

FIFTH NIGHT OF HANUKKAH

Tonight is the fifth night of the Festival of Lights. And it is appropriate that this night is dedicated to the true Light of the world, Yeshua Himself. In biblical numerology, the number five is the number of grace. Do you know what grace is? What does it mean to be in the "Age of grace?" The answers to those questions truly have life-changing ramifications. So, let's allow the Holy Spirit to shed a little "light" on this subject of grace.



Most people define grace as *unmerited favor*. Grace is most definitely the favor of God that He gives us even though we don't deserve it. And without a doubt, it is that, but is that all it is? Grace is much deeper than that. We are not just living in the age of unmerited favor. There are other levels to His grace.

Take Noah for example, our candle for night number two. The Scriptures say that He had "**favor**" with God because he walked with God. The word "**favor**" there is the same word for grace in Hebrew. In other words, he was given favor (grace) because of his actions. Just like a leader who is chosen by the people because of his leadership skills and abilities, so does God choose (gives grace) to those who show the ability to follow His ways. When a parent gives more

favor to one child over another, it doesn't mean that the parent loves that child more than the other, but the child receives more favor because they are pleasing the parent. And so it is with our Father. He gives favor to those who please Him.

But the definition that I would like to really highlight here is not only the **favor** of God, but the **power** of God. God's grace is the power and authority to accomplish whatever he has put your hand to do. Without it we will struggle to do anything. With it, the giant falls with a single rock from a small sling.

My entire life I have been one to "*get things done.*" As a first-born perfectionist and over-achiever, when I had something in my mind to do, I went after it, doing whatever I could to make it happen. If some obstacle came in between me and the goal, I would do whatever I could to go around or through it. Determination was my middle name. And most of the time I accomplished whatever I had my mind to do. Most leaders have that extreme resolve and determined resilience. The problem is that I carried that mentality into ministry to a degree. While in the civilian world that kind of push-through action might be necessary at times, in our lives with God, it can many times be a major sign that He is not providing the grace to accomplish whatever is before us.

When Moses came to the Red Sea, there was no struggle to open the sea. He just lifted his staff and the waters began to part. When the people were hungry, the Father gave them food from heaven and all they had to do was to pick it up. When they were commanded to destroy Jericho, all they had to do was praise their King with a loud voice. From Gideon to Joshua, and from Sampson to David, when the power of God is given to men, the will of God is done. And there is no better example of the power and will of God coming to man than in the man Yeshua our Messiah.

Ever since the fall, mankind has been trying to serve God ~ failing, falling, and getting back up again. And the only people that received the grace of God, the power and Spirit of YHWH, were the few individuals that needed it to accomplish His purposes ~ prophets, certain kings, etc. The extreme significance of the New Covenant is that the plan of God was to send His grace to **ALL** men that were in covenant with Him. In other words, He would send His grace, that power to accomplish His will, unto every man, woman, and child within His Kingdom ~ and at the exact time that they needed it. This is the reason behind the Spirit being given at *Shavuot/Pentecost*. It was "**power**" (grace) from on High. Finally, the people of God were given divine assistance to do His will, keep His commandments, and know the mind and will of their Creator.

So not only is grace the unmerited favor of God, and also the merited favor of God, but it is also the power of God to do His will on the earth. Have you ever attempted something in your life and it just seemed like there was nothing but resistance to it? It might be very possible that God is simply *not* giving you grace in that particular area. It might be time to rethink whether you are in the timing of God, or whether or not you are supposed to go in that direction at all. ***Because when God wants to do something, He normally supplies the grace for it.*** Mountains are brought low and valleys are raised up. It becomes clear that there is divine support for whatever you are trying to do. So I encourage you today to allow the light of His grace to fill you and each day

after that. Wait upon the Lord and let your strength renew as you ride upon His grace. Petition Him for His favor and ask Him to show you when you are walking in the dark of your own will. And at just the right time, when His grace shows up, the light will begin to shine and the path will become clear.

Trust the Light. Be the Light. Pass the Light.

Happy Hanukkah!

Jim Staley