

# Luke 14:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?

## Analysis

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Jesus presses His argument: 'And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?' Again Jesus 'answered' though they remained silent—He addresses their unspoken objections. His question appeals to their own practice: they would rescue an animal on the Sabbath without hesitation. The phrase 'straightway' (εὐθέως, *eutheōs*, immediately) emphasizes they wouldn't delay until sunset. If animal welfare justifies Sabbath work, how much more does human healing? This argument from lesser to greater (*qal vachomer*) was standard rabbinic reasoning. Jesus uses their own logic to expose their inconsistency.

## Historical Context

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Jewish law permitted rescuing animals on the Sabbath (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 128b). Even strict Pharisees agreed on this. Jesus' argument parallels His earlier defense (Luke 13:15-16) where He noted they watered animals on the Sabbath yet objected to healing humans. The comparison isn't demeaning humans but highlighting the Pharisees' misplaced priorities—they valued animals' temporary comfort over humans' permanent healing. This exposes how religious systems can invert values, elevating minor matters while ignoring major mercies.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does Jesus' argument reveal the Pharisees' selective application of Sabbath law?
2. What does this teach about God's priorities—mercy triumphs over sacrifice (James 2:13)?
3. In what ways might contemporary Christianity similarly prioritize tradition over compassion?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπεν Τίνος ὑμῶν  
**And answered them him saying Which of you**  
G2532 G611 G4314 G846 G2036 G5101 G5216

ὄνος ἢ βοῦς εἰς φρέαρ ἐμπεσεῖται, καὶ οὐκ  
**shall have an ass or an ox into a pit fallen And not**  
G3688 G2228 G1016 G1519 G5421 G1706 G2532 G3756

εὐθέως ἀνασπάσει αὐτὸν ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ σαββάτου  
**straightway out him on day the sabbath**  
G2112 G385 G846 G1722 G3588 G2250 G3588 G4521

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 13:15** (Parallel theme): The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering?

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