

I DESIRE MERCY, NOT SACRIFICE

Matthew 12:1-21

Key Verse: 12:7

"If you had known what these words mean, `I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the innocent."

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Read verses 1-2. What did Jesus' disciples do one day when they were hungry? According to the Pharisees, why was this unlawful?
2. Read verses 3-8. How did Jesus defend his disciples? Why did he talk about the David incident? How did the priests desecrate the Sabbath? What does Jesus teach about God's heart? What does it mean? What did Jesus teach about himself?
3. Read verses 9-10. Who was in the synagogue? Put yourself in the place of the man with the shriveled hand. What was the attitude of the Pharisees toward this man? Toward Jesus?
4. Read verses 11-14. What did Jesus teach about the mercy of God in answer to the Pharisees' legalism? What did he do? What was the result? How does this man show his faith? Why did the Pharisees want to kill Jesus?
5. Read verses 15-21. What did Jesus do after withdrawing? How did his actions fulfill Isaiah's prophecy? What does a bruised reed and a smoldering wick mean? What great hope can we find in verses 18-21?