:16

But the LORD of hosts is exalted in justice, and the Holy God shows himself holy in righteousness.

Isaiah 30:18

Therefore the LORD waits to be gracious to you, and therefore **he exalts himself to show mercy to you**. For the LORD is a God of justice; blessed are all those who wait for him.

Exodus 34:4-9

⁵ The LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. ⁶ The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, **a God merciful and gracious**, slow to anger, and abounding in **steadfast love** and faithfulness, ⁷ keeping steadfast love for thousands, **forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin**, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation." ⁸ And Moses quickly bowed his head toward the earth and worshiped. ⁹ And he said, "If now I have found favor in your sight, O Lord, please let the Lord go in the midst of us, for it is a stiff-necked people, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for your inheritance."

Luke 6:34-36

34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. 35 But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. 36 **Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.**

Matthew 9:9-13

9 As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, "Follow me." And he rose and followed him. 10 And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. 11 And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" 12 But when he heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. 13 Go and learn what this means: **'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.'** For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

Hosea 6:6

For **I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice**, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Micah 6:6-8

6 "With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" 8 He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and **to love kindness**, and to walk humbly with your God? **(NIV: love mercy)**

Matthew 12:1-8

1 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. 2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath." 3 He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? 5 Or have you not read in the Law how on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are guiltless? 6 I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. 7 And if you had known what this means, **'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,'** you would not have condemned the guiltless. 8 For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath."

Exodus 25:17-22

¹⁷ "You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold. Two cubits and a half shall be its length, and a cubit and a half its breadth. ¹⁸ And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work shall you make them, on the two ends of the mercy seat. ¹⁹ Make one cherub on the one end, and one cherub on the other end. Of one piece with the mercy seat shall you make the cherubim on its two ends. ²⁰ The cherubim shall spread out their wings above, overshadowing the mercy seat with their wings, their faces one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. ²¹ And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. ²² There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel

Romans 2:1-4

1 **Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things.** 2 We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. 3 Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that **God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?**

Ephesians 2:1-10

And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ²in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— ³among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ **But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us,** ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he **might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.** ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not

a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Matthew 6:2-4

2 "Thus, when you **give to the needy**, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 3 But when you **give to the needy**, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your **giving** may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.

James 2:1-13

1 My brothers, **show no partiality** as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 2 For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3 and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," 4 **have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges** with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called? 8 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well. 9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. 11 For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. 12 So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. **Mercy triumphs over judgment.**

Matthew 7:1-2

1 "**Judge not, that you be not judged.**" 2 For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.

Luke 6:37

^{37j} "Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven

John 3:17

¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

James 3:17-18

17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, **full of mercy** and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Romans 2:1-11

1 Therefore you have no excuse, O man, every one of you who judges. For in passing judgment on another you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, practice the very same things. 2 We know that the judgment of God rightly falls on those who practice such things. 3 Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? 4 Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that **God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?** 5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. 6 He will render to each one according to his works: 7 to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; 8 but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. 9 There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, 10 but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek. 11 For God shows no partiality.

La 3:21–23

But this I call to mind,

and therefore I have hope:

²² The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases;

his mercies never come to an end;

²³ they are new every morning;

great is your faithfulness.

Zec 12:10-13:1

¹⁰ “And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for him, as one mourns for an only child, and weep bitterly over him, as one weeps over a firstborn. ¹¹ On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning for Hadad-rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. ¹² The land shall mourn, each family by itself: the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; ¹³ the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by themselves; ¹⁴ and all the families that are left, each by itself, and their wives by themselves.

13 “On that day there shall be a fountain opened for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to cleanse them from sin and uncleanness.

MERCY SEAT (3727)

The Hebrew word *kappōreth* is connected with the verb *kipper*, to cover up or wipe out and hence to atone for offenses, to forgive. It was not a mere part of the ark. It was placed “above upon the ark” (Exodus 25:17-22; 26:34; 30:6; 31:7; 35:12; 37:6). It is never called “the cover of the ark” but is treated as something distinct. The Holy of Holies is called in two passages “the place of the mercy seat” (Leviticus 16:2; 1 Chronicles 28:11), making clear that it was more than a mere subordinate part of the ark. The *kippûrîm*, that is, atonements, on the Day of Atonement are connected inseparably with the *kappōreth*, upon which the blood of the sin offering was sprinkled. Accordingly the mercy seat covered that which was inside the ark, namely the two tables of stone, thus signifying that God in His mercy provided a propitiation for a breach of His covenant. By that means God could speak to His people from above the mercy seat that was upon the ark of the testimony from between the two cherubim (Numbers 7:89); see also Psalms 80:1.

(For the New Testament word in Romans 3:25 and Hebrews 9:5, see *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* under “MERCY-SEAT” ; “PROPITIATION.”) The cherubim are indicative of the angelic ministers of Jehovah, guardians in the attitude of adoration. The throne of His earthly glory likewise represented the footstool of His heavenly throne.¹

Mercy-seat

MERCY-SEAT

HILASTĒRION (ἱλαστήριον , (2435)), the lid or cover of the ark of the Covenant, signifies the Propitiatory, so called on account of the expiation made once a year on the great day of atonement, Heb. 9:5. For the formation see Ex. 25:17-21. The Heb. word is *kapporeth*, the cover, a meaning connected with the covering or removal of sin (Psa. 32:1) by means of expiatory sacrifice. This mercy-seat, together with the ark, is spoken of as the footstool of God, 1 Chron. 28:2; cp. Ps. 99:5; 132:7. The Lord promised to be present upon it and to commune with Moses “from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim,” Ex. 25:22 (see CHERUBIM). In the Sept. the word *epithēma*, which itself means a cover, is added to *hilastērion*; *epithēma* was simply a translation of *kapporeth*; accordingly, *hilastērion*, not having this meaning, and being essentially connected with propitiation, was added. Eventually *hilastērion* stood for both. In 1 Chron. 28:11 the Holy of Holies is called “the House of the Kapporeth” (see R.V., marg.).

Through His voluntary expiatory sacrifice in the shedding of His blood, under Divine judgment upon sin, and through His Resurrection, Christ has become the Mercy-Seat for His people. See Rom. 3:25, and see PROPITIATION, B, NO. 1. ¶²

2616 תָּנַח, תָּנַח [*chacad* /*khaw-sad*/] v. A primitive root; TWOT 698, 699; GK 2873 and 2874; Three occurrences; AV translates as “show thyself merciful” twice, and “put to shame” once. **1** to be good, be kind. **2A** (Hithpael) to show kindness to oneself. **2** to be reproached, be ashamed. **1A** (Piel) to be put to shame, be reproached.

2617 תָּנַח, תָּנַח [*cheded* /*kheh-sed*/] n m. From 2616; TWOT 698a, 699a; GK 2875 and 2876; 248 occurrences; AV translates as “mercy” 149 times, “kindness” 40 times, “lovingkindness” 30 times, “goodness” 12 times, “kindly” five times, “merciful” four times, “favour” three times, “good” once, “goodliness” once, “pity” once, “reproach” once, and “wicked thing” once. **1** goodness, kindness, faithfulness. **2** a reproach, shame.³

¹ Vine, W. E., & Bruce, F. F. (1981). *Vine's Expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words* (Vol. 1, pp. 97–98). Old Tappan NJ: Revell.

² Vine, W. E., & Bruce, F. F. (1981). *Vine's Expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words* (Vol. 2, p. 63). Old Tappan NJ: Revell.

³ Strong, J. (1995). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Woodside Bible Fellowship.

MERCY, MERCIFUL (2616, 7355, 2603, 2551, 3722)

This word represents the following different Hebrew words:

(1) *heseḏh*, which is sometimes rendered “lovingkindness”; it includes the qualities of kindly affection and loyalty, for example, Psalms 77:8; 103:4, where it is coupled with and parallel to Number 2 (below) and Psalms 25:10; 26:3 (coupled with *’emeth*, fidelity) in Deuteronomy 7:9 (coupled with *berîth*, covenant). It is used of man towards man, for example, Judges 1:24, and is rendered “kindness” in the case of David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 20:14), but especially of Jehovah towards His people, for example, Genesis 19:19; 43:14; Psalms 5:7 (and very frequently in the Psalms).

(2) *raḥamîm*, literally, “bowels” and so, figuratively of compassion or tender affection. It is used of God towards man, for example, Nehemiah 1:11; Proverbs 14:21.

(3) the verb *hānan*, to show favor, to do kindness; it is rendered “be merciful” or “be gracious,” “show mercy,” “have pity,” for example, Psalms 4:1; 6:2; 9:13 and is used of God towards man or of man towards man, for example, Proverbs 14:21, 31.

(4) *hēmlāh* signifies to have compassion, Genesis 19:16, “the Lord being merciful unto him.”

(5) *kāphar* (in the intensive form *kipper*) signifies to treat as forgiven, to forgive, as in Deuteronomy 21:8; 32:43, “be merciful.”⁴

New Testament

MERCIFUL (Adjective, and Verb, to be), MERCY (Noun, and Verb, to have, etc.)

A. Nouns.

1. **ELEOS** (ἔλεος, (1656)) “is the outward manifestation of pity; it assumes need on the part of him who receives it, and resources adequate to meet the need on the part of him who shows it. It is used (a) of God, who is rich in mercy, Eph. 2:4, and who has provided salvation for all men, Tit. 3:5, for Jews, Luke 1:72, and Gentiles, Rom. 15:9. He is merciful to those who fear him, Luke 1:50, for they also are compassed with infirmity, and He alone can succour them. Hence they are to pray boldly for mercy, Heb. 4:16, and if for themselves, it is seemly that they should ask for mercy for one another, Gal. 6:16; 1 Tim. 1:2. When God brings His salvation to its issue at the Coming of Christ, His people will obtain His mercy, 2 Tim. 1:16; Jude 21; (b) of men; for since God is merciful to them, He would have them show mercy to one another, Matt. 9:13; 12:7; 23:23; Luke 10:37; Jas. 2:13.

“Wherever the words mercy and peace are found together they occur in that order, except in Gal. 6:16. Mercy is the act of God, peace is the resulting experience in the heart of man. Grace describes God’s attitude toward the law-breaker and the rebel; mercy is His attitude toward those who are in distress.”*

“In the order of the manifestation of God’s purposes of salvation grace must go before mercy ... only the forgiven may be blessed. ... From this it follows that in each of the apostolic salutations where these words occur, grace precedes mercy, 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4 (in some mss.); 2 John 3” (Trench, Syn. § xlvii).

2. **OIKTIRMOS** (οἰκτιρμός, (3628)), pity, compassion for the ills of others, is used (a) of God, Who is “the Father of mercies,” 2 Cor. 1:3; His mercies are the ground upon which believers are to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, as their reasonable service, Rom. 12:1; under the Law he who set it at nought died without compassion, Heb. 10:28; (b) of men;

⁴ Vine, W. E., & Bruce, F. F. (1981). [Vine’s Expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words](#) (Vol. 1, pp. 96–97). Old Tappan NJ: Revell.

believers are to feel and exhibit compassions one toward another, Phil. 2:1, R.V. “compassions,” and Col. 3:12, R.V. “(a heart) of compassion;” in these two places the word is preceded by No. 3, rendered “tender mercies” in the former, and “a heart” in the latter, R.V.¶

3. **SPLANCHNON** (σπλάγχνον , (4698)), affections, the heart, always in the plural in the N.T., has reference to feelings of kindness, goodwill, pity, Phil. 2:1, R.V., “tender mercies;” see AFFECTION, NO. 2, and BOWELS.

Note: In Acts 13:34 the phrase, lit., ‘the holy things, the faithful things (of David)’ is translated, “the holy and sure *blessings*,” R.V.; the A.V., following the mss. in which the words “holy and” are absent, has “the sure mercies,” but notices the full phrase in the margin.

B. Verbs.

1. **ELEEŌ** (ἐλεέω , (1653)), akin to A, No. 1, signifies, in general, to feel sympathy with the misery of another, and especially sympathy manifested in act, (*a*) in the Active Voice, to have pity or mercy on, to shew mercy to, e.g., Matt. 9:27; 15:22; 17:15; 18:33; 20:30, 31 (three times in Mark, four in Luke); Rom. 9:15, 16, 18; 11:32; 12:8; Phil. 2:27; Jude 22, 23; (*b*) in the Passive Voice, to have pity or mercy shown one, to obtain mercy, Matt. 5:7; Rom. 11:30, 31; 1 Cor. 7:25; 2 Cor. 4:1; 1 Tim. 1:13, 16; 1 Pet. 2:10.

2. **OIKTEIRŌ** (οἰκτείρω , (3627)), akin to A, No. 2, to have pity on (from *oiktos*, pity: *oi*, an exclamation,=oh!), occurs in Rom. 9:15 (twice), where it follows No. 1 (twice); the point established there and in Ex. 33:19, from the Sept. of which it is quoted, is that **the mercy and compassion shown by God are determined by nothing external to His attributes.** Speaking generally *oikteirō* is a stronger term than *eleeō*.¶

3. **HILASKOMAI** (ἰλάσκομαι , (2433)) in profane Greek meant to conciliate, appease, propitiate, cause the gods to be reconciled; their goodwill was not regarded as their natural condition, but as something to be earned. The heathen believed their gods to be naturally alienated in feeling from man. In the N.T. the word never means to conciliate God; it signifies (*a*) to be propitious, merciful, Luke 18:13, in the prayer of the publican; (*b*) to expiate, make propitiation for, Heb. 2:17, “make propitiation.”

That God is not of Himself already alienated from man, see John 3:16. His attitude toward the sinner does not need to be changed by his efforts. With regard to his sin, an expiation is necessary, consistently with God’s holiness and for His righteousness’ sake, and that expiation His grace and love have provided in the atoning Sacrifice of His Son; man, himself a sinner, justly exposed to God’s wrath (John 3:36), could never find an expiation. As Lightfoot says, “when the N.T. writers speak at length on the subject of Divine wrath, the hostility is represented, not as on the part of God, but of men.” Through that which God has accomplished in Christ, by His death, man, on becoming regenerate, escapes the merited wrath of God. The making of this expiation [(*b*) above], with its effect in the mercy of God (*a*) is what is expressed in *hilaskomai*.¶ The Sept. uses the compound verb *exilaskomai*, e.g., Gen. 32:20; Ex. 30:10, 15, 16; 32:30, and frequently in Lev. and Numb. See PROPITIATION.

C. Adjectives.

1. **ELEĒMŌN** (ἐλεήμων , (1655)), merciful, akin to A, No. 1, not simply possessed of pity but actively compassionate, is used of Christ as a High Priest, Heb. 2:17, and of those who are like God, Matt. 5:7 (cp. Luke 6:35, 36, where the R.V., “sons” is to be read, as representing characteristics resembling those of their Father).¶

2. **OIKTIRMŌN** (οἰκτίρμων , (3629)), pitiful, compassionate for the ills of others, a stronger term than No. 1 (akin to A, No. 2), is used twice in Luke 6:36, “merciful” (of the character of God, to be expressed in His people); Jas. 5:11, R.V., “merciful,” A.V., “of tender mercy.”¶

3. **HILEŌS** (ἵλεως , (2436)), propitious, merciful (akin to B, No. 3), was used in profane Greek just as in the case of the verb (which see). There is nothing of this in the use of the word in Scripture. The quality expressed by it there essentially appertains to God, though man is undeserving of it. It is used

only of God, Heb. 8:12; in Matt. 16:22, “Be it far from Thee” (Peter’s word to Christ) may have the meaning given in the R.V. marg., “(God) have mercy on Thee,” lit., ‘propitious to Thee’ (A.V. marg., “Pity Thyself”).¶ cp. the Sept., 2 Sam. 20:20; 23:17.

4. **ANELEOS or ANILEŌS** (ἀνέλεος or ἀνίλεως), unmerciful, merciless (*a*, negative, *n*, euphonic, and A, No. 1, or C, No. 3), occurs in Jas. 2:13, said of judgment on him who shows no mercy.¶⁵

ELEĒMŌN (ἐλεήμων, (1655)), merciful, akin to A, No. 1, not simply possessed of pity but actively compassionate, is used of Christ as a High Priest, Heb. 2:17, and of those who are like God, Matt. 5:7 (cp. Luke 6:35, 36, where the R.V., “sons” is to be read, as representing characteristics resembling those of their Father).¶⁶

1656 ἔλεος [eleos /el·eh·os/] n n. Of uncertain affinity; TDNT 2:477; TDNTA 222; GK 1799; 28 occurrences; AV translates as “mercy” 28 times. **1** mercy: kindness or good will towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them. **1A** of men towards men: to exercise the virtue of mercy, show one’s self merciful. **1B** of God towards men: in general providence; the mercy and clemency of God in providing and offering to men salvation by Christ. **1c** the mercy of Christ, whereby at his return to judgment he will bless true Christians with eternal life.⁷

⁵ Vine, W. E., & Bruce, F. F. (1981). [Vine’s Expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words](#) (Vol. 2, pp. 60–63). Old Tappan NJ: Revell.

⁶ Vine, W. E., & Bruce, F. F. (1981). [Vine’s Expository dictionary of Old and New Testament words](#) (Vol. 2, p. 62). Old Tappan NJ: Revell.

⁷ Strong, J. (1995). [Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon](#). Woodside Bible Fellowship.