

Week 2 Compassion (9/3)

What does it mean for God to be compassionate? In this video, we take an in-depth look at the Hebrew word for compassion, *rakham*.

- **Watch on RightNow Media:**
<https://app.rightnowmedia.org/en/content/details/434053>
- **Watch on the Bible Project website:**
<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/character-of-god-compassion/>

Discussion / Study Questions

1. In the Bible, God's compassion is consistently shown as both an emotional and active reality. What does God do when he feels compassionate? How does he respond when his people return to him in order to follow him?
See Deuteronomy 4:29-31, Micah 7:19, Isaiah 14:1, Isaiah 49:10, and Jeremiah 30:18
2. God's ancient people fail to return to his ways and end up in exile. Read Isaiah 49:15-16, where God assures his people of his compassion during a dark chapter in Israel's history. What comes to mind when you consider God's compassion for his people being related to a mother's care for her infant?
3. God's compassion compels him to rescue his people from their self-destructive ways. Learn how God does this by entering into humanity and all of its suffering (see Isaiah 5:3). Discuss your observations.
4. Jesus entered into the suffering of humanity to bring restoration (see Matthew 9:35-36, Luke 13:34). What are some of the ways Jesus embodies the compassion of God?
5. Describe the ways followers of Jesus are called to live out the same self-giving compassion of God (see Luke 6:35-36, 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Colossians 3:12-13). What is one specific example of how this could be practiced in the life of the Church today?

Deuteronomy 4:29-31

²⁹But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. ³⁰When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to the Lord your God and listen to His voice. ³¹For the Lord your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the covenant with your fathers which He swore to them.

Micah 7:19

He will again have compassion on us;
He will tread our iniquities under foot.
Yes, You will cast all their sins
Into the depths of the sea.

Isaiah 14:1, *Israel's Taunt*

When the Lord will have compassion on Jacob and again choose Israel, and settle them in their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob.

Isaiah 49:10

They will not hunger or thirst,
Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down;
For He who has compassion on them will lead them
And will guide them to springs of water.

Jeremiah 30:18, *Restoration of Jacob*

"Thus says the Lord,
'Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob
And have compassion on his dwelling places;
And the city will be rebuilt on its ruin,
And the palace will stand on its rightful place.

Isaiah 49:15-16

¹⁵"Can a woman forget her nursing child
And have no compassion on the son of her womb?
Even these may forget, but I will not forget you.
¹⁶Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands;
Your walls are continually before Me.

Isaiah 53, *The Suffering Servant*

¹Who has believed our message?
And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?
²For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot,
And like a root out of parched ground;
He has no stately form or majesty
That we should look upon Him,
Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him.
³He was despised and forsaken of men,
A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;
And like one from whom men hide their face
He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.
⁴Surely our griefs He Himself bore,
And our sorrows He carried;
Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten of God, and afflicted.
⁵But He was pierced through for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,
And by His scourging we are healed.

Matthew 9:35-36

³⁵Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.

³⁶Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Luke 13:34

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!

Luke 6:35-36

³⁵But 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 Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, ⁴who comforts us in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Colossians 3:12-13

¹²So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; ¹³bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.