

## Most Merciful God

Thomas Watson the Puritan from the 1600's, said that "it is the great design of the Scripture to represent God as merciful. This is a loadstone (having magnetic properties) to draw sinners to him. "I am the Lord, I am the Lord, the merciful and gracious God. I am slow to anger and rich in unfailing love and faithfulness. I show this unfailing love to many thousands by forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion. Even so I do not leave sin unpunished." **Exodus 34:6-7.**

There are six expressions here that magnify God's mercy, and one that emphasizes his justice. Scripture represents God in white robes of mercy—more often than with garments rolled in blood; with his golden scepter—more often than his iron rod. God is more inclined to mercy, than wrath.

## Come Thou Fount

### PRAYER

Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise. There is no decibel loud enough that would represent the greatness of your mercy, Father. And just as the bee naturally gives honey and stings only when it is provoked, we thank you for being slow to anger, for not punishing until all other options have been exhausted. And even when you do at last punish for sin, you refer to it as your "strange work." Mercy is at your right hand, it thrills you to dispense of it, and again and again we have benefited from your patience. Thank you that no matter how we may try you, you look for ways to delay your hand of punishment.

## Forever

Jeroboam could have led the northern kingdom with the full approval and blessing of God. He chose to carve his own path, constructing two golden calves, encouraging rebellion and idolatry. He built shrines on high places and appointed priests from all sorts of people, even though they were not Levites. **1 Kings 12:31**

While standing by one of those altars about to profane God's worship one more time, a prophet approached with a word of judgment that Jeroboam didn't want to hear. *When King Jeroboam heard what the man of God cried out against the altar at Bethel, he stretched out his hand from the altar and said, "Seize him!" But the hand he stretched out toward the man shriveled up, so that he could not pull it back. Also, the altar was split apart and its ashes poured out according to the sign given by the man of God by the word of the LORD.*

*Then the king said to the man of God, "Intercede with the LORD your God and pray for me that my hand may be restored." So the man of God*

*interceded with the LORD, and the king's hand was restored and became as it was before.*

**1 Kings 13**

The king got anything but what he deserved, and the same is true for us. A poet from the 1500's, George Gascoigne, was thinking about the mercy of God in light of our disobedience and expressed it this way.....

But thou art good, and hast of mercy store,  
Thou not delightst to see a sinner fall,  
Thou hearknest first, before we come to call.  
Thine eares are set wide open evermore,  
Before we knock thou comest to the door.  
Thou art more press to hear a sinner cry,  
Then he is quicke to climb to thee on high.  
Thy mighty name be praised then alway,  
Let faith and fear, True witnessse bear.  
How fast they stand which on thy mercy stay.

**De Profundis George Gascoigne**

## **Lord Have Mercy**

Again and again in scripture we see what the mercy of God looks like, and how he displays his compassion. Remember Manasseh, the king of Judah? He was Hezekiah's son, and as a king, was as bad as his father was good. 2 Chronicles 33 tells us that *He rebuilt the high places his father Hezekiah had demolished; he also erected altars to the Baals and made Asherah poles. He bowed down to all the starry hosts and worshiped them. He built altars in the temple of the LORD, of which the LORD had said, "My Name will remain in Jerusalem forever." In both courts of the temple of the LORD, he built altars to all the starry hosts. He sacrificed his sons in the fire in the Valley of Ben Hinnom, practiced sorcery, divination and witchcraft, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the eyes of the LORD, provoking him to anger.*

*The LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention. So the LORD brought against them the army commanders of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh prisoner, put a hook in his nose, bound him with bronze shackles and took him to Babylon. In his distress he sought the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. And when he prayed to him, the LORD was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD is God.*

**2 Chronicles 33:3-6;10-13**

Mercy is his darling attribute, which he most delights in. "Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy." Micah 7:18.

Mercy pleases him. "It is delightful to the mother," says Chrysostom, "to have her breasts drawn; so it is to God to have the breasts of his mercy drawn." "Fury is not in me," that is, I do not delight in it. Acts of severity are rather forced from God; he does not afflict willingly. "For he does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men." **Lamentations 3:33.**

## **Who Is A God Like You**

### **OFFERING**

## **How Deep The Father's Love**

### **SERMON**

## **How Firm A Foundation**

### **Benediction**

No matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. God bless you as you go in the truth of this promise, for He who has promised is faithful. Amen.