

Contents

- ["Faith Alone in Christ Alone"](#)
 - [Doctrine of Grace](#)
 - [Progress Report](#)
 - [Evangelistic Meeting Schedule](#)
 - [Missionary Report](#)
 - [God Will Provide - Genesis 22:8](#)
 - [Gratitude For Answered Prayers](#)
 - [Letters to Grace Evangelistic Ministries](#)
 - [Bible Doctrine for Thought](#)
 - [Here is the Truth](#)
 - [The Good News](#)
 - [Financial Policy](#)
 - [Would You Join Us in Prayer?](#)
 - [Our Grace Ministry has no Limits](#)
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Faith alone in Christ alone

Greetings to you from all of us here at Grace Evangelistic Ministries. We are truly grateful to God our Father; because of His infinite mercy we have the privilege of serving Him. What an honor to be called the children of the Most High God! What a thrill to be servants of the Almighty! You and I can never fully comprehend why Sovereign God, the self-sustaining and self-sufficient One, has bestowed this sublime privilege to serve in His Kingdom as His children. We are totally undeserving in every sense of the word. Indeed, apart from the grace of God, there would be neither "Moses Onwubiko" nor "Grace Evangelistic Ministries!" His attitude of grace toward this ministry continues to leave us speechless and in awe! God continues to challenge many believers to partake in our missionary endeavors through their financial and prayer support. Haggai put it this way: "I am with you," declares the Lord. So the Lord stirred up the spirit of [His servant]...and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty, their God" (Haggai 1:13b, 14a, c). Month after month, we remain profoundly thankful for God's provision. Our Lord uses His people to pour out His indelible blessing on us—the unworthy ones. This is grace in action; a testimony to the fact that God always provides for a ministry that honors Him. And thus He declares, "The silver is mine and the gold is mine declares the Lord Almighty" (Haggai 2:8).

We would be amiss not thank all our partners who have allowed the Lord to use them in support of in this unique ministry. Our appreciation for your involvement remains undiminished. Also, we thank the local churches for their corporate support. And without believers who constantly mention us before the heavenly Throne, we would have nothing; your prayers produce results beyond calculation! We see the impact of your supplications, both at home and overseas, as God opens more doors for the ministry. Many are turning to Christ by faith alone in Christ alone, and believers are responding to the challenge to give learning and application of Bible doctrine the highest priority in their lives. In light of your partnership, we echo the words of the great apostle Paul; "I thank my God every time I remember you (*our partners*). In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it unto completion until the day of the Lord. And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:3-6, 4:19).

It is our purpose to challenge everyone who comes in contact with this ministry: Are you receiving sound Bible doctrine from your pastor? Or are you substituting something else—such as entertainment—for your fellowship with God? Is learning and applying Bible doctrine most important to you? Or do you value being admired, famous, successful, or wealthy? Are you making true spiritual progress? Or are you riding on your emotions and feelings? Are you taking our Lord's command seriously by making your deposits in heaven (Matthew 6:20,21; I Timothy 6:17-19; Luke 12:33,34)? Or are you thinking that you can take something other than the doctrine in your soul with you when you die? What is the source of your happiness? Is it the infallible and inerrant Word of God? Is your ultimate goal as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ to reach spiritual maturity and then to advance to know the love of Christ? At life's end will you be able to say with certainty, as did the apostle Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the [doctrine of our Lord]. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that day, and not to me only but also to all who loved His appearing (*believers whose priorities are on target—those who finish the race as winner believers*)" (II Timothy 4:6-8)? Your answers to these questions are a matter between you and God. He is the One who purchased you by the precious blood of His son Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:18,19).

As a doctrinal, grace-oriented missionary organization, we want to assure our partners, those channeling their resources, and those serving our Lord through this ministry that our objectives remain unaltered. First, we seek to evangelize unbelievers with the simple, undiluted gospel message of our Lord Jesus Christ: "Faith alone in Christ alone." Second, we assist positive believers in their spiritual growth by providing them with sound Bible teaching by means of literature and audiotapes without cost. Our policy is to clearly reflect God's grace. He gives everyone—rich and poor—the opportunity to hear the gospel. And to every believer He gives equal privilege and equal opportunity to learn sound Bible doctrine and grow in grace, with the ultimate goal of glorifying our Lord Jesus Christ. We realize that God has graced us out, and we wish to reflect His grace. Our third objective is to support believers who have communication gifts and are willing to learn sound Bible doctrine. As the funds become available, we send them to doctrinal seminaries to equip them with the tools necessary to accurately divide the Word of Truth for the edification of believers in their vicinity.

Grace Evangelistic Ministries does not solicit funds. We believe that financial support for this ministry is solely a matter between the individual believer and the Lord. We echo the words of the apostle Paul: "Let each one do (*in support of this ministry*) just as he has purposed in his mind (*a decision between him and the Lord*); not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:7). There is nothing cheerful when a believer is induced to give to the Lord by means of gimmicks. God loves the giver who gives because of gratitude for the infallible Word of God and his passion for the work of His Kingdom.

"The eternal God is [our] refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms" (Deuteronomy 33:27).

Forever in His matchless grace,
Moses C. Onwubiko, President
Grace Evangelistic Ministries

You shall know the
truth, and the truth
shall set you free.
JOHN 8:32

Doctrine of Grace

By Reverend Moses C. Onwubiko

(Lesson 5—Continued from volume 18[Lesson 4])

In our previous doctrinal exposition (volume 18, lesson 4), we examined the status of man before creation. We learned that man is nothing apart from the grace of God, and examined God's grace towards Abraham. Also, we noted the apostle Paul's vigorous defense of Abraham's faith alone in Christ alone as the ONLY means for an eternal relationship with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—the only way that is compatible with grace!

We reviewed the apostle's emphatic assertion that one's salvation, which commences with grace, cannot be made contingent on works that follow! Let's try to illustrate the fallacy that God's plan can include our human good. An automobile engine's power is derived from highly refined oil, or gasoline. You can see the engine, read its specifications, and see other engines moving up and down the street, but your engine isn't going anywhere without fuel. Likewise, spiritual power for believer's soul is only available through the fuel of God's grace provision—and there are never any shortages. Now consider a man who starts his car, and then pours a pound of sugar into the fuel tank (Warning: Do not try this at home!). Sugar may be a source of energy for your body, but never for an automobile engine. What do you think will happen to the engine? The carburetor, which converts the liquid fuel into a highly combustible vapor, will quickly become encrusted with the crystalline molecules of sugar and the engine will be cut off from the source of its power. The engine won't take you anywhere unless you push or pull it. Now, consider the thousands who after salvation decide that God's grace just isn't quite enough. First they add a little human power and as the engine begins to sputter, they incorrectly assume the solution is to add even more. They have long since, gotten out and started pushing. And for all that pushing, where are they going? Certainly not where God would have them. God's power in their lives has been blocked by the sugar of their human good. Just as the engine will not operate with sugar, God's plan will not operate with human works.

This is why God inspired the apostle Paul to so decisively reject the sanctification-by-works heresy in Galatia. "You foolish (*Anoetos: Greek = lacking intelligence- in this case without spiritual common sense*) Galatians," he wrote, "who has bewitched you (*i.e., led you into false doctrine*) . . .? I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the [Holy] Spirit (*a grace gift at salvation*) by observing the law (*i.e., working for your salvation*), or by believing (*i.e., faith plus nothing*) what you heard (*i.e., the simple grace gospel message*)? Are you so foolish? After beginning with the [*grace gift of the Holy*] Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal (*spiritual maturity*) by human effort?" (Galatians 3:1-3)

In the same context, he continued, "Consider Abraham; he believed [in] God (*the Son as He revealed Himself to him*), and it (*his faith plus nothing*) was credited for him as righteousness." He added, "Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith [alone], and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: 'All nations will be blessed through you.' So those who have faith (*alone in Christ alone*) are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. For as many as are of the works of the Law (*rely on salvation by works*) are under a curse (*still unbelievers*)" (Galatians 3:6-10a).

Believers today are the spiritual progeny of Abraham, saved in exactly the same way that he was saved. The Holy Spirit reaches out from the time of Paul through two millennia and asks this same question of the modern Judaizers, those who teach lordship-salvation, salvation-by-works, and sanctification-by-works—how can you start with grace and switch to works?

Abraham exemplifies God's standard for salvation in every generation—it is faith alone in Christ alone. Anyone who chooses to add works of any kind to simple faith for salvation remains an unbeliever-separated from God. This sounds extreme, but consider God's Word: "What then shall we say? That the Gentiles, who did not pursue [God's] righteousness, have obtained (*Greek: katalambano = laid hold of, apprehended*) it, a righteousness that is by faith, but Israel (*God's chosen people*), who pursue a law of

righteousness (*i.e., salvation by works*), has not obtained it. Why not? Because they pursued it (*i.e., salvation*) not by faith but as if it were by works . . ." (Romans 9:30-32a).

So how can a person who understands this simple truth resolve to reject it?" In one word, the answer is arrogance! Some personally reject this truth, because it calls into question the salvation of friends and family already departed. Others reject it publicly. When confronted with the truth, these false teachers say, "If people understood that salvation is simple and eternal, they would live immoral lives." I know a pastor in a denomination that rejects the doctrine of eternal security, who personally accepts its truth. But he says that he cannot teach what he believes for two reasons. First, he fears that he would lose his job. Second, he fears that it would encourage his congregation to live in sin.

Those who embrace false doctrine face the justice of the Supreme Court of Heaven! God has never needed anyone's help—not then, not now, not ever! Whether for discipline or blessing, God deals with us in grace—a policy that has never changed. Do you recall what happened to Uzzah when he reached out to stabilize the Ark when it was being moved to Jerusalem (GNT, Vol. 16)? He was trying to help, but it was the last time that he'd try that. When we get out of alignment with grace, God always corrects us. "For those whom the Lord loves (*Greek: agapao = unfailing love of the object, wholly based on character of the giver—here believers out of fellowship*), He disciplines, and He [skins alive] every son whom He receives" (Hebrews 12:6).

Now we are ready to examine one of the pivotal doctrines of Scripture: God's grace toward His chosen people.

GOD'S GRACE TOWARDS ISRAEL

Who are the Israelites? And how does God's grace apply to Israel in time and in eternity? Exactly what did Israel do to earn a special place in God's plan? Why was this race the source of our Lord Jesus Christ's humanity? Before answering these questions, let's review the definition of grace. Grace is "a favor done without expectation of return; absolute freeness of the loving kindness of God to men finding its only motive in the bounty and free heartedness of the Giver; unearned and unmerited favor." We will see that God's grace toward Israel is totally apart from human merit.

HISTORICAL ISRAEL: THE BEGINNING

The city of Ur, on the banks of the Euphrates, about 200 miles inland from the Persian Gulf was the birthplace of Abram (c. 2060 B.C.). Abram was born a gentile and was to become the first of a new racial species. He grew up, married, and then moved with his father's family to Haran, a town about 200 miles inland from the northeast corner of the Mediterranean. After his father's death in Haran, God told Abram—still childless—to move away from Haran to a place where He would provide land, seed, and blessing. We find the first phase of Abram's remarkable journey, begun in faith at age seventy-five, outlined in Genesis 12-16. Despite Abram's failures, God made his ninety-ninth a banner year. Abram, in obedience to God's command, circumcised himself and at that moment He became the first Jew in history - the father of the new racial species. Abram became Abraham while his wife Sarai, now 90, became Sarah. And it wasn't just their names that God changed but He also revived their sexual ability. A year later Sarah delivered her first child whom God named Isaac or "laughter" (Genesis 17-21) - the promised son and heir by Sarah. His mother died when Isaac was 38. Two years later he married, but it wasn't until age sixty that Isaac and Rebekah had twin sons—Esau and Jacob (Genesis 22-25). Abraham remarried and had six more sons. These along with Ishmael, the son of his adultery, and his grandson Esau became the fathers of Arab tribes. When Abraham died at 175 years, his grandson Jacob was 15. As an adult Jacob deftly wrested the birth right from his brother to become the heir of the promise. Joseph—his favorite son—was just nine years old in Jacob's 100th year. That year, after a humbling, all-night wrestling match with God the Son, God changed Jacob's name to Israel (literally one who strives with God. Genesis 32). Joseph's jealous brothers sold him to traders who took him to Egypt where he became regent. By means of God's grace he prepared Egypt for famine, a famine that eventually

reunited him with his family. Joseph and his eleven brothers became the fathers of the tribes of Israel-thirteen in all-including Joseph's double-portion, the half-tribes of Ephraim and Manassas.

GOD'S GRACE IN ISRAEL'S BLESSING: "And I will make you (Abraham) a great nation (Israel), and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing" (Genesis 12:2). God made this covenant with Abraham and his progeny unconditionally. Had the promise required human merit, it would not have been grace! The promise was repeated after Abraham's death: ". . . the Lord appeared to [Isaac] . . . and said, 'I am the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I am with you. I will bless you, and multiply your descendants, for the sake of my servant Abraham'" (Genesis 26:24). Note that God's promise to bless Isaac and his progeny was for the sake of Abraham. And what had Abraham done to merit God's blessing on his descendents? Nothing. In all the Scriptures, no shred of evidence supports that Abraham did anything but exercise non-meritorious faith in Christ! Further, notice these promises extend to those not yet born! What could they do to merit this blessing? Nothing. "The Lord did not set His love on [Israel] nor choose you because you were more in number (or more righteous for that matter) than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples" (Deuteronomy 7:7). Israel grew-outnumbering their hosts-during their stay in Egypt, and a new king who did not know Joseph came to power and enslaved the people. Even in slavery, God demonstrated His grace to the fledgling nation.

In His omniscience, sovereignty, eternal purpose, and grace, God called out Abraham and made a unilateral covenant to specially bless his family. This sovereign decision was not based on any special quality of any in the family; rather it was based solely on God's integrity. The only spiritual issue was non-meritorious faith in the person of Christ. Fully comprehending the doctrines related to God's grace toward Israel requires a detailed examination of both Testaments of the infallible, inerrant Word of God. The Bible distinguishes between racial, religious, and regenerate Israel. "But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "through Isaac (Isaac believed, Esau did not) your descendants will be named." That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants." (Romans 9:6-8)

All of those whom God miraculously brought out of Egyptian captivity were regenerate, born again by faith alone in Christ alone. But while under divine testing in the wilderness they demonstrated their lack of spiritual growth and momentum as well as capacity for their newly gained freedom by continually failing to trust God and apply doctrine. It came to the point that God was prepared to start over. "And the Lord said to Moses, 'I have seen this people (Israel), and behold they are an obstinate (stubborn, hard-headed, hard to care for, and hard to lead) people. Now let Me alone (while you go back down the mountain), that My anger may burn against them, and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you (Moses) a great nation'" (Exodus 32:9,10). Note that God has never been angry, not even once. Anger is a sin. So why does the Bible say that God was angry? This is an anthropopathism; there are many in the Bible and each is divinely inspired. They ascribe to God a human characteristic, which He does not-and cannot-possess. The Holy Spirit used anthropopathisms to convey divine policy in terms that man could quickly understand. Now back to God's proposal.

Any average person's ego might regard this as a tempting, even mouthwatering offer, but not Moses-he not only understood grace, but he had all the ingredients of a great leader: humility, authority orientation, loyalty, and integrity. Not only was he loyal to God and His Plan, but also to those whom God charged him to teach doctrine and lead into the land promised to Abraham. So it is not surprising to find him imploring God not to harm His people. "Then Moses entreated the Lord, his God, and said, 'O Lord, why [must] your anger burn against Thy people whom Thou hast brought out from the land of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? But now, if Thou wilt, forgive their sin-and if not, please blot me out from the book (an impossible request) which Thou has written.'" (Exodus 32:11, 32) Moses was willing to give up his salvation if God would not punish Israel! In a moment we will take a look at how God handled some of Israel's failures, and Moses' failures too. But first let's step back for a moment to look more closely at God's gracious deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage.

GOD GUIDED ISRAEL IN GRACE:

"Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt." (Exodus 13:18) And the Lord was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people" (Exodus 13:21-22). The pillar of cloud and fire was neither earned nor deserved-that's grace. And that grace was consistent day and night. Imagine, over two million believers with their flocks and cattle. They had just walked away from their homes. They had no specific knowledge of where God would take them or the dangers that lay ahead. But God the Omniscient One manifest himself in the pillar as their Navigator! No wonder Moses and the sons of Israel sang, "In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling" (Exodus 15:13). Though Israel often failed, God never failed them! Now, let's take a look at how God dealt with some of Israel's failures.

FAILURE #1 (Exodus 14): "As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the Lord. They said to Moses, 'Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt?' Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians (as slaves)?' It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert'" (v.10, 11). Listen to the sarcasm! While still in Egypt, God set the stage for Israel's liberation through a series of ten miracles. Now, in the sights of the pursuing Egyptian army they panic. They forget God, His promises, the doctrine taught by Moses, and the logical conclusion that if God had brought them this far He was not going to abandon them now. They had their eyes on the problem, while Moses had His eyes on the solution, the Lord. "But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. The LORD will fight for you while you keep silent" (v. 13,14).

Their lack of faith in these crucial moments merited discipline, perhaps their capture by the Egyptian army. But were they captured? "Then Moses stretched out his hand over the water . . . the waters were divided and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground" (v. 21,22). Had they earned this miraculous provision? Once safely across, God told Moses to stretch out his hand a second time. This time the waters closed back and swallowed the entire Egyptian army (v. 26-28). "That day the Lord (in His matchless grace) saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. And when the Israelites saw the great power the Lord displayed against the Egyptians, the people [respected] the Lord and put their trust in Him and in Moses His servant" (v. 30,31). It was a powerful lesson for Israel, but for most it would soon be forgotten.

FAILURE #2 (Exodus 15): "Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the desert of Shur. For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah (literally, bitter), they could not drink the water because it was bitter So the people [of Israel] grumbled against Moses, saying, 'What are we to drink?'" (v. 22-24). Just three days since the miracle at the Red Sea they had forgotten how God provided! God tested the Israelites at Marah and they failed. Though they whined, mewled, groaned, and grumbled, God's grace prevailed and the water became sweet (v. 25).

FAILURE #3 (Exodus 16): "In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses You have brought us out into desert to starve this entire assembly to death" (v.2-3). Again, the long history of God's provision-most recently, the miracles in Egypt, the Red Sea deliverance, and the water at Marah-is forgotten! Miracles are never the basis of spiritual strength. Absent doctrine in their souls, they became irrational, wishing that God had killed them in Egypt rather than face starvation in the wilderness. Once again, human viewpoint suggests God should have just abandoned them right there. Fortunately, we

never get everything we deserve from God's justice. "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'I will rain down bread from heaven. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them to see whether they will follow my instructions'" (vs. 4). God, in His unfathomable grace, provided fresh quail every evening and fresh bread every morning (v. 13-15). What did God demand in return for this provision? Nothing, but He did set some rules. Israel would have to know how to follow instructions in order to conquer the Promised Land. Therefore, the instructions (v. 16, 19, 23, 26) were both a test and a training exercise. One of these was to gather only one day's supply; "however, some of them paid no attention to Moses . . ." (v. 20) gathering more than a one-day supply. The Lord indicted them. "Then the Lord said to Moses, 'How long will [Israel] refuse to keep my commands and instructions?" (v. 28) Some failed the Lord, but His grace did not fail them. For forty years Israel neither earned nor deserved this grace provision that they called manna.

FAILURE #4 (Exodus 17): Israel "camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink." So they "quarreled with Moses and said, 'Give us water to drink [right now!] . . . Why did you bring us out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?" (v.1-3). Again, they have clearly failed to trust God's provision. Nonetheless, undeserving in every sense of the word, God provided water for the Israelites. He told Moses to strike the Rock, and water came out of the Rock and they drank to their satisfaction (v. 6). Are you ready for a quiz? From what we have studied so far, is there any good work the Israelites performed to earn God's love and provision? Of course not! Keep in mind that the Rock Moses struck is a type (or symbol) of the Lord Jesus Christ. Concerning this unique Rock, Paul wrote, "For they (the Israelites) drank the same spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ" (I Corinthians 10:4). Moses striking the rock once symbolized Christ being struck once with the sins of the whole world. "For Christ also died for sins once for all" (I Peter 3:18).

FAILURE #5 (Numbers 20): **THE FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP:** "In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin . . . Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses, . . . why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines . . . there is no water to drink!" (v.1-5). You might ask, "Why can't the Israelites trust God just for one day?" But are we doing any better several thousand years later? When you face uncertainty, do you pause to count your blessings and anchor your trust in God? How many times have you failed the Lord since you became a believer? Had you kept a log of all your sins and human good since that day, you would have a tangible, albeit partial measure of the extent of God's grace on your behalf. Have you ever committed a sin that God would not forgive? Of course not! No wonder Jeremiah wrote, "My soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled in me. This I recall to mind, therefore I have hope. It is of the Lord's mercies (His unfailing love and grace in action) that we are not consumed [and forgotten], because His compassions [cannot and] will not fail. They are new every morning (actually 24 hours a day): great is [His] faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:20-23). No one is worthy to receive anything good from God, let alone eternity in heaven. Only God's grace makes it possible!

As great as he was, Moses was fed up with Israel's complaints! God told Moses to take the rod (with which he struck the rock at Marah), his brother Aaron, and the Israelites to the rock, where in their presence He would speak to the rock. "So Moses took the staff from the Lord's presence, just as He commanded him. . . . [And] Moses said to them, 'Listen, you rebels, must we (*Moses and Aaron*) bring you water out of this rock?' Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff" (v. 9, 10). Moses failed on two counts, but his failure can be summarized in one word: arrogance.

Do you recall when Moses struck the rock at Marah? That was an object lesson representing the substitutionary death of Christ. At the cross God did all the work necessary to secure our salvation. Here the rock is an elevated rock, a picture of Christ in resurrection. This time Moses was told to speak to the rock, because we speak to the resurrected Christ.

What happened to Moses? He got his eyes on people instead of the Lord. His reaction was arrogant and blasphemous. Could Moses bring water from the rock as he suggested? No, that was something only the

Lord could do. There were times when God authorized Moses to rebuke Israel, but this time he took God's prerogative upon himself. He thought he would set the opposition straight, when God wanted to teach them a lesson about grace. Striking the elevated rock sent the wrong message. Nonetheless, God demonstrated His grace ". . . water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank" (vs. 11b).

Because of their leadership roles, the Lord took Moses and Aaron aside and announced their punishments privately. Their punishment denied them entrance to Promised Land; however, their failure did not cause them to lose their salvation-no matter how heinous, sins can never cancel our so great salvation. Although Aaron's failure resulted in his death, Moses recovered his fellowship and continued his advance to become of the founder of the Jeshurun fraternity into which all winner-believers are inducted (Deuteronomy 33:26, cf. Isaiah 44:2). "And the Lord said to Moses, '... you have found favor (grace) in my sight" (Exodus 33:11b).

PRINCIPLE: God always deals with us on the basis of His integrity-the foundation of His policy of grace-not on the basis of any quality that we possess. Grace emphasizes who and what God is, not who and what man is. God's grace provides what we can never earn nor deserve-His righteousness and His eternal life. Without these we cannot spend eternity with God. Apart from grace, all humanity would be thrown into the same Lake of Fire prepared for Satan and the fallen angels (Matthew 25:41). But that fate is reserved only for those who refuse to accept God's grace gift through faith alone in Christ alone.

PRINCIPLE: After death, sin and failure are never an issue. In fact, even when unbelievers appear at the Great White Throne judgment, Jesus Christ will not mention any of their sins, because He paid the penalty for all of them on the cross. On that day they will be indicted by their own good deeds (Revelation 20:11-15). The Scripture makes it clear that our good deeds are filthy rags in God's sight (Isaiah 64:6). And no one has enough righteousness to merit salvation or eternal life (Romans 3:10; Psalm 14:1-3, 53:1-3). We must have the same righteousness possessed by the perfect humanity of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in order to live with God forever (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3; Jas. 2:23). That is the righteousness imputed to us as a grace gift at the moment we follow the pattern of Abraham-faith alone in Christ alone.

GOD IN THE FLESH, GRACE INCARNATE

Both Israel and her leaders had a long history of failure, but God's grace always found a way. It was fourteen centuries after Moses' death that God made His most dramatic overture to Israel. In fulfillment of promises begun in the Garden of Eden, God sent His uniquely born Son. However, "[God the Son] came to His own (Israelites), and those who were His own did not receive Him" (John 1:11). Before Christ began his ministry, the spiritual corruption of Israel's leadership was complete. "But when [John the Baptist] saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Israel's leaders) coming for baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers...' (Matthew 3:7). In His humanity Christ grieved over Israel's spiritual condition. "And when He approached [Jerusalem], He saw the city and wept over it" (Luke 19:41b). And after excoriating the Pharisees, Christ lamented, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling" (Matthew 23:37).

PAUL LAMENTS ISRAEL'S REJECTION OF CHRIST:

"I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit, that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my [right lobe]. For I could wish (but it is impossible) that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites, to whom belongs adoption as sons and the glory and covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is blessed forever. Amen" (Roman 9:1-5). Are we missing something here? To Israel belongs adoption as sons-an irrevocable status as we have studied. To Israel belong the covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. To Israel belongs the Old Testament canon of Scripture. To Israel belongs the lineage of the humanity of Christ. Yes, Jesus Christ came from the royal

line of Israel! The same Israel whom John the Baptist called "brood of vipers," those for whom Moses, and now Paul, wished to trade their own salvation!

How can we explain God's grace toward Israel? The point we want to hammer down is this: Grace is what God does for man on the basis of God's integrity, never, repeat never because of man's character-good or bad! Israel illustrates that God's plan is a grace plan. In love He both blesses and disciplines.

ISRAEL'S FUTURE

Because of Israel's rejection, God put Israel on hold and inserted the Church Age. During the Church Age spiritual Israel are Christians, just as gentiles-race is not an issue. But God owes racial Israel another seven years. The remainder of the Age of Israel will come at the end of the Church Age and before the Second Advent (coming) of Christ. This time-called the Tribulation or the Time of Jacob's Trouble-will be a period of tremendous evangelism. Sadly, many believers and unbelievers will die horribly during the Tribulation. Nonetheless, only believers in the Lord Jesus Christ will survive to enter the Millennium.

Here is the scenario: When Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation (the Second Advent), he "will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, blood, fire, columns of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes" (Joel 2:30-32). Why must the sun be turned into darkness? So that everyone will see the Bright Morning Star, King of kings, and Lord of lords! "And I (the Lord Jesus Christ) will pour out on the house of David (Israel) and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on Me, the One they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him" (Zechariah 12:10a). In the New Testament we read, "Look, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him (Israelites)" (Revelation 1:7). Of course, then as now, not all racial Israel is spiritual Israel. So Christ "will purge from [Israel] the rebels and those who transgress against Me" (Ezekiel 20.34a). No unbelieving Israelites will survive God's justice. Now, the Pauline epistle makes sense: "And so all [spiritual] Israel will be saved, as it is written: The deliverer will come from Zion; He will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them when I take away their sins. As far as the gospel is concerned, they are enemies on your account [i.e., the gentiles]; but as far as election is concerned, they are loved on account of the patriarchs, for God's gift and His call are irrevocable [!]" (Romans 11:26-29).

GRACE PROTECTION OF ISRAEL

"I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse" (Genesis 12:3a). This unconditional promise has nothing to do with what the Israelites do-good or bad. The annals of history are littered with broken anti-Semitic nations. No person, no family, no nation can afford to dabble in anti-Semitism. We have noted many of Israel's failures, but it must be made crystal clear that God is completely competent to mete out Israel's discipline. He doesn't need anyone else's help. Those who assume that God needs their help with Israel-or any other issue for that matter-are in line for severe discipline of their own.

Let's summarize lessons we have learned:

Lesson # 1: God is unchanging and His grace remains undiminished-neither increasing nor decreasing. Previously, we have learned about the immutability of God, which undergirds His entire essence and function. In other words, God's grace does not swing like a pendulum.

Lesson # 2: Grace is unconditional; therefore, it is not swayed by man's character-good or bad. We have noted that God's grace provides for Israel despite their colossal failures. He could have abandoned them as a nation at any time, but His grace promise is based on His integrity.

Lesson # 3: Grace is anti-works in every sense of the word. The Pauline epistles make it crystal clear

that grace and works are mutually exclusive. "And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace" (Romans 11:6).

Lesson # 4: The arrogant believer adds works to God's grace to magnify self; but a humble believer seeks to remain filled with the Holy Spirit to magnify God.

Lesson # 5: What God begins in grace continues in grace! Israel remains insulated by God's grace. The forces of darkness and the territorial claims of others notwithstanding, spiritual Israel will inherit the Promised Land forever. Likewise, the forces of darkness and the objections of legalists notwithstanding, every believer will inherit eternity in Jesus Christ!

Lesson # 6: What we have been, what we are, and what we can be in God's plan is totally a matter of His grace. Paul sets forth this principle: "For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder (divine work-utilizing grace provisions) than all of them (other apostles)-yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me" (I Corinthians 15:9,10). Paul is not bragging about his work; rather he is accurately identifying the source. When you take an inventory of your life as a believer, who gets the credit? Apart from God's grace, even the best would be gone and forgotten.

Lesson # 7: Grace is not a license to live one's life without regard to God. If we fail in our spiritual lives, grace will not fail us; rather in His grace God will punish us severely. All punishment of believers is accomplished in time and never in the eternal state. The apostle Paul put it this way: "What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? May it never be!" (Romans 6:1-2a) In love, through grace, God blesses and punishes.

In conclusion, though Israel failed God, God did not fail them. Israel will survive to fulfill God's purpose. No sophisticated system of weaponry or intrigue can destroy them. God will fulfill His promises to Abraham and his progeny. By the same token, all believers have failed God, but the grace of God will never fail them: "If we are faithless (fail Him), He will remain faithful for He cannot deny Himself" (II Timothy 2:13). Thankfully, the issue is God's integrity, not Israel's, not ours.

God is perfect and His work is perfect. He initiated salvation by means of His grace. We can add nothing to grace. He purchased you through His Son (I Peter 1:18,19). He sealed you with His Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 1:22). He is the One who keeps you saved by His power (John 10:29). God began your salvation with grace, and you will enjoy His grace forever. With this in mind, we conclude: "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling (i.e., losing your salvation), and to make you stand in the presence of His glory, blameless with great joy (and no accusation against you), to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority before all time and now and forever. Amen" (Jude 1:24-25).

To be continued in Volume 20-lesson 6

Progress Report

Our purpose is to bring you up to date; to inform you about what God is doing for and through this ministry. Our hearts are filled with gratitude and thanksgiving for His indelible work. When you approach His throne in prayer, please remember Grace Evangelistic Ministries. Praise Him for His work through us; our work is nothing apart from His grace.

USA

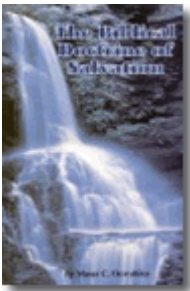
God continues to glorify Himself through Grace Evangelistic Ministries. Demand for our publications has increased tremendously. Requests from prison inmates have tripled in the past year. Some have responded to the gospel by faith alone in Christ alone. Others have been challenged to seek out accurate Bible teaching. We have referred many who request doctrine on tapes or literature for their daily studies, to R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries. We cannot thank God enough for what He is doing.

Prayer support continues to expand. Here is a condensed letter from a pastor in Dallas Texas:

I was reading through your latest publication (Volume 17 of Grace News Today) and I was impressed with what I read. I picked up a copy at Dallas Theological Seminary while recently on campus for a class. I would like to know a little more about . . .GEM.

I pastor a small church here in Dallas, Texas. Our church constantly looks for mission organizations with whom we share consistent doctrinal views and which have integrity in every manner of life and administration. Those that meet those conditions are supported primarily through prayer presently with the hope that we can one day provide some financial support as we grow.

NEW PUBLICATION



By the grace of God we have published a new book: *The Biblical Doctrine of Salvation*. This publication presents the biblical doctrine presented by Moses C. Onwubiko in "Grace News Today," volumes 1-14. We believe that this book will help everyone who wants to understand more about salvation. Very importantly, it will help thousands of pastors in Africa who have entered the ministry with little knowledge of the Word of God. Many of these pastors can hardly afford a good Bible translation, let alone Greek or Hebrew study tools.

OVERSEAS

Today, our mailing list includes addresses from Australia, Canada, Scotland, Philippines, China, India, Egypt, Germany, Croatia, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Gambia, and Nigeria—just to name but a few. Many are pastors. The list grows as God takes His doctrinal truth to those who are positive. This underlines the justice, fairness, and matchless grace of God, who removes any linguistic, racial, cultural and geographical barriers to make Himself known to anyone who desires to know and have a relationship with Him. We are witnessing the grace of God as it unfolds. We consider it a great privilege to be an instrument through which God brings the gospel to unbelievers, and Bible doctrine to those who have personally trusted in Christ.

REPORT FROM ZIMBABWE

Forwarded by Pastor John Gumbo

Greetings to all of you in the precious Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The entire set of books by R. B. Thieme, Jr., and the newly published book entitled, "The Biblical Doctrine of Salvation" by Reverend Moses C. Onwubiko, other books he authored, and the Bible (Hebrew/Greek Key Study) which Rev. Onwubiko brought to me were a magnificent gift of my life!

In light of the apostle Paul's admonition to pastor Timothy, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," in addition to my seminary preparation, these materials that Reverend Onwubiko brought to me during his last visit, have been a

source of my preparation and teaching of the undiluted Word of God.

I thank God for answering our prayer in providing us with a new place for worship, since the place we were staying no longer contains us. We have been granted a place of worship in the Shangani Primary School.

May you please join us in prayer for Grace Evangelistic Ministries in Zimbabwe as we pray for the newly formed churches in Victoria Falls and Hwange.

Indeed, many people are responding almost daily to the doctrinal books, we give them such as "Riding the Death Train," "Comfort in Suffering" and "The Biblical Doctrine of salvation" by Reverend Moses C. Onwubiko.

My sincere greetings to the entire associates of Grace Evangelistic Ministries in U.S.A, Nigeria and Cameroon.

In His Service,
Pastor John Gumbo

REPORT FROM NIGERIA

Prepared and forwarded by Pastor Tony Sani

There has been a tremendous increase in demand for doctrinal literature and audiotapes since our last report. We have had more new people come to our office this period than before. More ministers, pastors and church members are being introduced to our ministry on a regular basis. We can only attribute such increase to God who makes Himself known to anyone who is hungry to know Him. As soon as individuals come in contact with our material, they rush to us for their own copies. What are striking are the testimonies of many of these recipients. Some pastors admit that they are under going a theological training through G.E.M. Some also say that they have never seen a ministry like Grace Evangelistic Ministries before-a ministry that distributes doctrinal material without charging for them!

The testimonies that we receive on a daily basis confirm that our ministry is really changing many lives both within and beyond. To God we give the glory. Currently the blank tapes in stock may not take us to the second week of next month. We have recently reprinted 2,000 copies each of the following books: "God's Plan after Salvation," "Riding the Death Train" and "Comfort in Suffering". We only reprinted 1,000 copies of the 'Eternal Security of the Believers'.

We had an addition of seventy new recipients on our mailing list within the past two months. We distributed over a thousand doctrinal audiotapes within the same months and ninety-nine of those recipients were pastors. We really thank God the Almighty for what He is doing for us here in Nigeria and Africa as a whole.

Here are some of the testimonies:

"I thank God for your ministry and for what God is using you to accomplish in many places. I am one of those that was touched and challenged as I listen to your Bible teaching on cassettes. Therefore, I do request that you will please allow me to be a student in your ministry, so that I will continue to be blessed."

B.E
ECWA Theological College
Kaduna, Nigeria

"I knew you may wonder how I came about your ministry; in fact, I came in contact with your doctrinal

materials through a friend who had a copy of "God's Plan after Salvation". Honestly, what I read from that book transformed my life. Please I need more of your materials."

D.O
Lagos, Nigeria

"I thank God immensely for what He is doing for and through Grace Evangelistic Ministries. I want to acknowledge to you that I have received the package you sent me. I lack words to express how these books have awakened me spiritually. They are wonderful books. My contribution to your ministry at this time is prayer."

S.K
Gombe State, Nigeria

"I am overwhelmed with the books your ministry sent us in prison. Indeed and in truth these books have been a tremendous help to my spiritual life including the lives of the inmate believers in the prison. I really appreciate your effort in sending us those books, especially, "God's Plan after Salvation" and "Comfort in Suffering".

Prison Yard,
Nigeria

"I lack words to express my gratitude to God for bringing me in contact with your ministry. I learned for 18 years as a believer without being sure that I will make heaven because the more I try to be perfect as I was told to be, the more I fail God. But when I listened to Rev. Moses C. Onwubiko's teaching on the doctrine of salvation, I was set free. Now, I have more liberty to learn more about God and growing in grace.

The truth that I have learned has changed my life and made my marriage stronger than ever. I have also learned to stop blaming God or being bitter against Him whenever I face difficulty or unexpected problems. I give God the glory!"

Our Ministry in Africa

REPORT ON THE MISSIONARY TRIP TO NIGERIA WINTER 2001

Reverend Moses C. Onwubiko traveled to Nigeria on the 17th of November 2000 for a four-fold missionary program, namely, a ministers' and church-workers' conference, a Crusade, follow-up teaching for the new converts, and basic doctrinal teaching to a newly formed church. Reverend Onwubiko reports that his numerous trips to Africa, especially in Nigeria where he has made frequent visits, are truly yielding dividends to the glory of God who DOES ALL THE WORK.

BRIEF REPORT FROM JOS

Those of you who are partners with us are aware that our Headquarters for all of Africa are located in Jos, the Capital of Plateau State, Nigeria. Here we coordinate the reproduction and distribution of Bible doctrine within Africa. This includes reprinting all of our publications and duplicating audiotapes.

MINISTERS AND CHURCH-WORKERS' CONFERENCE: Grace Evangelistic Ministries realizes that many

(if not all) ministers in Africa are not properly trained. Many do not even have a high school diploma, let alone seminary training. These servants of God lack doctrinal materials, such as: good Bible translations and Greek/Hebrew Concordances. The majority cannot afford them even if they were available to purchase. Because of inadequate preparation, they rely on feeding their congregations with emotion. Therefore, the believers in Christ are deprived of the spiritual food of accurate Bible doctrine necessary for spiritual growth; consequently they become unfruitful and add to the degeneration of their land. In response to this urgent need, G.E.M. has elected to send doctrinal minded men with spiritual communication gifts to recommended seminaries. There they are equipped with the tools necessary for accurately dividing the Word of truth so they can feed their sheep with sound doctrine. In addition, we have decided to hold a ministers' conference to supply doctrine and doctrinal materials to pastors so that they can have resources available for their doctrinal preparations.

BRIEF REPORT: Forwarded by Darlington E. Elekwa (Africa chapter president): The year 2000 ministers' conference was conceived in December 1999 after some pastors and other church workers attended a teaching presented by Rev. Moses C. Onwubiko. Many of the ministers who were present throughout the duration of the program requested that such teaching should be extended to a wider audience to include pastors from across the vast country of Nigeria, the most population Black country, in Africa and the entire globe. All of those in attendance confessed to a greater insight and understanding of the Scriptures. They further asked that Grace Evangelistic Ministries' teachings should be made available to all pastors in Nigeria who are in constant touch with the rest of the body of Christ-the church. G. E. M's teachings, publications and those of R. B. Thieme Jr., were found so precious that some pastors suggested a weekly Telecast and Radio Broadcast in which Thieme's video and audiotapes should be played on National Televisions and Radio Stations across the country. Our record of the ministers' conference showed that 592 attended. G. E. M's management team comprising the Vice chapter president, Nelson Ibeji, Mrs. Ngozi Elekwa, pastor Tony Sani, Rev. Vincent Mmaduekwe and other associates of the ministry did their job as unto the Lord to put the entire program together. We are grateful to God for giving us the privilege to address those who are hungry for the inerrant and infallible Word of God. At the end of the program Hebrew/Greek Key Word Study Bibles (NAS), materials from G. E. M and Thieme's ministry were distributed to the attendees, although many did not receive the study Bible because of supply. We trust God that in the next conference (April 30 - May 4) He would provide enough funds so that these study tools would be readily available to those positive ministers.

In closing, I encouraged the ministers to re-examine their activities, re-sharpen their focus, re-define their objectives, and modify their motives. This is because, contrary to widely held view local assembly (local church) is not originally intended to enrich any one, but rather to provide home base, for feeding the flock of God with accurate message and providing materials and financial support for missionaries on the field. Local church is not designed to be a social club where individuals gather, sing and dance every Sunday and go home worse than they came. Instead, it is to be seen as a classroom in which field workers in God's Vineyard are raised, where winners are drilled using the sound Bible doctrine. He added that pastors and ministers should see themselves as those whom God in His grace has called, and employed and should at all times look up to Him for reward and blessings without resorting to gimmicks. Ministers must keep in mind that they are accountable to God for what they have done and taught. At the end of the program, 209 ministers from across the country indicated interest in receiving "Grace News Today" a bi-monthly newsletter of G. E. M and any other spiritual materials. Indeed, Grace Evangelistic Ministries is looking forward to the 2nd edition of ministers' conference in April 30, 2001 as we completely anchor our hope on God the source of our supply. He expressed his profound gratitude to God for all those who in various ways contributed in making the 2000 Pastors' Conference a huge success. He acknowledged that while he may not know in person, those who participated in support of this program, that God does. He concluded that God who rewards those who serve Him would reward everyone in abundance. He personally thanked Mr. Richard and his wife Debby Hagar for their invaluable contributions and unrelenting support.

BRIEF REPORT FROM ABA

CRUSADE: There was a two to three hour's delay on the first night of meeting because of power failure. The generator that G. E. M rented developed mechanical problems causing everyone to wait in darkness until a substituted one was brought. When light came Reverend Onwubiko went straight to the gospel, which he presented in a clear, lucid and perspicuous manner. Some acknowledged that they have not heard anyone present the gospel with clarity. The Crusade lasted for three nights.

FOLLOW-UP BASIC TEACHING: In accordance with the ministry's objectives which are three-fold: First evangelize unbelievers with the simple gospel message of our Lord Jesus Christ-faith alone in Christ alone. Second, follow up with those who have responded positively to the message. Assist these believers in their spiritual growth by teaching them the basic Bible doctrine as well as supplying them with literature and Bible doctrine on tapes. And third, identify those to whom God the Holy Spirit has given a communication gift. As funds become available, if these individuals are motivated to learn sound Bible doctrine, we send them to recommended seminaries to further equip them with the tools necessary for them to accurately divide the Word of God and precisely present its message to others. Grace Evangelistic Ministries is grateful to God for enabling the ministry to accomplish these three objectives. When the program ended, many believers asked that their names be put on the mailing list to receive newsletters and other spiritual materials. And some pastors who realized that their theology was not in tune with the Word of God came to G. E. M for direction. G. E. M is now sponsoring two of the pastors in ECWA Theological Seminary.

CHILDREN'S DAY: Mrs. Gloria Onwubiko (Moses' wife) gave a clear gospel message to more than 200 children using visual aids. And she followed it up with a basic doctrine, namely the essence of God.

REPORT FROM UMUAHIA

Reverend Moses C. Onwubiko visited a newly formed church in Umuahia and taught them more basic doctrines while supplying them with more publications. The teaching was very enlightened and successful, that the group requested that Rev. Onwubiko pays them another visit soon!

Grace Evangelistic Ministries stand in salute to God for giving us success for our missionary trip to Nigeria. G. E. M pauses to thank all our partners who supported us for the trip and to all who did not relent in their fervent prayers on the ministry's behalf. Your prayers were very effective!

PROJECTIONS:

(Prepared and forwarded by Darlington Elekwa, Africa chapter President).

As the ministry is rapidly growing, we consider it necessary to erect a befitting co-operate Headquarters at Jos. Plans are on to establish a doctrinal theological seminary (Grace Doctrinal Theological Seminary). We realize that the cost of sponsoring 100 students would be enough to establish GDTS. For the aforementioned and other projects the following budget has arisen:

5 - 7 Acres of land	\$20,000.00
Pentium PC (with Internet modem) (2)	2,600.00
Printer (Black and white, Color) (2)	800.00
Printing machine	6,000.00
Scanner (2)	1,000.00
Copy machine	6,000.00
Bus for transportation of equipment to and from conferences, crusades etc.	7,000.00

G. E. M's medical services department shall soon take off. This arm of the ministry plans to provide free medical services to those who cannot afford good medical services and use the opportunity to present the gospel message of our Lord Jesus Christ to the patients. Please do pray along with us. It is difficult

to fully express the response of positive believers out here. We owe it all to God who has chosen to use this ministry in a way beyond human comprehension!

Your fellow partner in His Service,

Darlington E. Elekwa,
Africa chapter President
"Grace Evangelistic Ministries"

REV. MOSES C. ONWUBIKO'S **Evangelistic Meeting Schedule**

ITINERARY FOR 2001

January 1 – June 7: U.S.A.

June 8 – 29: Nigeria

June 11 – 15: Pastors' Conference, Jos

For more information contact Tony Sani: 073-450-561

June 16 - 29: Owerri (Evangelistic meetings/Basic Bible teaching)

June 30 - August 2: U.S.A.

August 3 - 24: Crusade (Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe)

August 25 - September 6: U.S.A.

September 7 - 28: Switzerland or Ghana

September 29 - November 1: U.S.A.

November 2 - 23: Cameroon or Gambia

November 24 - 31 December: U.S.A.

God Will Provide **Genesis 22.8**

"God will provide" is the attitude of Grace Evangelistic Ministries. We do not beg for money. We believe that if this ministry is honoring to God, He will provide EVERYTHING necessary for its continuation. "God will provide" was Abraham's reassurance to his confused son, Isaac ([Genesis 22:8](#)). When God gives an assignment to us as His servants, He is under obligation to provide for the job. When God does not provide, it could mean one of three things. One, God may not want the job accomplished at that particular time. Two, it could mean that those who are to carry out the mission are not prepared to do so yet. Lastly, it could be a sign that God does not want to have any part of the ministry. Therefore, it is absolutely foolish and arrogant for us as believers to try to devise a way to accomplish a task in the name of God when He has already rejected it. For example, when we use gimmicks to manipulate people to contribute money, we are not glorifying God. It is blasphemy on our part to think that God does not know how to provide for the work which He has assigned. Take a moment and think about the following question: When we work to accomplish a job which God has rejected, who will be glorified in the end? God? Or me?

A believer in the Lord once said, "God's work, done in God's way, will have God's provision".

Gratitude for Answered Prayers

“Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping **alert** in it with an attitude of thanksgiving” (Colossians 4:2).

Please join us in thanking our heavenly Father for answers to the following prayers:

1. For helping us meet our financial obligations for the year 2000.
2. For opening doors for our ministry in Zimbabwe.
3. For giving our missionary team journey mercies and success for the year 2000.
4. For the faithfulness of our partners in the area of financial and prayer support.
5. For the spiritual food, which He provides for the positive believers around the world.
6. For the freedom and stability we enjoy here in America.

Letters to Grace Evangelistic Ministries

We would like to share some of the letters that have been sent to us. As you read these letters, please join us in giving thanks to our gracious God who does all the work: “For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose” (Philippians 2:13).

Our purpose in sharing these letters with you is to show you that your partnership in financial and prayer support for this ministry is indeed producing dividends for the glory of our merciful God.

Dear friends,

Please accept my heart felt gratitude for the publication "Grace News Today!" I have been asking God to give me various needed prayer requests and was deeply grateful for receiving an answer to my prayer through your publications. Thank you again!

If you can spare three copies of your new publication, "The Biblical Doctrine of Salvation," I believe I can use them.

God in His grace has given me some new contacts, my prayer is, that God the Holy Spirit will draw these needy souls to Him.

My heart overflows with joy and a personal blessing that is almost unbelievable as I read that which you have revealed in "Grace News Today".

What a marvelous God of grace we have!

*Yours,
Salem, OR*

Dear Grace Evangelistic Ministries,

I am always pleased when I receive your newsletter. I have found the teachings of Rev. Onwubiko to be biblically sound. It is good to see men who are willing to strongly defend the teachings of the Bible.

Many today treat Bible doctrine carelessly!

I am thankful to God who has given you a desire to persevere in presenting the truth of the gospel. I will continue to pray for your ministry, as this is all I can really do for you now because I am currently in prison and have no income.

May God bless you and grant you increase as you serve Him.

*A servant of Christ,
USA*

Bible Doctrine for Thought

The most dubious thing any believer can do is to help God or to serve Him in the energy of the flesh. That's arrogance at its pinnacle! What constitutes your life as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ? Arrogance? Or grace?

Here is the Truth

(Continued from volume 18)

Bible doctrine and its application— a source of gratitude and true giving

God cannot, could not, should not and will not be fooled or bribed! In Chronicles we read, "The Lord our God will have no part in unrighteousness, or partiality, or the taking of a bribe" (19:7b). The idea that God will multiply whatever I give to Him is completely erroneous. And the notion that if I give a lot of money to God, He will deliver me from difficult situations or enriched me is at best a perverse absurdity! God is more interested in the giver than any gift. In Proverbs 21:3 we read, "To do righteousness (develop spiritual integrity) . . . is desired by the Lord rather than sacrifice (or offering). The sacrifice of the wicked (unbeliever or carnal believer) is an abomination, how much more when he brings it with evil intent (Hebrew: Zimmah, or wrong motive)." A grace giver never entertains ulterior motives! He gives because of gratitude in his soul and his passion for God's Kingdom!

Now lets continue with the Pauline teaching on giving:

"And this [generosity of the believers in Philippi], not as we had expected, but they **first gave themselves to the Lord** and to us by the will of God" (II Corinthians 8:5). The question then, is how did they give themselves to God? They made learning and applying Bible doctrine the highest priority in their lives and thus developed true gratitude for their loving Father-the One who had graced them out.

CAPACITY—THE MAGNET OF GOD'S BLESSINGS:

God neither blesses us because of who and what we are, nor because of what we do, but because we acquire the capacity to enjoy His blessings. Those who suggest that we give to God so that He will give to us have completely missed the mark. God showers his blessings on all believers, even those who are unaware. We call this logistical grace. How many people do you know that think a million dollars would make them happy? Many of them are wrong; money would hopelessly complicate their lives and become a profound cursing. God knows precisely what will make each of us happy and has already placed blessings in escrow for both time and eternity. These greater blessings cannot be bought with any

human works or deeds, such as giving. They can only become ours by advancing in our spiritual lives through the non-meritorious exercise of faith. As we learn doctrines from the Word of God, our love for God increases. Learning and love exist in mutual dependence. You cannot love a God whom you do not know, and you cannot learn about God apart from love for Him. Put your emphasis on one or the other and you will go nowhere in your spiritual life.

A believer gives money from a mental attitude of love. God provides both the money and the attitude. Legitimate giving combines spiritual and material blessings. "And God is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have abundance for every good deed" (II Corinthians 9:8). Good deeds-such as giving-which result from wrong motivation are classified as wood, hay, and straw to be burned when evaluated by Christ in eternity. So the litmus test for every believer is motive. The Philippians were eager to help Paul and to share in his ministry, not because of what God would do for them, but because of what He had already done for them-His unspeakable gift-the Lord Jesus Christ-and His Word, which had tremendously enriched their lives!

As a point of doctrine, asking someone to pledge what he does not have is wrong! "For if the readiness is present, it is acceptable according to what a man has, not according to what he does not have" (II Corinthians 8:12). (To be continued-volume 20)

The Good News

When our Lord Jesus Christ was on the cross, He had you on His mind. There was never a sin committed that was not poured out on Jesus Christ on the cross ([I Peter 2:24](#)). He endured all afflictions so that He might pave a way for you to have life more abundantly through Him. Regardless of how sinful you have been in the past or are now, you can be forgiven and your slate wiped clean by God. How? By telling God right now that you are believing in His Son, Jesus Christ. The moment you put your entire trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will automatically become a regenerate person before God forever. The Bible says, "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31). "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). Will you believe in Him today? Or will you reject Him? The decision is totally up to you.

Financial Policy

Grace Evangelistic Ministries does not solicit funding. We believe that God in His grace will continue to meet our financial needs as they arise.

We do not charge for books or audio tapes. No money is requested. Anyone desiring to receive our books, tapes or other spiritual materials can receive them at absolutely no cost.

When gratitude for the Word of God and understanding of the need to reach the unsaved souls with the simple grace gospel and sound Bible teaching motivate you to contribute, you have the privilege of giving and sharing in the dissemination of the Word of God. This is a grace ministry.

Would You Join Us in Prayer?

GRACE EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES' PRAYER GROUP

The importance of prayer cannot be over emphasized!

The God-Man, our Lord Jesus Christ, gave us a perfect example to follow. His life and earthly ministry was encapsulated in a lifestyle of prayer. Prayer occupied a place of singular importance in His own life and teaching. In time of decision and crisis He gave Himself to prayer. Thus our Lord prayed when He was baptized (Luke 3:21,22); when He chose the twelve disciples: "It was at this time that He [Jesus Christ] went off to the mountain to pray and He spent the whole night in prayer to God [the Father]" (Luke 6:12,13); when He was transfigured (Luke 9:29); when He was engaging in sustained and exhausting service: "In the early morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house, and went away to a secluded place (*for privacy*), and was praying there." (Mark 1:35-39); when He called forth Lazarus from the grave (John 11:41); when He was burdened for Simon Peter (Luke 22:31-32); when He faced betrayal, execution, and divine abandonment, and thus the Scripture recorded: "And He withdraw from them [His disciples] about a stone's throw, and he knelt down and began to pray...And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground" (Luke 22:41,44). He prayed when He thought of His disciples and their future ministry (John 17) and before His physical death (Luke 23:46). Therefore, if you are a believer who finds it difficult to spend a time with our heavenly Father, sin no more. "Far be it from that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you" (1 Samuel 12:23).

If Jesus Christ, a perfect God and a perfect Man spent all night in prayer (Luke 6:12-13), we the mortal believers should spend all year in Prayer!

In light of the importance of prayer, would join us as we pray:

- That God would continue to open doors for our ministry.
- The student pastors in seminary.
- The sustenance and growth of the churches we formed.
- U.S.A.
- Israel
- That God would continue to meet the spiritual and material needs of our partners.
- That God would continue to sustain Col. R. B. Thieme, Jr., and his staff.
- Success in our missionary endeavors in this year of our Lord 2001.
- Continued provision for our ministry and others that serve Him faithfully.
- That God would protect Rev. Moses C. Onwubiko as he travels.

Our Grace Ministry Has No Limits

Therefore, if you would like to be on our mailing list to receive this bi-monthly issue, "Grace News Today", or other materials of spiritual value, please write to the following address:

Grace Evangelistic Ministries

P. O. Box 17246

Nashville, TN 37217-7246

or

call us at **(615) 365-0015**

or

you may visit our web site

on the Internet at:

<http://www.gracemissions.org/>

Return to:

[Publications](#)

[Grace News Today Index](#)

[Home Page](#)