

Mercy

(ἐλεήμονες = 'ellehimones')

To show mercy, be merciful, tenderhearted, forgiving, benevolent, lenient.

Matthew 5:7, "**Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.**" This word conveys many good qualities and all these qualities are *outlets* for the merciful nature. Being *merciful* is a state of sensitivity! Therefore, as we mature, we should abide in a state of empathy with our fellow man - '*sharing in the interests of others*'. Notice that the first thing we are asked to embrace in The Beatitudes is *compassion*. We ought to be *sympathetic* and *tender* toward each other. We should *display compassion, exercise mercy* and *dispense clemency*. The Greek word used here for *mercy* has to do with earnestly showing kindness and being actively compassionate. It is not restricted to the passive expression of one's feelings. A person with this unique quality finds outlets for his merciful nature, always combining such kind tendencies with action. It's a trait that Paul attributed to Christ as our High Priest in Hebrews 2:17. Mercy is displayed through actions and actions are as a result of right thinking. To be merciful we must be habitual in extending mercy toward others. Mercy should be part of our intrinsic nature! We should never have to think of being merciful; it should be the most natural thing to do.

The essence of mercy is unveiled for us clearly in the parable of the Good Samaritan. The victim in that story was miserable. He had been beaten, robbed, and left for dead. The priest and the Levite in the story showed no concern for him whatsoever. "*But a certain Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion*" (Luke 10:33). The word most often translated "mercy" in the King James Version conveys strong feelings of pity, sympathy, compassion, and affection. The Old Testament word is sometimes translated "loving-kindness", and that describes another important aspect of mercy. When God looks at suffering people, He feels love, tenderness, and kindness toward them in their time of need. God's mercy is founded on His unconditional love and driven by His unreserved compassion.

When we read that God is merciful or that He has mercy, we may be assured that He is feeling our heartache just as intensely as we are. As the writer in Hebrews taught us, the reason we can "*come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need,*" is because the occupant of that throne is a merciful High Priest who is touched with the feeling of our frailties. He is one who sympathizes with us in all our weaknesses (Hebrews 4:15-16). Those divine affections are the foundation of His mercy.

Mighty

(δυνάμειος = 'dynamios') (δύναμις = 'dynamis')

Strength, power, ability, inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth, power for performing miracles, moral power and excellence of soul, the power and influence which belong to riches and wealth, power consisting in or resting upon armies.

2 Corinthians 12:12, "**Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.**" 'Dynamis' is often translated "power", however, when referring to the 'signs' of an apostle it is rendered "mighty deeds." The opening phrase is literally "the signs of the apostle." The basic meaning is a 'mark' or 'token' by which a particular person or thing is recognized. Paul undoubtedly is thinking of deeds that validated his preaching. What deeds would these be? The signs, wonders and miracles that Paul says were done among the Corinthians *with great perseverance*. Paul's rivals, in all probability, also claimed the working of miraculous signs, wonders and mighty deeds. What distinguished Paul from them is captured in the phrase *with great perseverance*.

Signs and wonders also regularly accompanied the early church's proclamation of the gospel (Acts 2:43; 8:6-8; 15:12). In this respect Paul's ministry was no different and this fits the biblical data. That word and mighty deed were inextricably linked is clearly attested in Luke's account of the missionary journeys.

Miracles were performed in virtually every city that Paul visited. In fact, Paul in his letters says repeatedly that his preaching was not merely one of word but of "power and the Spirit." Furthermore, the deeds that were worked among the apostles are specified as *signs*, *wonders* and *miracles*. However, the differences, though slight, are to be noted. When grouped with spectacular phenomena, *'shmeion'* ("sign") has the meaning "miraculous sign" and signifies an event that contradicts the natural order of things. Healings and casting out of demons, presaging the messianic age, come readily to mind as examples of miraculous signs. *Dynamis* ("miracle") refers to strength or ability and is generally used of the mighty acts of God - like the parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:15-31) or the violent earthquake in Philippi that loosed the chains of Paul and Silas (Acts 16:26). Jesus' own ministry was accredited by "miracles, wonders and signs" (Mark 3:13-15 and parallels; Acts 2:22).

In **2 Thessalonians 1:7**, Paul says, "***And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed (at the Second Coming) from heaven with His mighty angels.***" The word translated "***mighty***" is also the word *dynamis*, which means '*intense energy and power, great force, immense ability, and exceeding strength*'. Here, Paul was talking about celestial beings of great might and awesome power!