

Mercy

by Leon O. Poole

This book, *Mercy*, by Leon O. Poole, provides an explanation of the subject of God's mercy from a Biblical perspective.

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Chapter 1

Hebrews 4:14-16. *"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast the profession of our faith. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."* There are two key words in verse 16. They are Mercy and Grace. I have come to believe that God's mercy is a higher aspect of His Nature than is His grace. That is, mercy is an attribute of God, that is above His grace. It is my purpose to show by the Scripture why I have come to believe that. Both aspects of God's Nature are available to every one, especially to believers. God actually invites believers to access both His mercy and His grace. Observe Hebrews 4:16: *"Let us therefore, come boldly, unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain (notice the order here) mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*

Sometimes believers get into trouble. They stay home from church, and they neglect to read their Bible and to pray. Then their conscience bothers them about asking the Lord for help in time of need, because they weren't faithful to Him before they got into trouble. Therefore, they lack the courage to come to Him. But you see, the mercy and grace of God is available in time of need. His mercy endures forever, praise the Lord.

According to Ephesians 6:13 God has made His armour available to us, so that in the evil day we can withstand the wiles of the devil. The evil day is any day that a believer is beset with any kind of trouble, either within ourselves, or coming from conditions in the world around us. In the context of Hebrews 4:16, quoted above, the evil day of Ephesians 6:13, would be a time of need, wouldn't it? People who are in trouble need to come to the Throne of grace.

It is important for us to learn about our Heavenly Father's Nature. Therefore, let us study about His mercy and His grace. Both of them are aspects of His Nature. Mercy and Grace especially apply to believers. The Scripture invites us to access each of their Divine substances. They are not identical in function.

Earlier in my life, I supposed that somehow they were the same. But they're not the same. God does not 'chew His words twice.' His use of both terms in one verse implies their distinction.

Although mercy & grace are not identical, they often work together. I suppose that most Christians are more familiar with the idea of grace than with the idea of mercy. Frequently we hear Christians talk about God's grace. Comparatively, we don't hear them talking as much about His mercy. Most any Christian knows about grace. We have been taught much more about grace than we have about mercy. We should learn about their typical working, and how they interact, according to the Scripture. Praise God.

According to the Bible, grace seems to require a response of faith from people. Think about it. In most instances, the operation of grace seems to require a 'faith-believing'

response from people. For instance, notice Ephesians 2:8-9. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."* No one gets saved by faith. It is **by** God's GRACE **through** faith that we are saved.

Without faith, grace has no approach to us, in the way that He is talking about here. We should understand that in the general sense, God's grace influences people, and inclines them to come to Christ. Yet in order for grace to finish its work in them, they must respond to it in faith. That is why the Gospel is given to us, so that by hearing it, faith will come to us, and we can be saved by God's grace through faith.

But if people don't interact with God's grace through faith, His grace is unfulfilled as far as they are concerned, and they are NOT saved. But that is not always the way it is with God's mercy, thank God. Thank you, heavenly Father, I praise you and thank you for it. Thank you in Jesus' Name, thank you for your mercy and love.

The Bible shows that believers are to be partakers of God's promise to Abraham, in Christ, through the Gospel. May I say that the Gospel shows, in an expanded form, what God promised to Abraham, in a condensed form. For He said to Abraham: *"...in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."* Genesis 22:18.

The Gospel offers a greater view of what is in that promise. We really can't know all that God meant for the world, through simply reading Genesis 22:18. We must have the unfolding of the Scriptural record to see what's in it. He said that in Christ, we might be partakers of His promise in Christ *through* the Gospel. "For by grace are you saved THROUGH faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast." Praise God.

Now look at Romans 4:13-16: *"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not made to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect. Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, tht it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed;...".*

Verse sixteen explains why God requires us to express faith to Him when we approach Him for anything. It must be through faith, so that it might be by grace. I.e., undeserved favor and holy influence upon the human heart.

The truth is that without faith, we cannot please God. We must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6. Paul explains why in Romans 4:16. I have come to appreciate that verse. Many times in reading through it, I've browsed on to verse 17, because it seemed more interesting because it tells us that God calls those things that be not as though they were. He quickens the dead, and calls those things that be not as though they were. That's the "God kind of faith". But verse 16 tells us why things work the way they do.

He says that it is by faith that it might be by grace, i.e., undeserved favor. Nobody can earn it, and God doesn't want anybody to try to earn it. He just wants them to receive it as His gift. Praise God. In contrast to His grace, God's mercy appears to be a Divine gratuity. Its expression often does not depend on human faith.

Observe the Scripture in Genesis 19:15-16, which is the story of the destruction of Sodom. We can learn many notable things from it. The Bible says that the Scripture is written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Romans 15:4.

According to the context, two of God's angels came to Sodom at evening time. Lot took them into his house, and made them a feast. That night the sodomites attempted to molest them. The Scripture says that when the morning arose, then the angels hastened (hurried) Lot. They tried to get him to hurry! They hastened Lot, saying: "...arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here, lest ye be consumed in the iniquity of the city." Now notice vs 16: *"And while he lingered..."*. We might say "while he fooled around." Can you believe that? Isn't that a mind boggling statement?

Now, he had some idea of who these two men were. In effect the angel of the Lord said, Hey! Get out of town. We're going to burn this place to a cinder. We don't want you to be caught in the destruction of the city. Now come on, let's go! Instead of hurrying, Lot "fooled around!" I mean, there were some people in the Old Testament who were like people are now. They really haven't changed that much in nature.

"While he lingered, the men (the angels) laid hold upon his hand...". I don't know what he was doing, but they wanted him to hurry. So they took him by the hand. They took his wife by the hand and they also took his two daughters by the hand, and they led them out of town. It seems the Lot family were kind of dragging their feet. They didn't seem very eager to leave town. Especially not Mrs. Lot.

Now notice what it says: *"...While he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters..."* (notice) the Lord BEING MERCIFUL unto him. And they brought him forth and set him without the city. And it came to pass when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said unto them, "Escape for thy life: look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed. And Lot said unto them: Oh, not so, my Lord."

Did you ever meet a guy like Lot? Have you ever acted like Lot? Isn't that a stunning passage of Scripture? Lot called Him Lord. He had an idea Who he was talking to. Lot said unto them, "Oh, not so, my Lord. Behold, now, thy servant has found grace in thy sight (indeed, you have, Mr. Lot!) *and you have magnified thy (WHAT?) Mercy, which you have shewed unto me in saving my life. And I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me and I die.*" There really wasn't much faith in that statement, was there? *"And he said, behold, now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one. Oh, let me escape thither, is it not a little one? And my soul shall live."*

Often, when God begins dealing with people about salvation, they want to try to do it their way. That's what Lot did! The Lord gave wise counsel, but in effect Lot said, well, that's not quite..., Lord, let's do it this way. What I want you to see here, is both MERCY and GRACE. When Lot began to pray and ask for this, he made a request that involved a function of faith. That involved God's grace, as we noted in Romans 4:16.

Notice how the angel responded to his faith, Genesis 19:21. *"And he said unto him, See, I have accepted you concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city for the which you have spoken."* Our words spoken in faith have such profound effect upon us. For instance, observe what the Lord Jesus said: *"...For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith."* Mark 11:23.

Here's the picture. Lot, is in effect, arguing with the Lord, and yet he **still** gets what he asks for. That has to mean that God is pretty well inclined to answer prayer. Can you say amen? You'd think He'd just say, "O.K. buddy, if you want to argue, good-bye", and to have left him.

However, Lot's Uncle Abraham, the friend of God, the day before, had stood before God, and made intercession, and obtained a commitment from God. God purposed at least to save Lot. He was committed. And so God's mercy took over, when every thing else failed, because God's purpose was involved. By faith Abraham "moved" God to carry it out. You find that it says, "God being merciful", and: "God remembered Abraham." God permitted Abraham to influence His mercy.

Come on! Mom's, and Dad's: you can pray and believe for your household. It's Biblical, clear back to the book of Genesis. They may act like Lot, or worse! But if you can 'get before God' and 'move' Him, see. And the Bible indicates that you can. It says to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain MERCY and find GRACE to help in time of need, doesn't it? In many cases mercy, not only for myself, but for others also.

God already knew how Lot would react, but His mercy, in response to Abraham's intercession, prevailed. Thank God. Praise God for His wonderful works towards the children of men. Because of Abraham's faith, and because of God's mercy, Lot had a pretty good lee-way. In the New Testament, Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist didn't have that much lee-way. He was struck dumb until John was born, because he didn't believe the Angel's words. Luke 1:20. No one had made intercession for Zechariah, and he bore judgment for his unbelief.

What a tremendous passage of Scripture Genesis 19:15-22 is. To me, it has statements that are `soul stunning'. *"And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee, concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city for the which thou hast spoken. Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither. (Isn't that profoundly instructive? See how profoundly God's mercy, and Uncle Abraham's intercession affected Lot?) Therefore, the name of the city was called, Zoar."*

In this passage we can see a Divinely inspired, riveting, stunning, expression of BOTH aspects of God's Nature. That is, His mercy and His grace. See, Lot expressed no faith towards God when the angel took him by the hand. God moved the angel to do that, of his own accord, because of His mercy. Lot didn't express faith, and he didn't express respect, in a sense, did he? The Angel in effect said, come on, let's go, and Lot just fooled around. And so that was God's mercy.

The New Testament, in Hebrews 4:16, tells us to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain MERCY. When the person has NO faith, no interest, no concern, no attitude at all that's acceptable in God's sight, there's still a place of asking for mercy, if you know how to do it. OOOOOh!, Glory to God! Hallelujah! Magnify His Name, Praise the Lord, for He is Good, for His mercy endures forever. Glory to God. Thank you, Father, in Jesus' Name.

God's mercy springs from His disposition, and according to His eternal counsel. I've already made the statement, that Abraham, through faith, and by God's permission, moved God. God's intention was to have mercy. He wanted Abraham to ask Him for it. We can realize that He didn't have to come down and visit Abraham, on THAT day. He didn't have to tell Abraham what He had in mind, did He? He was already in that disposition before He came to Abraham's place for lunch. God is a merciful God, BY NATURE! Hallelujah.

And so Abraham stepped into the role that God provided for him. And sometimes, saints, God will permit you to step into a certain role and you can function in it. He will 'flow' with it, because you move in His purpose. Praise God. Glory to Jesus.

So I repeat again that God's mercy springs from His disposition, and eternal purpose. The first attribute about Himself, which God Himself, proclaimed to Moses, was mercy, as we shall note in the next chapter. Although we're focusing on the two words Mercy and Grace, for the time being, we're studying in the aspect of God's mercy. Praise God. Both Mercy and Grace is vital, but it appears to me that there is a time when mercy is a "Cut above Grace". By that I mean respectfully, it is a higher aspect.

Chapter 2

In order to search the fathomless nature and character of God, we must turn to the Scripture, in which He has revealed things concerning Himself. We studied about God's MERCY and His GRACE in chapter one. There is another aspect of God's Being that is yet above both mercy and grace. That is LOVE.

You never find the Scripture saying, "God is mercy". But you do find it written, "God is love". We hear a great deal about God's love, and we should. The Bible says God IS love. Now, let's qualify that. Love (emotion and affection as humans commonly think of it) is not God, but God is love. Again, not love as humans think of it. The love that God is, is infinitely greater than the human concept of love. The greatness of God's love is spotlighted by the Scripture which says: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us:...". Since Scripture says God is love, it seems certain that love is the wellspring of all of the other aspects of His Being and Person.

But let's pursue our study on His mercy. Exodus 34:1-7: *"And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee out two tables of stone, like unto the first and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which you broke. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning into Mount Sinai, and present thyself there to Me in the top of the Mount"*.

Moses went up on Mount Sinai to ask God for mercy, because Israel had sinned a great sin of idolatry, viz., the golden calf. God said, *"No man shall come up with you, neither let any man be seen through all the Mount, neither let the flocks nor the herds feed before that Mount. And he hewed two tables of stone, like unto the first, and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up into Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the Name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, MERCIFUL..."*

Note that God Almighty, Personally introduced Himself to Moses. He began by telling him about His Nature. He said, the LORD, the LORD God, merciful, (note that Merciful was #1!) *"...gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty. Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and the fourth generation."*

Let us now observe in more detail, what God's word teaches about His mercy. Turning to Psalms 136:1 we should note that God devoted a whole chapter in the Bible to His Own statements about His mercy. We should see that God's mercy is completely independent from the way that people look at things. Notice that every verse concludes by saying: "For His mercy endures forever." Twenty six times He repeats the statement.

"Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever." God indicates that His mercy is the reason that men ought to thank God. All men, sinners and

saints alike can do that, because His mercy endures forever. *"Oh give thanks unto the God of gods, for His mercy endureth forever. Oh, give thanks unto the Lord of lords, for His mercy endureth forever."* Then the Lord began to expound upon the subject. *"To Him Who alone doeth great wonders. For His mercy endureth forever."*

That's why God does great wonders. It's because His mercy endures forever. This chapter is not talking about grace, the subject here is mercy. Verse 5. *"To Him that by wisdom made the heavens, for His mercy endureth forever."* Somebody says, "Why did God create all of the things in the heavens, and in the earth, and in the sea?" The Bible says that it's because His mercy endures forever.

"To Him that stretched out the earth above the waters, for His mercy endureth forever. To Him that made great lights, for His mercy endureth forever. The sun to rule by day, for His mercy endureth forever. The moon and the stars to rule by night, for His mercy endureth forever." But satan has deceived people during the ages of time, to vitiate God's mercy by seducing them to worship the moon and the stars, and to say that they evolved.

Verse 10: *"To Him that smote Egypt in their firstborn, for His mercy endureth forever."* Now if you had been an Egyptian in those days-- But remember this is not about grace, it is about mercy. The Bible insists that it was because His mercy endures forever. Understand something: had God not delivered Israel out of Egypt, there would have been no salvation for mankind. The Egyptians were already 'ripe' for judgment. They would stand before the Great White Throne anyway. So God executed judgment on them early in time, because His mercy endures forever. He wanted to bring redemption to mankind, and He wouldn't permit anything disrupt His purpose. He had made a covenant of blessing with Abraham, and his seed. The exodus from Egypt was a vital part of that covenant, according to Genesis 15:16.

When the people of Israel offended God by creating a golden calf, God would not abandon His purpose. He said to Moses, I'll destroy them; I'll make of you a greater nation than them. Yet, in spite of their grievous sin, God's purpose of redemption for mankind proceeded.

So He smote the first born of Egypt, for His mercy endures forever. *"And brought out Israel from among them, for His mercy endureth forever. With a strong hand, with a stretched out arm, for His mercy endureth forever. To Him which divided the Red Sea into parts, for His mercy endureth forever."*

We should realize this: God did not divide the Red Sea because of Israel's faith. They cried out in fear. Even Moses cried unto the Lord. Yet God had already told them that He was going to deliver them. The Bible, in Psalms 106:6 says that they provoked Him at the Red Sea. Yet because His mercy endures forever He delivered them anyhow. Thank God, thank God, thank God. Can you say amen? Praise God.

Verse 14. *"And made Israel to pass through the midst of it for His mercy endureth forever. But overthrew Pharaoh in the Red Sea, for His mercy endureth forever."* You

see, Pharaoh and his hosts had already opposed God, and thus, His purposes of Redemption. If God did not keep His promise to Abraham to bring his descendants again to Canaan, His integrity would have been vitiated, and the fact that God cannot lie would have been voided.

"To Him which led His people through the wilderness, for His mercy endureth forever." It is eleven days journey from Sinai to Canaan, but God led Israel through the wilderness for a special reason. The Bible carefully records that God said He would lead them that way, lest they should encounter war with the Philistines. So His mercy caused Him to lead them through the desert. His mercy really does endure forever. How tenderly His mercy sought to protect them.

Israel didn't know God's thoughts; they were just glad to get out of Egypt. They weren't trained in war, they were a bunch of former slaves. God did not want them to be discouraged, or think of returning to Egypt, so He led them in such a way as to avoid war, at that time.

And I rather believe that there are times when God leads us today in certain ways, because His mercy endures forever. Praise God, HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER. Thank God. Sometimes I have wondered why certain things I experienced when I was first saved happened the way they did. But now I'd be willing to say His mercy endures forever. I went through some things because His mercy endures forever, and a He gave a whole lot of grace with it, may I add. Praise God forever.

"To Him which smote great kings, for His mercy endureth forever." Perhaps someone says: "Now wait a minute. You mean that God was exercising mercy when He smote those great kings?" Yeah! Let me tell you why. Because those kings were kings of the giants! They were an aberration of the human race. They were satan's special agents to defeat God's purpose. Before the Flood in Noah's days, similar giants were so wicked and lawless, they so corrupted human society that God sent the Flood to purge the earth from them. The giants in the land of Canaan were another eruption of giant humanoids.

According to Genesis chapter six, the giants were the offspring of fallen angels and human women. Since Jesus had to come through the "Seed of the woman", satan attempted to defile humanity so that He couldn't come. Therefore, God destroyed them during the Flood, and afterwards out of Canaan. He used not only Israel to destroy them, but also the descendants of Esau and of the Amonites.

When it says they were great kings, they were not only great politically, but they were great in stature. They ruled in cities where the walls were so high that the spies returned to Moses and said that the cities of Canaan were walled up to heaven.

"And slew famous kings, for His mercy endureth forever. Sihon, king of the Amorites, for His mercy endureth forever. And Og, the king of Bashan, for His mercy endureth forever." The Scripture in Deuteronomy 3:11 records that Og, the king of Bashan, had an iron bedstead that was nine cubits long: a minimum of about 13.5 feet long!

Chapter 3

Psalms 136:21-26. "And gave their land for an heritage, for His mercy endureth forever. Even an heritage unto Israel, His servant, for His mercy endureth forever. Who remembered us in our low estate, for His mercy endureth forever. And has redeemed us from our enemies, for His mercy endureth forever. Who gives food to all flesh, for His mercy endureth forever. Oh, give thanks unto the God of heaven, for His mercy endureth forever."

Isn't the 136th chapter of Psalms a fantastic chapter? The entire chapter is devoted to the subject of Divine Mercy : an attribute of God's Divine Person. Praise God forever.

Now, let us turn to Romans 9:14-19. *"What shall we say then. Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For He saith to Moses I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of Him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that My Name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore, has He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He willeth He hardens. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will?"* In other words, someone might say, If I happen to be one of those on whom He's not going to have mercy, how can He 'pick on me'? And a lot of people argue like that.

Verses 20-26: *"Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show His wrath, and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?"*

Who did the fitting? They did! *"And that He might known on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom He hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. As He saith in Osee, I will call them My people which was not My people, and her beloved which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the very place where it was said unto them, ye are not My people, there shall they be called the people of the living God."*

Some people 'hang up' on this passage, because they say: "See there, it says right there, God's going to have mercy on some people, and some people He isn't". Some people teach the doctrine of Predestination. That's one of the verses that they use, because it says right there, in black and white, that God will have mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wants to, and whom He wants to He will harden.

However, let's ask the question: Who would God have mercy on? The answer is easy! *"Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved."* Romans 10:13. In the New Testament dispensation, He will have mercy on **anyone** who calls upon Him for His

mercy in salvation. Anybody can get mercy from God, according to that. Whosoever means anybody, doesn't it?

But those who refuse to obey, He hardens. How is that? Because men harden their heart first, and resist God's mercy, just like Pharaoh, the king of Egypt did. When they do that, then afterwards God hardens their heart. In the first instance God said to him, through Moses, "Let My people go...". Pharaoh's response was "No".

Pharaoh, on his own, inclined his heart like that. As a matter of fact, Pharaoh rejected God three times before God did anything to harden his heart. God chose a man of that disposition and put him on the throne. Yet he had an opportunity: he could have said obeyed. "Yeah, but Brother Poole, God said He would harden his heart, and He knew that he would not yield." Well, God, Who knows the hearts of all men, picked a man of Pharaoh's disposition, set him on the throne of Egypt, and allowed him to do his thing. God knew that he would act like he did, and gave him the leeway to do it. But it was Pharaoh's *choice* of his own accord to do so. After he did, then God hardened his heart so that he would not back out of God's assignment.

And so Pharaoh initiated the process and hardened his heart. Finally it got to the place where he couldn't help it; God hardened his heart and he couldn't back out. And in the overall sense of course, he couldn't have backed out in the first place because God picked that kind of a man; God knew he wasn't going to back out. Even so, it seems that, on occasion, Pharaoh toyed with the idea of consenting. I mean, when things got real tough--but then, "nah!"

The Bible talks about rightly dividing the Word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15: says, "*Study to shew thyself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*"

Well, people read this passage in Romans 9, get confused because they don't rightly divide it. They say "See there, there no use in me trying to get saved, I'm so bad,...you know". But the Son of God stood on the earth and said, that: "...whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. And finally, in His resurrected, glorified state, He said, Whosoever will..may come and take of the water of life freely. Revelation 22:17. The invitation is out. Anybody that believes on Jesus Christ can get mercy from God. There is no legitimate excuse for anybody going to hell because, as they suppose, God didn't want to save them.

Outside of Christ, my brother and sister, there is no case of predestination for some to **be** saved and some to **be** lost, as far as God is concerned. Sinners **ARE already LOST!** They don't have to do anything to become lost, they already **are** lost! But IN Christ, there is predestination for those who accept His free gift of salvation. And so as we look at this text in Romans 9:14-26, we're talking about God's disposition towards mercy. The focus is not grace, but on mercy, although of course, God's grace IS involved in the actual saving of our souls, Ephesians 2:8-9. Praise God. Thank you Jesus.

Now, let's look at another instance of God's mercy. John 8: 1-11. The story is the case of when the Pharisees brought a woman to Jesus who had been caught in the very act of adultery. They brought her to Him to tempt Him, to get Him in trouble. They said: *"Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned. This they said, tempting Him, that they might have to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground as though He heard them not. So when they continued asking Him, He lifted up Himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And when they which heard it, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: When Jesus had lifted up Himself, and saw none but the woman, He said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."*

Listen to me. That adulterous woman didn't ASK Jesus for anything! Because she was a Jewess she probably knew what the Law said. She had no grounds for any redress. She was guilty. She had no grounds for asking for anything, because the Law said she should be stoned.

So Jesus exercised mercy: God's attribute that is higher than His grace. Grace would have had to defer to the Law because she couldn't exercise faith for grace. But Jesus exercised mercy. Notice that in the Book of James, the Scripture states that MERCY rejoiceth against judgment. Jesus did that for that woman. She couldn't ask, "Lord, help me" according to the Law. Even so, at the Judgment of sinners in the time to come, sinners there will not have grounds to ask for either mercy or grace, because it is appointed once to men to die, but afterward, the judgment. They shall have entered eternity as lost sinners, without God, without Christ, and without mercy or grace. The Scripture insists that NOW is the time, behold NOW is the day of salvation. When one dies lost, it is too late to obtain mercy or grace.

Take the case of Adam and Eve. I used to wonder why Adam didn't just say, "Lord, I did do that, Please forgive me". You know why he didn't? Because God had to teach the concept of forgiveness to man. Heathen have no concept of Divine forgiveness. God has to teach mankind the concept of forgiveness.

In the world, sinners will say to people that have offended them, but ask to be excused: "Ah, that's all right", and then go away boiling and seething over it, maybe for years afterwards. They have no concept of true forgiveness. So Adam had no grounds to ask God for it. He was already dead in his sins; it was too late. No grounds for it; no concept of it. How's he going to get it? He can't get it from God because he's separated from God by his sin.

And so in the mercy of God, He took the skins of animals and made them clothes and put them out of the garden of Eden. But in this case, the adulterous woman didn't dare ask for anything. She stood before this Man, Jesus, Who was also a Jew; He also knew what the Law said, and she didn't know what He could do.

He said, "Has no man condemned you?" (He didn't *have* to say anything to her, but in His mercy, He made it possible for her to obtain mercy and grace) She said "No man, ...LORD!" When she said that, she entered into God's grace. According to Romans 10:9, any sinner can be saved by confessing with his mouth the Lord Jesus, (just like the woman did, and on the same grounds of God's MERCY and grace)

Understand something: Rahab the Harlot did the same thing. She heard about God, and she believed in God. She acted on that, and she got her name in God's Hall Of Fame (Hebrews chapter 11), even though she was a harlot. Even though she lied about the spies. Can you see how mercy and grace sometimes work together? Oh, Glory to God! How could people help from getting saved, if we receive both mercy and grace. Can you say amen? OOOOH, glory to God!

For His mercy endures forever, praise God. The prophet Jeremiah, in Lamentations 2:22, said that it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed. And he said that God's mercies are new every morning. Great is thy faithfulness, Oh, God, thy mercies are new every morning. Every morning. The sun comes up every morning, without fail, because His mercy endures forever. The moon and the planets, the stars, all function in their course, because the mercy of God endures forever.

Behold that the mercy of God recorded promises and statements for the Messiah, a thousand years before His death on Calvary, so that Jesus Christ might hold to them in faith when He was in hell. By faith in those promises, He was resurrected by God The Father and came out of the tomb the victor! The mercy of God endures forever.

We need to understand something. When Jesus died, He died totally alone. He asked why God had forsaken Him. He died, being made SIN. He died being CURSED. And he died the same as any other sinner would have died. When He left His Body, He went down into hell. He "was sin down in there, He was a curse down there, He was cut off from God down there."

But by faith in His heart, HE held the promise of God even while He was hell. For that reason, the Bible says, it was impossible for death to hold Him. OOOH! Glory to God! HIS MERCY ENDURES FOREVER!

Since Jesus arose from the dead, there is no possible extremity in those who come to Him, where faith in God's Word CANNOT prevail. Faith worked in Jesus Christ and burst asunder the bonds of hell and of death. Through faith Jesus came out of there by the glory of the Father. When He came out, He was no longer sin, He was no longer cursed, He was no longer cut off, He was back in favor with God.

That's exactly how sinners come to Christ. When they call upon the Name of the Lord, their faith reaches out and God springs the bars of their prison, and they come out not sinners, not harlots, not liars, not thieves, but sons and daughters of God, SPOTLESS. OOOOH! Glory to God! Oh, hallelujah, there's no need for 'inner healing' for a believer if

he knows what belongs to him. When he comes out of the 'tomb' of his sins, he is spotless, he is a new creature, and he has a new mind.

The Bible says that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. And it doesn't make a dime's worth of difference what he was before. When he comes up out of that tomb of death (sin) he's a child of God. Behold, John says, what manner of love the Father has bestowed, (just bestowed, just dropped it on us) upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Glory to God forever. Saints, we really ARE, we REALLY ARE redeemed by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hallelujah.

Chapter 4

Praise God forever. Praise God. Hebrews 4:16: *"Let us therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."*

There are many occasions when we need mercy and grace. For an illustration, some years ago, I was an assistant Pastor at a Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Someone came running into the Church office, and said one of the workmen on a demolition job had been hurt. So I went out to see what was going on. The man had been working on an 8 foot high concrete block wall, tearing it down. As he had walked around the end of it, it had fallen down upon him. Not only the concrete blocks, but also a pillar of bricks had also toppled down on him.

Another man who was working nearby, dug the man out from under fallen blocks and bricks. He was lying on the ground when I arrive on the scene. One of his ankles was turned backwards, and he was obviously very seriously hurt. Out of his mouth was coming the vilest of language.

As I listened to his words, and saw his pitiful condition, I heard my mouth saying, "God, have mercy, God have mercy, God have mercy, God have mercy, God have mercy, God have mercy." That's all I could say. I couldn't pray for the guy, because he was cursing and carrying on. What was I to pray?... "Mercy!" The ambulance came and took him to the hospital. I learned later he had a punctured bladder, a punctured lung, and his face was messed up; they would have to break the bones and reset them later. I mean, he was really messed up. I went back down to the Church office and we gathered the staff. We began to pray. We took authority over the situation by faith, and I felt in my spirit something in the case "break". Thank God, the man survived.

OOOOH! Let us come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, even when a man is cursing and taking God's Name in vain or whatever. There's mercy with the Lord. Not because the man deserved it, but because God's mercy endures forever. It'll go a step beyond grace. As far as I could tell, that man didn't pray. I never heard him say God have mercy on me. He didn't say it: rather, he was cursing and carrying on, because he was hurting. But in the kindness of God, there was someone standing there in his Presence saying, God, have mercy. God have mercy. I really couldn't pray, and I didn't know what else to say. But it worked, for His mercy endures forever. Glory to God. That man spent about three months or so in the hospital. He told me himself, his hospital bill alone, just the hospital bill, cost him a million dollars. But its better than frying in hell!

Later I asked him, "If you had died, would you have gone to hell? He said: "I would have gone to hell". Yes, he did afterwards receive Christ. Thank God! For His mercy endures forever. See, we have a High Priest in heaven. Jesus is the Savior of all men, not just the saints. He's the saviour of ALL men, specially of them that believe. And His mercy reaches out to men. Oh, the mercy of God!

In his book called *Angels On Assignment*, Roland Buck talked about how the angels of God appeared to him. He said one time an angel said to him, "You will never understand God's love. He said sometimes God will say to one of us, "Help him!" That man is doing everything against God; taking His Name in vain, and God will say to the angel, "just help him."

Now let me ask you. Is it not possible that His children can come and receive mercy and grace from God to help in time of need? Sometimes you may feel like you've 'run past the limit' of God's grace, and you're such a trial to Him, He's probably tired of you. But His mercy is still there. Glory to God forever.

Praise God, the mercy of God even tried to spare Sodom! Justice wouldn't permit it, because they refused. The mercy of God would save every human being if they would let Him. What do I mean, "If they would let Him?"

The Scripture says that he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Acts 16:31 says: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." That is what people must do in order to 'let' God save them. If they don't, they are already lost.

The Bible says mercy rejoices against judgment. But when the time comes, every person will have to answer to God for his sins. Divine justice is also a part of God's Nature.

Lift up your hands and let's bless the Lord, which made the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them. "Ohhh, Father God, we praise you. We glorify you for your love, for your mercy, and for your grace. Grant unto us mercy, and your grace to help us in this moment. Thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ, Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His Own Blood. Revelation 1:5.

And now, dear reader, if you have never received the Lord Jesus as your Lord and Savior, you are outside of the blessed salvation which Jesus purchased for us with His Blood. You are cut off from God because of your sins, and you are lost, on your way to eternity in the Lake Of Fire, as noted in Revelation 20:12-15. But you can change that fact! The Scripture says: "Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved." See Romans 10:13.

Romans 10:9 tells us exactly HOW to be saved. It states: "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth, the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Simply DO what it says! Say with your mouth, "Jesus Christ IS my Lord. In my heart I DO believe that God has raised Him from the dead. Now, Lord Jesus, I open my heart to you, come into my heart, my Lord". And then thank God for saving you. By His grace, through your faith, you ARE NOW saved if you were sincere and believed when you prayed the above prayer. Praise God. Forsake your sins, and begin to follow the Lord

Jesus as your Savior. Tell others about Him, and invite them also to do what you have just done. Read your Bible every day. Pray to God, and thank Him, and trust in Him. Find a good, Bible believing Church, where they teach the Word of God, and will help you to come to know the Lord Jesus Christ better, and how to follow Him according to His Word. God bless you.