

Grace of God I

Grace of God in the Old Testament

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I'm going through the series in the book of John and we basically ended with the third chapter and we had the sermon about the love of God for the world, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and then how we need to 'walk in the light.' There's going to be in conjunction with it—although not directly in the series of John—the Grace of God in the Old Testament.

There are too many people who have the idea that God was only gracious in the New Testament; that God only gave His grace in the New Testament, and that His grace was not revealed at all until Jesus Christ. Well, that is not a wholly accurate statement, even though John said that 'the Law came through Moses and grace and Truth through Jesus Christ.' That is not saying that God was ungracious in the Old Testament. God *was* gracious in the Old Testament and in dealing with the people that He dealt with.

Hebrews 13 gives us a very important Scripture that we need to really rely on and understand and realize in approaching this. We're going to see other aspects of the grace and mercy of God in the Old Testament, which also are precursors or forerunners of those in the New Testament. After all, let's not forget, all of those who prophesied also spoke of the grace that was coming. Those who wrote the words of God also were prophesying and writing down what Jesus Christ was going to do.

Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, and today, and forever." I would have to take it that this statement means:

- Jesus Christ *yesterday*—as the Lord God of the Old Testament
- Jesus Christ *today*—as He is the Mediator of the New Covenant
- Jesus Christ *forever*—on into eternity

There's one thing that we need to grow in and that is *grace* and *knowledge*. Let's see how we are to be growing in grace and knowledge. Here's a statement that is made, and as we get into this we will see how we are to grow in grace and knowledge.

2-Peter 3:18: "Rather, **be growing in the grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ....**" As a result of studying through this again, this time I know that I understand it more, and I think we'll all understand our calling better.

How many of you have asked yourself: Why did God call me? Almost everyone does. That's one of the hardest to answer, but we'll answer that. I'll give you a partial answer right now: If we look at the things that we have done and what we are, then we have to ask: Why did God call me? That's an introspective way to look at it. The grace of God gives us the answers as to why God has called us. And we're going to see that it's not because of some great thing we have done, ***but it's the great thing that God has done!***

We're also going to see in the Old Testament, as well as the New Testament, how God dealt with the ones He worked with directly was in a *very gracious way*—with the exception of when they sinned and God had to really lower the boom on them.

We also need to balance out the equation. If we sin in the New Testament, under the New Covenant, does not God lower the boom on us? What is the ultimate? What is the ultimate punishment of sin? *The Lake of Fire!* It sure is, and that is the opposite of God's grace. God's grace is all encompassing in God's goodness and the Lake of Fire is all encompassing and all consuming in doing away with people who do not follow God's way. We have these two very broad extremes.

Let's look at things from just a little bit different perspective than we have before. In Genesis 1:31 we find something of God's goodness or graciousness: "And God saw everything that He had made, and indeed, ***it was exceedingly good....***"—'tov me od'—*beautiful or bountiful, cheerful, fine, glad, good* and also a word for *gracious*. So, even the creation of God was an *act of grace*. Why can we say the creation of God was an act of grace? *Because when you define the word 'grace' it means an act of God, unearned* on the part of the recipient—*unmerited in why the person is getting it.*

Grace actually means—in the Old Testament—*favor or kindness, gracious, pleasant, precious, well-favored, to bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior in position or level, or, in this case, we are inferior to God even though we're made in His image.* So, God's stooping and bending to us is an act that He does—to be here, to find or show favor and to be or to give or grant graciousness, show mercy and have pity upon.

If God is gracious—which He is—then what He does reflects His grace or graciousness or goodness. We know that God is love, so then *grace is a quality* of that love. That love is shown in the things that God does. Go through the first chapter of Genesis and everything there is totally positive. God made the earth, all the animals and all the plants. He created human beings. He blessed all the animals and said to be ‘fruitful and multiply.’ He blessed Adam and Eve and said ‘to be fruitful and multiply.’ And when He finished everything He said, ‘Behold, it is very good.’

The next thing He did, Genesis 2, was a very gracious thing. A day—which we can now say is a *day of grace*, because it’s the day *God chose*. This gives us a little insight into Sabbath-keeping *vs* Sunday-keeping. If you do what God says by His dictate, by His command, then you’re acting in response to what God has done. So therefore, that is a gracious act from God to even give us these things. Creating the Sabbath, blessing it, sanctifying it, establishing it as a day of contact between His creation and Himself is, in fact, a very *gracious* thing.

Adam and Eve didn’t earn it. They were created, came to consciousness and God said, ‘I’m God, you’re Adam and you’re Eve—*Ish and Isha*. Here God gave the Sabbath as a very *gracious* thing to do. The Sabbath was given to man, Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath, and it’s given for our benefit. I tell you, we sure need it. Doing what I’m doing now, I know the value of the Sabbath much more than when I was just full-time in the ministry. There’s sort of a little trap in that—not to put it down or say that things are the way they are now or worse than they were then. There’s no judgment, it’s just that it’s a comparison of the difference in perspective.

When I would go around and visit all church people, I hardly had contact with anybody that we would say that were ‘in the world.’ Sabbath was a totally different thing from what it is now. People would come to Church and say, ‘I’m so glad it’s the Sabbath’ and I would say, ‘Yeah, I am, too’ from all these things I had to do; I had to go here and there. I enjoyed doing it, but now when the Sabbath comes and now when we get together with God’s people—because I’m not out there with God’s people day in and day out, I’m out there in the world with swearing, cursing, smoking, tobacco-chewing, foot-stomping *world*—it sure means a whole lot.

I can see that the giving of the Sabbath was a tremendous, *gracious act of God* so that we could have a day of contact with Him, a day of fellowship together with Him, a day that *He* has blessed! Have you ever noticed when you’re talking to someone

and you have a good conversation and at the end you say, ‘God bless you.’ You feel just real good when someone says ‘God bless you.’ You go away feeling real happy. Just think: God has blessed the Sabbath. That’s a fantastic thing! God has blessed this very day! That’s really a gracious act.

He didn’t bless the other days. He said, ‘Go work!’ This day He blessed. Then He showed them the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. He gave them a warning, which was gracious. Isn’t that gracious to give a warning, that ‘in the day thereof you shall surely die.’ We look at it as a very negative thing and say, ‘Oh, terrible!’ But that was gracious. He warned them before He did it. How would it be if He said nothing to them and said, ‘Go ahead and eat of all the trees in the Garden.’ So, they go eat of all the trees of the Garden and then they eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and lo and behold, all these things come crashing in on them. What would be the first reaction? *God, why didn’t you tell us?* God didn’t do it that way! He told them first.

Then the creation of Eve for Adam was a very gracious act by God. Now then, we find that man—as they always do—turned the grace of God into something it shouldn’t be. Isn’t that right? Doesn’t that go right back to the book of Jude where it says that ‘they turned the grace of our God into licentiousness.’ That’s exactly what happened here in Gen. 3 if you look at it properly. Didn’t they take the graciousness of God and turn it into license to do what they want? *Sure! Yes!*

Let’s see that after man *fell*—which he did—Satan fell and man fell, both of them, *they fell from God’s grace!* So then there had to be the penalty of sin that came. God had to set in motion, which was already to go, all the laws controlling goodness, righteousness, sin and all of that sort of thing, to where there had to be a control on evil. There’s an automatic control on all evil whether people believe it or not.

Good example: Look at all of these so-called great rock stars. They run their lives in a very evil way. They take the drugs, they debilitate themselves; they bring others into the evil that they are doing—what happens? *They all die at a young age!* That’s almost like an automatic law that sets in. The more evil that you are the shorter you’re going to live. Whenever there is a sin, there’s always a consequence, because there’s an automatic law.

God set all of those things in motion, as well as we inherited the *law of sin and death* passed on to us by inheritance. How does God deal with us? We’re dealing with a situation whereby in certain things—in almost everything—*the law of sin and*

death keeps us from meeting the requirements of God's perfection, the only way God can deal with us in a gracious way, or through His grace.

The curse came on the world; we know the story of Cain and Abel. Gen. 5 gives the genealogy down to Noah. 'Noah' actually has the meaning of *God's favor*. Not grace, but *God's favor*, because God did something with the birth of Noah that perhaps maybe we've overlooked before and haven't quite understood in this light.

Genesis 5:28 "And Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years and begat a son. And he called his name Noah, saying, 'This one shall comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed.'" (vs 29-29). God lifted the curse at this time that was on the land because of the curse of Adam and Eve.

Verse 30: "And after he begat Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years. And he begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years. And he died. And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth" (vs 30-32). What happens here in God's intervention concerning the Flood.

Genesis 6:5: "And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great on the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was only evil continually*." That's a result of the *law of sin and death*.

Are there good acts and things people can do? *Sure there are!* But there are things that are good that are not motivated from goodness. They can be good on the surface. When you get right down to the final analysis when Jesus said, 'Don't call Me good, there is none good but God.' So, even though a person can do good things, do right things, do responsible things, that doesn't make them good as God is good. They are good by human standards.

Here God looks down on the earth and the thought of everyone was "...only evil continually. And the LORD repented that He had made man on the earth, and He *was* grieved in His heart. And the LORD said, 'I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth... [In other words, let's just end all this nonsense!] ...both man and beast, and the crawling thing, and the fowl of the air; for I repent that I have made them.' But Noah **found grace** in the eyes of the LORD" (vs 5-8). Why did Noah find grace? *Partly because of the things that he was doing*, but partly because of the *choosing of God!* That's how we find grace, *by God's choosing!* That's the whole point to remember concerning

God's grace.

We will see that this all the way through the Old Testament. It is by *God's choosing!* Case in point: Remember when Hezekiah was told to set his house in order, he was going to die. He wept and he cried and asked God to please remember 'the things that I have done.' Whatever his full repentance was, God chose to be gracious to him—didn't He? God sent Isaiah back and told Hezekiah, '15 more years.' That is an act of *pure grace!*

- Did Hezekiah deserve it? *No!*
- Did he earn it? *No!*
- Did he beg that his life be spared? *Yes!*
- Was he repentant? *Yes!*

But his begging and his repentance didn't earn it. God *chose* to do it! Just like what it's going to be at the Lake of Fire. There is going to be 'weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Weeping and gnashing of teeth *is not going to earn the grace of God*, because they've already *rejected* the graciousness that God was going to give them. *Grace is something that God gives to us!* Noah found grace, and you know the whole story of the Flood.

Now we're going to see something very interesting, quite a parallel here, Genesis 12:1: "And the LORD said to Abram, 'Get out of your country, and from your kindred, and from your father's house into a land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation. And I will bless you and make your name great. And you shall be a blessing.... [This is a pure act of grace. That is why Abraham is called 'the father of the faithful.' God *chose* him—which is an *act of grace*—and God calling for us is an *act of grace*.] ...And I will bless those that bless you..." (vs 1-3).

Let's see the attitude they had at the Tower of Babel, Genesis 11:4: "And they said, 'Come, let us build us a city and a tower, *with* its top reaching into the heavens. And let us establish a name for ourselves..." They wanted to make a name *for themselves*, strictly out of

- *their* own doings
- *their* works
- their own rebellion
- the things they were doing *themselves*
- What happened? *They didn't make a name for themselves!*
- What did God do? *He chose Abraham!*

Abraham was probably a reject in his society. If you read *Josephus* you will find that he was a reject in his society because he wouldn't bow-down to idols! He was a reject, so God calls a *reject!* He says, 'All right, now that you're rejected, get up and completely get out.'

I think there are some parallels for us. One of the reasons God called us: I don't think we were necessarily 'in like Flynn' in the world, I don't believe. I don't recall in my circumstances that I ever was. I wasn't a rebel, but surely anything but righteous. However, you want to measure by the world's standards, I think we can all say that about ourselves.

Here God says that He's going to make a name for Abraham. What is the thing that still motivates so many people in the world today? *To make a great name!* That's the whole thing behind the great sports things—isn't it? *It sure is! Make a name for themselves!* They love to be called 'bad'; same way with politicians.

Let's see what God told Abraham He would do, Genesis 12:3: "And I will bless those that bless you and curse the one who curses you.... [That's still true today! The world can't figure it out. All they do is curse and end up with drought and famine. Those who bless us and do go to us, they get blessings, too.] ...And in you shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Part of our faith in God, part of our acceptance of God, is because we do have to accept God. He has to accept us, but we're accepted in Christ. We have to accept God; we have to answer the calling. God takes us as we are and forgives our sin, but there is sure one thing that is true: ***we are not going to change God!*** So, that means we have to accept Him for what He is and what He has done. We can't tell God, 'Oh yes, we love You, because You gave Your grace to us and You have called us, but then I don't like the way You're doing to the rest of the world. I don't like it that You blast the descendants of Abraham.' Well, would you want God to lie to Abraham? *Of course not!* There are some people who believe that way today. That's a very reason for a lot of the race problems in the world.

Genesis 18:1—here we will see God's grace involved in it. Here's where we find that Abraham found favor: "And the LORD appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, and he sat at the tent door in the heat of the day. And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him. And when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground. And he said, 'My LORD, if now I have found favor in Your sight, do not pass away, I pray, from Your servant. Let a little water, I pray, be brought, and wash Your feet, and rest under the tree'" (vs 1-4).

Then he prepared this meal for the One Who was the Lord God of the Old Testament and, apparently, two angels with Him. Abraham did find *grace* in God's eyes—didn't He? Notice what position this put him in, that all the way through this

incident where God told Abraham what He was going to do to Sodom and Gomorrah, *Abraham reasoned with God!* Notice how he reasoned with God. If we are within God's grace and within God's mercy, and are in a repentant attitude—which we can see that Abraham was—then this puts us in a totally different relationship with God.

Isaiah 1:16: "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes; cease to do evil... [There's something we can do, and that is to quit doing evil.] ...learn to do good... [we can do that] seek judgment, reprove the oppressor. Judge the orphan, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together,' says the LORD...." (vs 16-18). Within this relationship with God there is repentance and the acceptance of God's grace, we can reason with God to a certain degree. Not to go against His will, not to change His plan, but we can ***reason on the basis of mercy.***

Just remember when James and John that came to Jesus—when then didn't receive Him in the village—and they said, 'Let's call fire down from heaven.' Jesus said, 'You don't know what manner of spirit you are in.' *You can always reason with God concerning mercy!* Therefore, you know one thing: if you have an enemy, don't go pray that God will destroy them, because God won't do that. You pray for that enemy, that God maybe could be merciful to him. Isn't that the hardest thing in the world to do? *That is the hardest thing in the world!* But if you found yourself in dire circumstances, wouldn't you want God to be merciful to you? Here's then how we can reason with God:

Verse 18: "Come now, and let us reason together,' says the LORD. 'Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool. **If you are willing and obedient,** you shall eat the good of the land... [what a tremendous and gracious thing that God does for us] ...But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured *with* the sword;' for the mouth of the LORD has spoken *it*" (vs 18-20).

Let's see how this actually was the way that Abraham reasoned and dealt with God, and God was gracious—wasn't He? He would be gracious to all the sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah ***IF*** there were 50 righteous.

Genesis 18:23: "And Abraham drew near and said, 'Will You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?... [he was reasoning with God face-to-face] ...Perhaps there are fifty righteous within the city.... [What is this also telling you about Abraham? *That Abraham was a merciful man! He was concerned with the shedding of innocent blood,*

as well as for Lot and his family! He knew that Lot was there.] ...Will You also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous who are in it? Far be it from You to act in this manner, to kill the righteous with the wicked.... [He's talking very bluntly directly to God!] ...And far be it from You, that the righteous should be as the wicked. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (vs 23-25).

If Abraham were speaking wrongly, God would have told him, 'You're out of order!' He just did to Sarah—didn't He? He said, 'Sarah, you're going to bear this time next year.' She laughed and snickered and said that she didn't laugh. God said, 'Yes, you did laugh.' If Abraham were wrong when he made the statement, 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' God would have said, 'Abraham, what are you saying this for?'

Verse 26: "And the LORD said, 'If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.' And Abraham answered and said, 'Behold now, I have taken upon myself to speak to the LORD—I who am but dust and ashes.... [Notice his attitude; he realized he is just dust and ashes because in the snap of a finger that is exactly what he could become.] ...Perhaps there will be five lacking from the fifty righteous. Will You destroy all the city for lack of five?' And He said, 'If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy it.' And he spoke to Him yet again, and said, 'Perhaps there shall be forty found there.' And He said, 'I will not do *it* for forty's sake.' And he said, 'Oh let not the LORD be angry...'" (vs 26-30). Notice the attitude that he had toward God. This is a perfect example of *reasoning* with God for mercy!

"...and I will speak. Perhaps there shall be thirty found there.' And He said, 'I will not do *it* if I find thirty there.' And he said, 'Lo now, I have taken upon myself to speak to the Lord. Perhaps there shall be twenty found there.' And He said, 'I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake.' And he said, 'Oh do not let the LORD be angry, and I will speak **only once more**. Perhaps *only* ten shall be found there.' And He said, 'I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake.'" (vs 30-32). And, of course, you know they didn't find ten.

- What happened? *God saved Lot and his family!*
- What else happened? *Lot's wife did not believe the goodness and mercy of God and she looked back and turned to a pillar of salt!*

Notice that when they were leaving, Genesis 19:17: "And it came to pass, when they... [the two angels] ...brought him outside, *they* said, 'Escape for your life! Do not look behind you, nor stay

anywhere in the plain. Escape to the mountain lest you be consumed.' And Lot said to them, 'Oh no, my LORD, behold now, your servant has **found grace** in your sight... [He knew that this was a gracious act of God. Did Lot do anything to earn it? *No!* He actually got out because of the pleading of Abraham.] ...and you have magnified your mercy, which you have shown to me in saving my life. But I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil overtake me and I die'" (vs 17-19).

So, God allows even our own peculiar little difficulties and problems we have. Here Lot was right in the middle of being saved. He knew that he had found grace and he knew that he was getting out of it. He had the peculiarity that he was probably afraid of wild animals up in the mountains and said that he didn't want to go up there.

Verse 20: "'Behold now, this city *is* near to flee to, and it is a little one. Oh let me escape there—is it not a little one?—and my soul shall live.' And *the angel* said to him, 'See, **I have accepted you concerning this thing also...**'" (vs 20-21). There's a little more reasoning and latitude with God, but what does it all depend upon? *It depends upon our acceptance of God's grace* and our recognition of our own human weaknesses and frailties!

That is why when come to the prayer in Luke 18—when the Pharisee came and said, 'God, I thank You that I'm not like other men.' See the difference in the attitude? And the sinner said, 'God, be mercy on me, a sinner.'

Genesis 32:5—here again we see the grace and favor of God. This has to do when Esau was coming back and he was going to meet Jacob and Jacob was coming with his two wives and two concubines and all of his sons, all of his sheep and all of his cattle. He thought Esau would take them. Jacob sent a present out to Esau and said:

Genesis 32:5 "And I *have* oxen and donkeys, flocks, and menservants, and maidservants. And I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in your sight." Jacob also knew the value of how he should treat his own brother. Remember, even though he did get the birthright the way he did from Esau, he still didn't despise his brother. He came and treated him very kindly. Jacob said, 'If I've found grace in your sight...' Esau at that time, was probably more powerful militarily and could really have done Jacob in. Jacob thought that if this guy still hates me for stealing the birthright, I'd better be very careful.

Genesis 33 goes through the whole episode of Jacob and Esau meeting, and I just want to cover, Genesis 33:10: "And Jacob said, 'No, please, if now

I have found grace in your sight, then receive my present at my hand; for therefore have I seen your face, as though I had seen the face of God, and you were pleased with me. Please take my blessing that is brought to you because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough.' And he urged him, and he accepted" (vs 10-11).

Here's another thing that's very important and is also very true, and this ties in with the parable in the New Testament: *If you have received a gracious treatment and mercy*, how are we to treat others? *The same way!* Remember the parable of the lord whose servant demanded that he pay 10,000 talents. He said, 'Lord, I don't have it to pay'—when the lord commanded that he be sold and his family and everything. So, he forgave him. Then the one who was forgiven went out and choked his servant who owed him 100 pence. You know what happened when God found out about that.

Here's a very good example in the Old Testament. As we go through we're going to see a unity and a consistency in the whole Bible, rather just divided Old Testament and New Testament in the traditional way that it is normally done by most people. Yet, there is that division: the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. But the basic principle of grace is true in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. Only the graciousness of God to us has the ramification of eternal life—which is absolutely fantastic! Here's another kind of grace and favor that God can give, and it has to do in relationship with others. It also is a reward of God—not strictly speaking—it is an extension of His grace. I would hate to put in the form of a 'reward,' because *you cannot earn grace*. I would have to say that is semantically not correct, though apparently on the surface it is.

It is an extension of God's grace because of your relationship with Him that He will extend His grace into the relationship that you have with others. Here's a case of Joseph. He was brought into Egypt, sold, and especially after the way his brothers treated him, you talk about a family argument. I just imagine we would be shocked if we had the recording of all the arguments that the 12 brothers had between each other. And the arguments they had concerning Joseph: 'This upstart with that coat and that smart aleck telling of the dream. We'll fix his hide. We'll take him out here and we'll do him in.' They were going to kill him. Then Ruben said to spare his life. 'Okay, we'll sell him to the Arabs.'

Then they went through the whole charade of killing a goat, putting the blood on it and taking the jacket back to Jacob saying, 'Joseph is gone!' They had to live with that lie for how long? Did

Joseph *have cause* that he could be bitter? *Yes, sure he did!* He was brought into Egypt, sold, and:

Genesis 39:2: "And the LORD was with Joseph, and he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the **LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all he did to prosper in his hands**.... [The master could see that there was something special about Joseph. It was an extension of God's grace.] ...And Joseph found grace in his sight... [tremendous favor, tremendous blessing] ...and he served him. And he made him overseer over his house, and he put him in charge of all he had" (vs 2-4). You know the rest of the story. It's the one of the few cases that's recorded in the Bible where a man turned down an illicit affair.

Nevertheless, then he went through all of the things of being in the dungeon. He found grace and favor in the eyes of Pharaoh, because Joseph told what Pharaoh's dream was. Pharaoh put Joseph in charge of all Egypt. Joseph then returned that grace and favor when his brothers came down to Egypt to find grain because of the famine. He had a little trickery in it, too, but that made it kind of intriguing when you go through and read the whole story.

Can you imagine how they all felt when they were all together; when Jacob was there and Benjamin and all the sons were there in Egypt when everything was discovered of who they were and what was going on. Joseph said that it's 'by the hand of God that He sent me here.' He didn't even say, 'Hey, brothers, I want you down here to apologize to me for what you did to me.' Didn't say that. Didn't do it. Didn't seek any vengeance. He said, 'I'm here because of the hand of God. He's blessed me, so let's receive the blessings of God.'

Then we go through the rest of the story and come to the time when the children of Israel were the captives or slaves in Egypt. They suffered quite a few things, and, of course, we would have to say that the calling of the children of Israel out of Egypt was *a gracious act*. Remember, the whole beginning of the Passover, as it relates to Christ—and it's through Christ that we have grace.

Exo. 32 is the sin where they made the golden calf. Exodus 33 is really a fantastic chapter when you realize it. Exodus 33:7: "And the LORD said to Moses, 'Go! Get you down, for your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted *themselves*.'" After Moses stood between God and the people and said, 'God, don't kill them.'

Then God said, 'I'll take you to that land, only these are a stiff-necked people. Then we have the occasion where Moses asked to see God in His

glory, and God told him, ‘Yes, you can see My glory, but stand here at the rock and I will show you My back part,’ because no one can look on the face of God and live.’

Exo. 34—What it is that God delights in, and what God emphasizes more than anything else.

(go to the next track)

Exodus 34:5 “And the LORD came down in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD.” What are some of the names of the Lord? *Almighty! All powerful!* Is that what He emphasized? *No He didn’t!*

Verse 6: “And the LORD passed by before him and proclaimed, ‘The LORD, the LORD God, **merciful and gracious...** [He spared all the Israelites—didn’t He?] **...longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and Truth.**” Because God is love, this is what He delights in more than anything else.

This is why if a person approaches God from the opposite point of view—as we find in the parable of the three servants who were each given a pound (Matt. 25). One gained ten, one gained five and one hid it in the earth. Remember what he said when God came to account? *Here’s the pound You gave me, I wrapped it and hid it in the earth! I knew You were an austere man! I knew that You gathered where You didn’t sow! You harvested where You didn’t straw! Therefore, I was afraid and I hid it in the earth!* What was God’s response to him? *The same that he had to God!*

If our response, our attitude toward God, regardless of your circumstances is that **God is gracious and merciful and kind!** *If*, in our prayers and relationship with God you really feel down and out and sort of on the odd side of God—and I’m sure you’ve all felt on the odd side of God because of sin and some of the circumstances you’ve gone through—*remind Him of His goodness and His mercy.* Think of the attitude Abraham had; think of the attitude that Joseph had. Use those attitudes toward God coupled with repentance. Then you won’t be like the third servant who took the pound and hid it.

“...the LORD God, **merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,** keeping mercy to the thousandth generation... [He would have spared all those in Sodom and Gomorrah] **...forgiving** iniquity and transgression and sin...” (vs 6-7). That’s what God delights in; that’s why Christ came: to save the world, not condemn it. It’s own sins condemn it enough! That’s why the only sin that won’t be

forgiven is the *blaspheme* against the Holy Spirit, which comes from God the Father.

“...but Who will by no means clear *the guilty...* [God is not going to forgive unless there is repentance!] (If there isn’t repentance, then): ...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, to the third and to the fourth generation.” (v 7).

As it is in Exo. 20—for those who love Him and keep His commandments unto a thousand generations.’ A thousand generations is a long, long time. I can’t tell you exactly how long a generation is. I know that it came up one time where Jesus said that ‘this generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled’ (Matt. 24) We all try to figure out how long a generation is. I thought I’d be real clever and took the three sections of the 14 generations of Matt. 1—from Abraham to Moses—to whatever and took all of those and went through the genealogy tables and added up all the years of those that were listed and divided and got an average. I found out that there’s no way you can set a definite number of years on a generation, because one average was 32 years, one was 60 years, and one was 42 years. How long is a generation? *However God figures it!*

How long is a thousand generations? A thousand times 62 is almost the whole history of the earth. A thousand times 42 is almost all the time from Abraham down to our day—right? You want to take the narrowest amount—32 years—that’s 3200 years, goes back at least to David. That’s a long time! I just imagine that if we really knew, we are here as a result of God’s mercy, regardless of how we got here or our forefathers got here. We’re here because of God’s mercy. I know I would not want to live in Eskimo land. Nor would I want to be down in the jungles of the Amazon. When I see people in circumstances like that, I’ve had two responses:

1. Those dirty people deserve it—*that’s the wrong response!*
2. It’s God’s blessing that we’re here—and *may God be merciful to them!*

Maybe if God would call them, remember what God said of Israel in Jer. 2—‘If I would have gone to the heathen, they would have kept My laws and statutes to this day.’ We don’t need to get all uppity-uppity and brag about this, that or the other thing. We just need to be thankful for God’s mercy, that He has done it, that He has allowed it.

Let’s see some more of God’s graciousness and mercy and goodness. There are many places we can go in the Old Testament. Some I have covered in the past: sections in Deuteronomy where God said that ‘I love the fathers, therefore I have chosen you.

You're not the biggest, the greatest and the best, nevertheless, you're the least, smallest and so forth.

1-Samuel 1—let's see how God works through circumstances in people's lives. Samuel and his calling, and the whole situation concerning Samuel was because of mercy and grace. It was because of the attitude of Samuel's mother; strictly because of her attitude. Look at how all of Israel was blessed because of Samuel. Just to summarize:

They came year to year and Elkanah^[transcriber's correction] her husband said, 'Why are you weeping.' That's because she didn't have any children (1-Sam. 1:7-8).

1-Samuel 1:9: "And Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh and after they had drunk. And Eli the priest sat upon the seat by the side post of the temple of the LORD." We can also understand something here that's important: What happens when you come into contact with someone who is supposed to be God's representative, but is corrupt? Was Eli corrupt? *Yes, he was!* Were his sons corrupt? *Yes, they were!* God executed all three on the same day. **Hannah trusted in God**, not the man Eli the high priest.

Verse 10: "And she *was* in bitterness of soul, prayed to the LORD, and wept sorely." Not angry. Bitterness means *over much sorrow* in this particular case; much grief because of the trying circumstances of not having any children.

Verse 11: "And she vowed a vow... [this is reasoning with God in the realm of His grace] ...and said, 'O, LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your handmaid and remember me, and not forget Your handmaid, but will give to Your handmaid a man-child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.'" You can imagine the older that Samuel got... It doesn't say *no scissors*, but no razor. It's not saying that his hair was always long. But he would not be shaved.

Verse 12: "And it came to pass as she continued praying before the LORD, Eli noticed her mouth.... [here's Eli, an evil man, still a priest] ...Now, Hannah spoke in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard...." (vs 12-13). You can imagine that she was there like you see at the Wailing Wall, the Jews rocking back and forth, you see their lips moving. She was crying and tears were streaming down and rocking back and forth.

Verse 14: "...And Eli thought she had become drunk And Eli said to her, 'How long will you be drunken? Put away your wine from you!' And Hannah answered, 'No, my lord, I *am* a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have neither drunk wine nor

strong drink, but have **poured out my soul before the LORD**.... [notice the whole attitude] ...Do not count your handmaid for a daughter of wickedness... [Eli's sons were called sons of Belial (1-Sam 2:12)] ...for out of the abundance of my anxiety and grief I have spoken until now.' And Eli answered and said, 'Go in peace...'" (vs 14-17).

Did God honor Eli's command? *Yes, He did!* Not because Eli was good. Partly because she was pleading with God, but I imagine there were others who pleaded with God and wept and went through all these things and God never granted them children. But because God chose to do so and Eli affirmed it.

Verse 17: And Eli answered and said, 'Go in peace and the God of Israel grant *to you* your petition that you have asked of Him.' And she said, 'Let your handmaid find grace in your sight.' So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer *sad*" (vs 17-18).

She became pregnant. Her first child was Samuel and he became one who kept the Word of God going, and was a great prophet of God, and hence a tremendous amount of grace came to Israel because of that one thing. There's an excellent example of it.

Let's go to Psalm 78 and see how God deals with those who are sinners. How He dealt with Israel. I think this helps give us an insight into the tremendous wickedness of human beings. I think if we understand that and if we all understand that the wickedness in the human being differs not one wit from human being to human being, with the exception of those who are demon or Satan-possessed, that will obviously be multiplied in wickedness.

Here is the whole account of God calling Israel, how they went through the Sinai, how they sinned and their lust and everything just coming all the way through.

Psalm 78:32: "For all this they still sinned and did not believe in His wonderful works.... [They had the fire by night, the pillar by day; they had the manna, all the things that God had done: the killing of the wicked, the fighting of the enemy, etc. Therefore, He ended their days in vanity and their years in terror. When He slew them, then they sought Him; and they turned back and sought after God earnestly" (vs 32-34). Isn't that true with all human beings. When the going gets rough there is not an atheist anywhere; not one.

You know how you know and atheist is really not an atheist? *By the very fact that he swears and takes God's name in vain!* If he didn't believe in

God why would he have to use curse words all the time? Because when you use curse words all the time you're trying to prove, trying to reinforce, that God doesn't exist. ***You're tempting and challenging God!*** So, if there were really an atheist, and one of these days I hope I meet an atheist, and if I hear him swear and curse I'm going to ask him this question: 'Why do you use God's name if you don't believe in Him? You believe in all the other words you speak—don't you? If you use His name you must believe in Him.' That will sort of twist them up in a knot. This is true. They've even portrayed this in movies, and it is true, when the going gets tough they cry out to God.

Verse 35: "And they remembered that God was their Rock, and the Most High God was their Redeemer. Nevertheless they flattered Him with their mouths, and they lied to Him with their tongues, for their heart was not steadfast with Him; neither were they faithful in His covenant. But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them..." (vs 35-38). That's going right back to the time that we just covered there in Exo. 32 & 33. That's quite a thing, that God is that merciful and gracious and here this is talking about just in the Old Testament—isn't it? We haven't come to the New Testament.

This will help you understand why God called Paul who was Saul, who was a destroyer of the Church. That's why Paul said that he was called to show a pattern. He considered himself to be *the* sinner. Every time I think of that I cannot help but think how relatives of the deceased—that Paul when he was Saul caused to be killed—felt when they were in the Church and then here comes Paul who was known; he's the one who persecuted the Church. You wouldn't feel like running up and putting your arms around him, hug him and say, 'Oh, Paul, I'm so glad to see you. By the way you killed my son.' *or* 'You killed my daughter.' It's an incongruity in human standards, but that shows you how fantastic the *grace of God* is.

Look at it here; it says they flattered Him with their tongues: "...and the Most High God was their Redeemer. Nevertheless, they flattered Him with their mouths, and they lied to Him with their tongues" (vs 35-36). They didn't mean it; they lied to Him: 'Oh, God, we will never do this again.' Their heart was not right with Him because they had their heart set on what they wanted to do.

Verse 37: "For their heart was not steadfast with Him; neither were they faithful in His covenant. But He, *being* full of compassion, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them..." (vs 37-38). Now you can see why it is so ludicrous for us to say

that as Americans we are great Americans, because of the great American spirit and the great American ingenuity. We're only here because of God's mercy to us, that's all! I mean, even as a nation and as a country we're here *by God's grace*.

"...yea, many times He turned His anger away and did not stir up all His wrath" (vs. 38). Sometimes I do this quite a bit in my own mind's eye. What would it be like just to be stationary and let the earth turn and what would happen every time I came to San Francisco? You can just feel the anger well up in you, you see all these fruitcakes going around up there and all the things taking place. How would you feel everyday? Well, God remembers that they're but flesh. He knows that their day of salvation is going to come. He's already set the laws in motion that will take care of their activities and so let it be, and be merciful to the rest.

Verse 39: "For He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes away and does not come again. How often did they provoke Him in the wilderness and grieve Him in the desert? And still again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel" (vs 39-41).

It goes through showing here that how God just keeps taking it and taking it and then it reaches a certain point. I don't know what God's level is of how He judges all these things and where it comes to. But I'm just thankful that He's merciful and we ought to look to His mercy and His graciousness and not look to His wrath and His power and His destructive ability, but look to God's creative ability and His goodness and that will help us in our relationship with Him.

Psalm 84:8: "O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah. Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of Your anointed, for a day in Your courts is better than a thousand *elsewhere*.... [a thousand days in the court of the wicked] ...I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness" (vs 8-10).

I have seen this Scripture perverted, to use it as leverage in humility to force people into a fearful, humble stance to where then, 'he wasn't seeking in anything better than to just be a doorkeeper—so who are you?' *You know!* 'Oh that's right.' To use it as leverage in fear against people.

"...I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness, for the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD will give grace and glory... [God is the One Who gives grace and glory] ...no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly"

(vs 10-11). That's something to keep in mind. That's why Paul rejoiced in his afflictions. That's why he rejoiced when God told him, 'My grace is sufficient for you.' Because He's withholding no good thing from us and He will give it to us, especially in due time at the resurrection.

"O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusts in You" (v 12). The next time you sin and you think: How can I go repent of this? *Especially if it's one of your lifelong problems!* There are certain things that God has allowed everyone to have as a lifelong problem. He did Paul—didn't He? He didn't heal him. Every one of us has some kind of lifelong problem or thing that is always a stumbling block for us, and every time we lose our temper, or whatever it is, we think: Oh, terrible! How can I repent again?

Remember this, this will help you: Psalm 86:1: "Bow down Your ear, O LORD, answer me, for I am poor and needy." When you sin you sure are needy. Even when you don't sin you are needy. I mean, even when you're the very best you can be you're still needy. That is true!

Verse 2: "Preserve my soul, for I am Holy..."—we are! We're called the Holy people of God—aren't we? Aren't we sanctified with God's Truth? *That's true!*

Verse 3: "O You my God, save Your servant who trusts in You. Be merciful to me, O LORD, for I cry unto You all day long. Rejoice the soul of Your servant, for to You, O LORD, do I lift up my soul, for You, LORD, are good and **ready** to forgive..." (vs 3-5). That's all part of God's grace! He is ready to forgive!

What if we thought we don't have to go back to 1-John 1 because we've been there several times where that He *will forgive* all of our sins, all of our unrighteousness? He *is faithful* to forgive them. Here it is He is also *ready* to forgive.

"...and rich in mercy to all those who call upon You" (v 5). Don't hesitate to repent of any sins that you find yourself doing. I mean even if it's one of those things that dog you all your life, cause you do need it forgiven. ***He's ready to forgive for those who call upon Him!*** Sure enough if you don't call upon God He won't forgive them. If you think that it's too much that God can't forgive remember He's going to forgive the sins of the whole world. Are your sins greater than the sins of the whole world? *No!* That's all a part of God's graciousness.

Remember, it says that they 'limited the Holy One of Israel.' We limit God when we do not trust in His mercy. How is it that we don't trust in His mercy? ***When we do not acknowledge***

- His goodness
- His mercifulness
- His graciousness
- When we are *afraid* to go to God and tell Him that we really need Him

We really, *really* need Him! So, that's all a part of the *relationship of the graciousness of God*.

Verse 6: "Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplications. **In the day of my trouble I will call upon You...** [Don't wait until the week after. You may not get out of your trouble.] ...for You will answer me. Among the gods there is none like You, O LORD; neither are there any works like Your works. All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You, O LORD, and shall glorify Your name, for You are great and do wonderful things; You alone are God. Teach me Your way, O LORD; I will walk in Your Truth; unite my heart to fear Your name. I will praise You, O LORD my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify Your name forevermore, for great is Your mercy toward me; and You have delivered my soul from the depths of the grave" (vs. 6-13). Tremendous—isn't it? This is why we are to grow in *the grace* and in *the knowledge* of Jesus Christ.

- Why can't we have the joy of God's salvation?

Yes, we can have the joy of God's salvation when we understand about God's grace! Too many people who should have the joy of the Lord are in the misery of church, and that should not be.

- Why can't we feel good?

Not because we look upon ourselves as good and do as the world: psyche yourself up—self-hypnotize—how good you are, how wonderful you are, how much you can do. *No!*

- Why can't we feel good because we understand God's goodness?
- Why can't we feel happy because of what God has done for us?
- In spite of all of our circumstances?

Paul said in Rom. 8, it doesn't matter what comes against us: life or death, height, or anything. '**Nothing** can separate us from the love of God.' I really think we're really on the verge of beginning to understand that. Let's hope that going through this part of the *grace of God* we can understand more how we can have the joy of God and His salvation, and His goodness, and His mercy.

There is nothing wrong with that. Is it a sin for Christians to be happy because of God? *Of course not!* That's an incongruous question. Why should we as Christians have to go around and carry God as a burden? That's a silly statement—isn't it?

How many times did we make it so? Why did we make it so? *Because we didn't understand about God's graciousness and God's mercy!*

Here's another Psalm having to do with God's mercy, Psalm 103:8: "The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in mercy. He will not always chasten, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities, for as the heavens are high above the earth, so is His mercy toward those who fear Him" (vs 8-11).

Verse 17: "But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting..."

Psalm 111:1: "Praise the LORD! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart in the council of the upright and in the congregation. The works of the LORD are great, sought out by all those who have pleasure in them. His work is glory and majesty; and His righteousness endures forever. He has made a memorial for His wonderful works; **the LORD is gracious and full of compassion**" (vs 1-4).

I defy anyone to hold the doctrine that the God of the Old Testament was a God of wrath and a God of anger. God is a God of love, mercy and compassion for those who

- call upon Him
- seek Him
- repent
- draw close to God

God is a God of wrath, a God of anger and a God of power ***against sinners and the rebellious and the devil worshipers*** in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. There's no difference because God, as we saw in the beginning, is 'the same yesterday, today, and forever.'

Psalm 112:4: "To the upright there arises light in the darkness... [That ties right back in with our series in John—doesn't it?] ...he is gracious and full of compassion and righteousness." That's what God is! The book of John is that which exemplifies, is that which brings the understanding of God's grace and love like no other book. I think it is absolutely true that we cannot understand the Gospel of the New Testament, the Gospel of Christ unless we fully understand the book of John. That it's spiritually understood.

Psalm 116:1 gives the full situation here: "I love the LORD because He hears my voice and my prayers." Have you ever had a prayer answered that you just muttered kind of as a thought one time? Who knows how long before it was fulfilled. I've experienced that. I know that in the moment that I

understood that that prayer was answered there was a special thrill and exhilaration that even that little thought, *God heard.*

Verse 2: "Because He has bowed down His ear to me, therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live. The sorrows of death hemmed me in, and the pains of the grave took hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow" (vs 2-3). Lest any of us think that that is true, I know sometimes with the pains and difficulties of our own physical existence and the circumstances we are in, sometimes we feel that way.

Verse 4: "Then I called upon the name of the LORD: 'O LORD, I beseech You, deliver my soul.' Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful. The LORD preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me. Return to your rest, O my soul, for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you" (vs 4-7). I've often wondered what is going to be like at the resurrection when all these things really come together. Whatever that song of Moses is going to be when we're on the Sea of Glass, that is going to be absolutely stunning.

Psalm 145:1—here again you have to follow through the thought: "I will extol You, my God, O King; and I will bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You; and I will praise Your name forever and ever. Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.... [we can sure say that about God's love] ...One generation shall praise Your works to another and shall declare Your mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious splendor of Your majesty and of Your wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of Your awesome works; and I will declare Your greatness. They shall pour forth the memory of Your great goodness and shall sing of Your righteousness. The LORD is gracious and full of compassion; slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love" (vs 1-8).

This could almost be the theme song of the second resurrection. You just think on it for a minute! Can you imagine what those people are going to think when they come to the conscious realization that they have been resurrected. When they come to the conscious realization that God is going to give them salvation. They're going to say that God is *gracious and full of compassion*. Slow to anger, and of great mercy.

Verse 9: "The LORD is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works." That's a tremendous Psalm—isn't it?

Let's see a couple things concerning our part in using God's grace in relationship to God's laws.

Proverbs 1:7: “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge...” That’s basically true. If it comes down to where you don’t sin because of the fear of sin, that’s better than not sinning. I’ve found that when you come to that point and you resist that temptation, what does God always do? *He always provides a way out! It’s the beginning of knowledge!*

“...*but* fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of your father and forsake not the law of your mother, for they *shall be* an ornament of grace to your head... [In other words of grace and favor just in life and living like it was with Joseph.] ...And chains around your neck” (vs 7-9)—chains of decoration and beauty.

Proverbs 3:21: “My son, do not let them depart from your eyes; keep sound wisdom and discretion, and they shall be life to your soul and grace to your neck” (vs 21-22). Apparently that had to do with some of the symbolism having to do with the priest ornamentation. I know across the forehead of the priest they had ‘Holiness unto the Lord,’ and then the two shoulder things. I forget right now exactly what they were.

Proverbs 4:9 talks about wisdom and what it will do: “She shall place upon your head a garland of grace; she shall bestow upon you a crown of glory.” We can spiritualize this and project it into what it’s going to be at the resurrection. That will be because of God’s grace and then we will have a crown of glory, which won’t fade away, etc.

Isaiah 30:18: “And therefore, will the LORD wait, that He may be gracious unto you... [This is talking about how God is going to bring back all the Israelites; bring them out of captivity and restore them.] ...And therefore, He will be exalted, that He may have mercy upon you, for the LORD *is* a God of justice; blessed *are* all those who wait for Him.”

Let me add to your reading list these things that you need to go back and read in the book of Deuteronomy: 4:6-8, 37; 6:16-18, 24-25; 7:6-9, 12-15; 10:12-22. Let’s go to that one section and we’ll pretty well end the grace of God in the Old Testament. This is showing our part.

Deuteronomy 10:12: “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, to keep the commandments of the LORD, and His statutes which I command you today for your good? Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens *belong* to the LORD your God, the earth also, with all that is in it. Only the LORD had a delight in your fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, you above

all people, as *it is* today” (vs 12-15).

Verse 19: “Therefore, love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” And it talks about fearing God, serving God.

Verse 21: “*He is* your praise, and *He is* your God, Who has done for you these great and awesome things which your eyes have seen. Your fathers went down into Egypt with seventy persons. And now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of the heavens for multitude” (vs 21-22). Then you can add to that Deut. 11 about loving God and so forth.

Isaiah 53 is showing part of the grace of God. Remember, it says in Heb. 2:9 that by the grace of God ‘Jesus tasted death for every man.’ Well, here is a prophecy of it. This doesn’t talk about the grace of God in Isa. 53, but it *shows* the grace of God. Isaiah 53:2 is a prophecy of Christ: “For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; He has no form nor comeliness that we should look upon Him, nor beauty that we should desire Him. *He is* despised and rejected of men...” (vs 2-3). Imagine that He came to His own creation. He came to His own people.

Verse 3: “*He is* despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him, He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He has borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted” (vs 3-4). That’s virtually what they said, ‘If you be the Christ come down off the cross.’ That’s tantamount to saying ‘You are there because you are not of God.’ And if you’re not of God ‘You’re there because God is striking you down.’

Verse 5: “But He *was* wounded for our transgressions; *He was* crushed for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* upon Him; and with His stripes we ourselves are healed.” We always used to say that’s just *physical* healing. But I tell you, there’s a whole lot more to *spiritual healing* than there is to physical healing. A whole lot more!

Verse 6: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned each one to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and with His generation who did consider that He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of My people He *was* stricken?”(vs 6-8). It shows God’s

graciousness and mercy even in the death of Christ.

And we're going to see even more profoundly, as we get down to the Passover time, and I'm still brooding on this and thinking about the tremendous sacrifice of Christ and in particular in relationship to the fact of the power of Satan the devil's hand in His crucifixion. I hope we can get that in a real bright light this time, because it manifests ***the humility and the love and the mercy and the graciousness of God like nothing else ever does.***

- 1 Samuel 1:7-8; 2:12
- 1 John 1
- Romans 8
- Deuteronomy 4:6-8; 6:16-18, 24-25; 7:6-9, 12-15; 10:22; 11
- Hebrews 2:9

Also referenced:

- Sermon Series: *Gospel of John*
- Books: *Josephus*

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural Referenced:

- 1) Hebrews 13:8
- 2) 2 Peter 3:18
- 3) Genesis 1:31
- 4) Genesis 5:28-32
- 5) Genesis 6:5-8
- 6) Genesis 12:1-3
- 7) Genesis 11:4
- 8) Genesis 12:3
- 9) Genesis 18:1-4
- 10) Isaiah 1:16-20
- 11) Genesis 18:23-32
- 12) Genesis 19:17-21
- 13) Genesis 32:5
- 14) Genesis 33:10-11
- 15) Genesis 39:2-4
- 16) Exodus 33:7
- 17) Exodus 34:5-7
- 18) 1 Samuel 1:9-18
- 19) Psalm 78:32-41
- 20) Psalm 84:8-12
- 21) Psalm 86:1-13
- 22) Psalm 103:8-11, 17
- 23) Psalm 111:1-4
- 24) Psalm 112:4
- 25) Psalm 116:1-7
- 26) Psalm 145:1-9
- 27) Proverbs 1:7-9
- 28) Proverbs 3:21-22
- 29) Proverbs 4:9
- 30) Isaiah 30:18
- 31) Deuteronomy 10:12-15, 19, 21-22
- 32) Isaiah 53:2-8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 2; 3
- Luke 18
- Exodus 32
- Matthew 25
- Exodus 20
- Matthew 24; 1
- Jeremiah 2