

ALL YOU NEED IS GRACE

I used to cringe when I heard Bible teachers use that phrase. Usually, it was because what followed was a sermon on how you can't do anything to please God, or you don't have to do anything to earn His favor, or you don't have to worry about how you live because everything is covered by grace. But recently, the Father has radically changed my thinking on this topic and he used a good friend of mine to do it.

What is grace...*really*? The Hebrew word is “*chen*,” and means “*grace, kindness, graciousness*.” It carries with it the idea of “*bending in kindness toward an inferior subject*,” which is what “*chanan*,” a word closely-related to “*chen*,” literally means. When the Creator gives someone “*grace*” He is literally bowing before them and offering His kindness and favor. Picture someone bowing before a king and the king coming off of his throne to extend his scepter toward the one entreating him. That's the word picture. But it goes much deeper.



Zechariah 12:10 says, “*And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look upon Me whom they pierced.*”

Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.” This is a powerful scripture that most believers are familiar with. It is a Messianic prophecy of how the Messiah will be pierced and how, at the end of time, those who crucified Him will have their eyes opened to who He really is. But look closer at how it happens.

What did they do to have their eyes opened? What caused them to mourn for Him? *Absolutely nothing.* It was Yahweh Himself who decided to send a Spirit of *chen* (grace) and supplication. We covered supplication in a previous article and discovered that it is connected to *chen* and literally means to “camp out and beseech Him for His grace.” In this passage, the reason they repent and their eyes are open is because He sends His favor and grace. Strangely, He sends His grace **FIRST**, and **THEN** they “see” Him pierced. It was His “*unmerited*” and undeserving grace that allowed them to “see” the light of their actions and be given the tools necessary to bring them to the place of complete and total healing. There was nothing they could have done to receive this grace. He just chose to extend it to them for their own benefit out of His great love.

This concept has been a missing piece in my own walk with God in ways you cannot imagine. When we don’t understand the concept of *true grace* at its core, we can (and usually will) develop a sense of spiritual pride without even knowing it. This is what happened to me. How? Because when you don’t fully comprehend grace and its full power in keeping the universe together, a thought can slip into your mind that you have something to do with anything, that you somehow “**did**” that. In other words, we start, usually unconsciously, to be a bit too proud of the things we have accomplished and a little too reliant on ourselves to make things happen. Yeah, we “*give God all the glory,*” but deep down we know we had a part to play in it, too. And it is that very same thought that the highest-created angel had right before he chose to rebel against his Creator. And what did *he* become? Satan.

Some of you might have something in you that disagrees with that last statement. The flesh, I’ve learned, is pretty clever and fairly strong. It likes to take some of the credit. And it’s easy to do. Because when we look around at the final results, we see the part we had to play in it. We see our ideas, our input, and our final creation. But is it really *ours*? Is there anything we did that He did not grace us to do? Where did the brain come from that birthed that new idea? Where did the oxygen come from that filled your lungs with the breath needed to accomplish the task? There is no action, thought, word, or deed that proceeds from us that we can really take credit for, especially if we are believers in Messiah Yeshua. For “*I am crucified in Christ. Nevertheless it is not I who lives but Christ in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the One who loved me and gave Himself up for me*” (Galatians 2:20).



If we are crucified with Christ, ***we are dead***, and the last time I checked, dead people really can't take much credit for anything that happens in life. That's why the apostle Paul says that "*it is not I who lives, but Christ in me.*" We can't take credit for anything anymore because HE is the one living in me and all glory must go to Him. This is what is meant by "*I must decrease so that He can increase*" (John 3:30). In order for the Creator to truly live through us, we must empty ourselves and become a vessel for His service.

To empty ourselves is to deflect all glory to the One who truly deserves it. It is to refuse all self-reception. Receiving for ourselves leads to pride, which leads to the growth of the ego, which leads to the feeling of separation from the Creator. Not that He ever separates Himself from His children, but rather that intimate connection is lost between us. We are created to *receive* but with the purpose of *giving* away to others. In other words, everything we have ever received in this life is meant to be used to bless someone else along the way. Our "**receiver**" is meant to be used to **give**. The eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil damaged our ability to receive for the sake of others, twisting it into self-reception as we hold tightly to our "**precious**" (to use an analogy from *The Lord of the Rings*). The moment we begin to hold on to any part of what He gives us and believe we have done something for God or mankind is the very moment He begins to resist us; for He "*...resists the proud, but gives GRACE to the humble*" (James 4:6).

Unfortunately, there are those who begin to learn His commandments, learn of His ways, and unconsciously begin to think they know something, that they are doing something for God. They even defend Him, as if He needs it. Knowledge, if not understood through the eyes of grace,

puffs up and leads to a spiritual pride that is detestable before the throne of God. Grace understands that everyone is at a different place in their spiritual walk and feels no need to convert or police them into the right doctrine. Love leads people by example. Pride pushes people into place through guilt and shame.

Never underestimate the power of grace. It, in and of itself, is what gives you the power to even read this article. When you are sick, you need more grace. When you cannot figure something out, pray for Him to give you the grace to unravel the puzzle. When your relationship with your loved one is on the rocks, it is **His** grace that you need.

When was the last time you prayed for His grace in your life? For me, ever since the Father gave me revelation on this through a friend of mine, I am daily and throughout the day praying for more of His favor and grace. This puts me in a position of recognizing that HE is the sustainer of all things (not me) and that I can do **NOTHING** without Him but **EVERYTHING** through Him. And then when I do **“everything,”** my heart will be in the place where it knows that it wasn't really me after all, but Christ who lives in me, giving me the grace to accomplish His will on earth.

Now you should understand why many of the apostles started their letters: *“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”* It is **HIS** power through us that is our hope in any situation. Humble yourself before your King and ask for His grace and you will see the joy it brings in the morning.

Shalom!

Jim Staley
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