

Audio Transcript of Sermon  
February 28, 2026  
God is Gracious

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. When Moses met with God on Mount Horeb to replace the broken tablets of stone containing the ten commandments, God descended from a cloud and took time to remind Moses of Who God is. The tablets needed to be replaced because Moses became angry when he returned from his prior meeting with God on the mountain as he saw the people had so quickly seemingly abandoned God and reverted to religious practices similar to the nations around them, and he broke the tablets when he threw them to the ground in anger. Somehow Israel still thought they were honoring God because during this time they had made a feast to God, but that feast had all of the symbolism of religions associated with other nations, which God did not want. The first tablets of stone were provided by God but this time God had Moses bring replacement tablets of stone with him. Moses was to come to the mountain early in the morning and by himself. Moses had very quickly gotten angry over what the people did, a typical reaction, and this time God reminded Moses that He was God Who was merciful and gracious, patient, and abundant in goodness and truth.

The people had just very quickly moved beyond God when Moses was the first time with God on the mountain, and had adopted religious practices similar to the nations around them which they were not to do. God explained that He was both a God of mercy to those deserving of mercy and a God Who would not simply give a free pass to those who sinned showing that sometimes sin has a generational impact where the sins of a person can trickle down to their children and grandchildren, and even generations of great grandchildren. Exodus thirty-four verse one.

**Exodus 34:1-26**

**1. And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest.**

**2. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount.**

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**3. And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount.**

**4. And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.**

**5. And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord.**

**6. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,**

**7. 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 to the fourth generation.**

Moses asked God to forgive the sin of the people, and God told Moses that Israel had not yet seen all that God could do. He went on to explain that eventually other nations in the region would come to fear Israel, and all Israel needed to do was what God expected of them. He showed that many other nations currently inhabiting the land would be driven out, and that when they took possession of the land, God expected them to destroy all remaining religious devotions aligned to the religious practices of the nations that were being removed. As Israel took possession of these lands, they absolutely were not to absorb any part of previous religious practices of these nations into how they worshipped God. He warned that while the people might look like them and on the surface might seem to be suitable as neighbors and spouses for their children, these people had no loyalty to God, and would seek to preserve their own religious practices corrupting the next generation of Israel. Under no circumstance was Israel to worship their gods, with a small “g”. Verse eight.

**8. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.**

**9. And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.**

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**10. And he said, Behold, I make a covenant: before all thy people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all the earth, nor in any nation: and all the people among which thou art shall see the work of the Lord: for it is a terrible thing that I will do with thee.**

**11. Observe thou that which I command thee this day: behold, I drive out before thee the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite.**

**12. Take heed to thyself, lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee:**

**13. But ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut down their groves:**

**14. For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:**

**15. Lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their gods, and one call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice;**

**16. And thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring after their gods.**

**17. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.**

After receiving the first set of stone tablets from God, Moses returned to find the people preparing to celebrate some manmade feast to God. This second visit regarding the tablets of stone had God reminding Moses of the weekly Sabbath, and God's Holy Days. He explained how the firstborn in the flocks were to belong to God, but that they could be redeemed. God also made clear that under no circumstance was human sacrifice to occur. All the firstborn human sons had to be redeemed. God showed how the Holy Days were to serve as a reminder of how God had fought for Israel. Verse eighteen.

**18. The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee, in the time of the month Abib: for in the month Abib thou camest out from Egypt.**

**19. All that openeth the matrix is mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, whether ox or sheep, that is male.**

**20. But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem him not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty.**

**21. Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest: in eaving time and in harvest thou shalt rest.**

**22. And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the firstfruits of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's end.**

**23. Thrice in the year shall all your men children appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel.**

**24. For I will cast out the nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders: neither shall any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear before the Lord thy God thrice in the year.**

**25. Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.**

**26. The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto the house of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk.**

With the Spring Holy Days coming up in a month, Christians who honor God by keeping the Holy Days know that not only do these serve as a reminder of how God worked with Israel thousands of years ago, but we also know that as we move through the Holy Days, especially moving into the fall Holy Days, we have a better understanding of Biblical prophecy. Christians who keep the Biblical Holy Days know the scary events that bring concern to so many today are less scary because these Holy Days give us a roadmap of what to expect aligning very nicely to Biblical prophecy. Christians who keep the Biblical Holy Days also know that most of what is thought of as Christian holidays borrow ideas from the Bible as much as Israel borrowed from what they knew about God in devising their manmade feast to God, the one where Moses broke the tablets of stone. Israel was told not to allow religious practices of other nations to become blended as part of their religious practices, and today many who call themselves Christians celebrate what they think of as Christian holidays that have a history originating in some nation other than Israel. For a deception to work, the lie has to be seemingly believable, and in today's Christianity for every Christian who keeps the Biblical Holy Days, there are hundreds if not thousands who observe Christian holidays that are part of this subtle deception. That's too bad for them, because they will be off in understanding Biblical prophecy.

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There might be some listening who might think that the vast majority of Christians couldn't be wrong in keeping what are thought of as typical Christian holidays, but remember, the vast majority of Israel was wrong in inventing a feast day with a golden calf even if in their mind all they were doing was honoring God, but a god made after their imagination. There might be some who might think that surely priests would let people know about what is right and wrong according to the Bible. Aaron and the priests at the time were willing to look the other way to let the people do whatever they wanted, almost like they feared the sheer numbers of the people, until confronted by Moses. Only then did they think it was a good idea to listen to Moses and do what God expected. Today it is no different. We can read of the different churches in Revelation and some clearly sold out to paganism. Some mistakenly only look at those churches as churches of that time in what is today the nation of Turkey, but Revelation is a book of prophecy with an end time focus. Think of that review of the churches in Revelation not as only some contemporary warning during the human lifetime of John, but also as a warning to Christians at the end time. If we want to understand Bible prophecy, we need to honor God by keeping the Biblical Holy Days and ditching what are thought of as Christian holidays that have their origin in countries unrelated to Biblical Israel.

When Hezekiah, King of Judah, rededicated the temple at what is thought of as the Great Passover, he reminded the people that God is merciful and gracious. Typically the Passover would have been kept in the first month, but there was a Biblical provision to keep it in the second month if needed, and Hezekiah used that provision for the circumstances of his time. During the normal time of the Passover, the priests had not sufficiently sanctified themselves and the people had not had time to come to Jerusalem, so the provision to keep the Passover in the second month was used. Second Chronicles thirty verse one.

## **2 Chronicles 30:1-21**

- 1. And Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel.**
- 2. For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the congregation in Jerusalem, to keep the passover in the second month.**

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- 3. For they could not keep it at that time, because the priests had not sanctified themselves sufficiently, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Jerusalem.**
- 4. And the thing pleased the king and all the congregation.**
- 5. So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beer-sheba even to Dan, that they should come to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel at Jerusalem: for they had not done it of a long time in such sort as it was written.**
- 6. So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Israel and Judah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, Ye children of Israel, turn again unto the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, and he will return to the remnant of you, that are escaped out of the hand of the kings of Assyria.**
- 7. And be not ye like your fathers, and like your brethren, which trespassed against the Lord God of their fathers, who therefore gave them up to desolation, as ye see.**
- 8. Now be ye not stiffnecked, as your fathers were, but yield yourselves unto the Lord, and enter into his sanctuary, which he hath sanctified forever: and serve the Lord your God, that the fierceness of his wrath may turn away from you.**
- 9. For if ye turn again unto the Lord, your brethren and your children shall find compassion before them that lead them captive, so that they shall come again into this land: for the Lord your God is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if ye return unto him.**

While many laughed at the idea of keeping the Passover once again in Jerusalem, several people did show up to keep the Passover, one of the greatest gatherings in Jerusalem in a long, long, time. Several who came to keep the Passover hadn't sanctified themselves, so for those families, the priests killed their Passover. While this was happening Hezekiah prayed for God's mercy and graciousness on the people that they be pardoned, and God listened to Hezekiah. Verse ten.

**10. So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Ephraim and Manasseh even unto Zebulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them.**

**11. Nevertheless divers of Asher and Manasseh and of Zebulun humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.**

**12. Also in Judah the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king and of the princes, by the word of the Lord.**

**13. And there assembled at Jerusalem much people to keep the feast of unleavened bread in the second month, a very great congregation.**

**14. And they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron.**

**15. Then they killed the passover on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the priests and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought in the burnt offerings into the house of the Lord.**

**16. And they stood in their place after their manner, according to the law of Moses the man of God: the priests sprinkled the blood, which they received of the hand of the Levites.**

**17. For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the Lord.**

**18. For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good Lord pardon everyone**

**19. That prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.**

**20. And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.**

**21. And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests praised the Lord day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the Lord.**

Even in the face of punishing circumstances, God shows graciousness. For instance the time when Elisha the prophet was near death was a time when Syria was oppressing Israel. Hazael, King of Syria, was a determined adversary to Israel's King Jehoahaz. God's graciousness was not given because of Jehoahaz, Elisha, or the people of that time, because Elisha was a rare righteous person in Israel. God's graciousness was given because of God's prior commitment to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Eventually Hazael died and

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Hazael's son who became King of Syria was not the same caliber of military leader as Hazael. Think about it. The past relationship between God and these three men who were long deceased was the reason for God's graciousness. We never know how our relationship with God today might impact future generations, but from the Bible we can see that God remembers and honors commitments to even the dead who cannot plead their cause. That is how gracious God is. Second Kings thirteen verse fourteen.

## **2 Kings 13:14-25**

**14. Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died. And Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.**

**15. And Elisha said unto him, Take bow and arrows. And he took unto him bow and arrows.**

**16. And he said to the king of Israel, Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands.**

**17. And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them.**

**18. And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed.**

**19. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.**

**20. And Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the year.**

**21. And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.**

**22. But Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz.**

**23. And the Lord was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his presence as yet.**

**24. So Hazael king of Syria died; and Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead.**

**25. And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.**

Isaiah shows that God sometimes shows graciousness by not taking immediate action. God gives people the opportunity to decide to change by themselves. God also knows that when a person believes that a life of sin is the only way of life, that change probably will not come voluntarily. God knows that when people believe a life of sin is the best life for them, they will seek more ways to sin, because in the minds of these people, more, as in more sin, is better. God knows instead of people seeking His truth these people will seek their own “truths” which support their beliefs. With Israel, instead of following God they wanted to be more like Egypt, the nation which had enslaved them. Isaiah thirty verse one.

### **Isaiah 30:1-18**

**1. Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:**

**2. That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!**

**3. Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.**

**4. For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes.**

**5. They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach.**

**6. The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people that shall not profit them.**

**7. For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still.**

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God loved Israel, but He also knew Israel was rebellious. He knew they lied, and He knew they would ignore His laws. Instead of hearing truth, the people sought their own “truth”, a fancy way to describe a lie. The people did not want to hear the potential consequences for their sins, they wanted to hear flattering words that made them feel good about themselves, even if it meant abandoning what God expected. And here is where God’s graciousness shows. God already knew the people were rebellious, that they lied, that they would ignore what He expected preferring sweet lies over the reality of the consequences for sin. God also knew that the people would be saved when they returned to Him, and God was willing to wait them out to be gracious to the people. God could immediately punish anyone for their sin. God instead will wait us out to also show us graciousness. But we must change. Verse eight.

**8. Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come forever and ever:**

**9. That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord:**

**10. Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits:**

**11. Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.**

**12. Wherefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon:**

**13. Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.**

**14. And he shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that is broken in pieces; he shall not spare: so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit.**

**15. For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not.**

**16. But ye said, No; for we will flee upon horses; therefore shall ye flee: and, We will ride upon the swift; therefore shall they that pursue you be swift.**

**17. One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one; at the rebuke of five shall ye flee: till ye be left as a beacon upon the top of a mountain, and as an ensign on an hill.**

**18. And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you: for the Lord is a God of judgment: blessed are all they that wait for him.**

The prophet Joel again reminds us of God's graciousness urging the reader to rend their heart and not their garments adding that God is slow to anger. That doesn't mean God never gets angry, just that God is willing to wait out people and their sins for a while to give space to repentance. Joel two verse twelve.

### **Joel 2:12-17**

**12. Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:**

**13. And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.**

**14. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the Lord your God?**

**15. Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly:**

**16. Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.**

**17. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?**

We also learn that God is gracious in the Psalms. When God is willing to wait out people and their sins for a while to give space to repentance, God is showing mercy. We are all in need of God's mercy. Psalm eighty-six verse eleven.

### **Psalm 86:11-17**

**11. Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name.**

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**12. I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.**

**13. For great is thy mercy toward me: and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.**

**14. O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul; and have not set thee before them.**

**15. But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth.**

**16. O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and save the son of thine handmaid.**

**17. Shew me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it, and be ashamed: because thou, Lord, hast holpen me, and comforted me.**

When God hears our cries for help, it is because God is gracious. He wants to treat His people with compassion. Psalm one hundred sixteen verse one.

#### **Psalm 116:1-5**

**1. I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications.**

**2. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.**

**3. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.**

**4. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.**

**5. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.**

As God is gracious to us, we should be gracious to others. In Proverbs, we read that a gracious woman retains honor. Proverbs eleven verse sixteen.

#### **Proverbs 11:16-17**

**16. A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong men retain riches.**

**17. The merciful man doeth good to his own soul: but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh.**

The ultimate example of graciousness is given to us through the death of Jesus Christ, who sacrificed his life for us. We know that through Adam sin entered the world. We also know through Jesus Christ, a life exemplifying

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graciousness, that we have access to something we simply called grace. Through Jesus Christ, we experience God's graciousness, grace, by having our sins forgiven. Having had our sins forgiven, we no longer live a life of sin. We seek first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness. We seek to be righteous. Romans five verse twelve.

### **Romans 5:12-21**

**12. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:**

**13. For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.**

**14. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.**

**15. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.**

**16. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification.**

**17. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.**

**18. Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.**

**19. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.**

**20. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:**

**21. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.**

The grace that God gives us through the death of Jesus Christ is worthy of praise knowing that God's graciousness makes it possible for people who are by nature sinners, who once given the Holy Spirit, have the opportunity to pursue God's righteousness. We have been redeemed through the blood of

Jesus Christ. Our sins have been forgiven. We have been given incredible grace by God Who is gracious. Ephesians one verse three.

### **Ephesians 1:3-14**

- 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:**
- 4. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:**
- 5. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,**
- 6. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.**
- 7. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;**
- 8. Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;**
- 9. Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:**
- 10. That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:**
- 11. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:**
- 12. That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.**
- 13. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,**
- 14. Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.**

Having been given grace, we choose to pursue righteousness. We do not pursue a life of sin. The grace that we have through God's graciousness is not a license to sin. We know the wages of sin is death and the gift of God is eternal life, and instead of seeking sin, we seek first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness. Romans six verse fifteen.

### **Romans 6:15-23**

**15. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.**

**16. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?**

**17. But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.**

**18. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.**

**19. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.**

**20. For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.**

**21. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.**

**22. But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.**

**23. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

While we seek the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness, our seeking of the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness does not become God's graciousness. There is nothing we can do to save ourselves. The hope of eternal life we have is because of God's graciousness, and God's graciousness is controlled by God, and not anything we do. Ephesians two verse one.

### **Ephesians 2:1-10**

**1. And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;**

**2. Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:**

**3. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.**

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- 4. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,**
- 5. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace ye are saved;**
- 6. And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:**
- 7. That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.**
- 8. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:**
- 9. Not of works, lest any man should boast.**
- 10. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.**

Finally, God's graciousness is beautifully and wonderfully shown in the Book of Revelation. Towards the end of that book, John sees a new heaven and a new Earth with New Jerusalem descending from heaven. God could have announced this event to John in any way He wanted to, but God simply had John hear that the tabernacle of God is with men, showing that God will live with people. The people will become God's people, and God will be their God. God is gracious enough to live with the people He created. Revelation twenty-one verse one.

#### **Revelation 21:1-4**

- 1. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.**
- 2. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.**
- 3. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.**
- 4. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.**

We can be thankful that God is gracious and not spiteful. God is slow to anger, but not without anger, and God is slow to anger and will wait out His people and their sins for a while, because God wants to bring all people to

repentance. The greatest example of God's graciousness is the grace we have through Jesus Christ, and because we have been called having God's Holy Spirit, we seek first the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness.

Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.