

# THE GOD OF

# BOOTH

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## **MATTHEW 12:1-8 (NKJV)**

*<sup>1</sup> At that time Jesus went through the grain fields on the Sabbath. And His disciples were hungry, and began to pluck heads of grain and to eat. <sup>2</sup> And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to Him, "Look, Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath!" <sup>3</sup> But He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: <sup>4</sup> how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests? <sup>5</sup> Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple [a]profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? <sup>6</sup> Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. <sup>7</sup> But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. <sup>8</sup> For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."*

## **WHEN JUSTICE MET MERCY.**

The Pharisees accused Jesus' disciples of breaking the Sabbath by picking grain. Jesus reminded them that mercy and necessity sometimes outweigh strict rules, citing how David ate the consecrated bread when he was in need. The Pharisees were right in valuing the Sabbath, but Jesus showed that human need and God's mercy are just as important.

### **The Disciples were hungry (vs. 1)**

They were having a "gladiator" moment. Hands on the wheat as they were walking. They had been walking in the miraculous, learning from Jesus, witnessing the impossible.

### **Along come the Pharisees. (vs. 2)**

The Pharisees were a religious group in ancient Judaism, active during Jesus' time. The Pharisees were one of the most influential Jewish religious groups during Jesus' time. They were strict about following the Law of Moses and additional traditions

meant to keep people from breaking the law.

However, their legalism often put them at odds with Jesus, who emphasized the heart behind the law rather than just outward obedience. While many Pharisees were devout and sincere, some became legalistic, focusing more on external rituals than inner faith. This often put them at odds with Jesus, who criticized them for hypocrisy—following the letter of the law while neglecting justice, mercy, and faith (Matthew 23:23).

However, not all Pharisees opposed Jesus. Nicodemus (John 3) and Gamaliel (Acts 5:34-39) showed openness to His teachings. Paul, before his conversion, was also a Pharisee (Philippians 3:5).

They were tribal in nature, not realizing that God is the God of Both: Justice and Mercy. The Law and Grace. They couldn't fathom the apparent paradox.

### **Jesus was locked and loaded (vs. 3-7)**

**Question 1:** (referencing 1 Samuel 21:1-6)

Have you not read what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: 4 how he entered the house of God and ate the showbread which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those who were with him, but only for the priests?

You reside in the City of David. He doesn't even believe what you're selling.

### **Question 2:**

Have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?

In other words, you have rules for thee but not me.

You are quick to point out others not realizing you are doing the same.

Jesus accused them of the following:

### **You are built for the structure of religion not the relationship with God.**

Here is how he said it: Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. 7 But 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 even of the Sabbath."

You know the God of Justice and the Law.

You do not know the God of Mercy and Grace who desires relationship.

You know about Him. But you do not know him.

**PSALM 89:14 (NKJV):** *Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; mercy and truth go before Your face.*

The foundation or structure of the law and justice produces the ability to go before His face.

Isaiah, when standing before God in Isaiah 6, couldn't help as he viewed God's

majesty to see how undone he was. You encounter His face, you will get his ways. You try to legislate His ways and you will build a wall before His face.

He is the God of Both. Justice sets the foundation for mercy.

He desires mercy and not sacrifice.

God desires a relationship over the rules. (It doesn't eliminate the need for Justice, but goes before justice)

## **HE IS THE GOD OF BOTH.**

**JAMES 2:13 (NKJV):** *For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

He asks us to lead in mercy.

**MATTHEW 5:7 (NIV):** *Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.*

**EPHESIANS 4:32 (NIV):** *Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

**LUKE 6:36 (NIV):** *Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*

Our foundation is Justice.

**MICAH 6:8 (NIV):** *He has shown you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."*

**ISAIAH 1:17 (NIV):** *Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow."*

**ROMANS 12:19 (NIV):** *Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord."*

If my eyes are on Him, my life will be in Him.

Justice reflects God's holiness, righteousness, and fairness.

Mercy reflects God's willingness to forgive and His compassion towards us.

His justice demanded a payment.

His mercy gave us Jesus.

Justice and mercy meet at the cross of Christ—justice was satisfied because sin was punished, and mercy was extended because Jesus took that punishment for humanity

**ISAIAH 53:5 (NIV):** *He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquity.*

Justice demands that we live according to God's moral standard, avoiding sin, and walking in righteousness. Mercy gives us the confidence that He will pick us up if we fall down.

Justice brings joy.

**PROVERBS 21:15 (NIV):** *When justice is done, it brings joy to the righteous but terror to evildoers*

Justice serves as both a protection for the righteous and a warning to those who persist in sin.

Mercy brings love.

**LAMENTATIONS 3:22-23 (NIV):** *Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for His mercies never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.*

Mercy is not just a one-time act; it's a continuous aspect of God's nature that believers are called to imitate.

The ultimate example of justice and mercy working together is Jesus' crucifixion:

Justice – Sin was punished; Jesus bore the penalty of sin so God's justice could be satisfied (Isaiah 53:5).

Mercy – Through Jesus' sacrifice, sinners receive grace and eternal life (Titus 3:5).

**MATTHEW 12:9-14 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> Now when He had departed from there, He went into their synagogue. <sup>10</sup> And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—that they might accuse Him. <sup>11</sup> Then He said to them, "What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? <sup>12</sup> Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." <sup>13</sup> Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other. <sup>14</sup> Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against Him, how they might destroy Him.

He stretched His hand through Justice and met mercy.

Justice allows you to humble yourself and recognize you are sinner.

Mercy allows you to realize that He chose us and loves us.

Just as we are, transforming us into who He wants us to be.

Final Thought: Walking in Both Justice & Mercy

Micah 6:8 perfectly captures the balance:

**Do justice** → Stand for righteousness.

**Love mercy** → Show compassion and forgiveness.

**Walk humbly with God** → Depend on the Holy Spirit to live out both.