

**THE LOVE OF GOD (2)**  
The Attributes of God  
Banska Bystrica, 22nd January 2017

תַּנּוּן וְרַחוּם יְהוָה אֲרֵךְ אַפַּיִם וְגַדְל־חַסֵּד	Ps 145:8 The LORD is <u>gracious</u> and <u>compassionate</u> , slow to anger and rich in love
יִאֲתָה אֲדֹנָי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְתַנּוּן אֲרֵךְ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חַסֵּד וְאֵמֶת	Ps 86:15 But you, O Lord, are a <u>compassionate</u> and <u>gracious</u> God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.
תַּנּוּן יְהוָה וְצַדִּיק וְאֱלֹהֵינוּ מֵרַחֵם	Ps 116:5 The LORD is <u>gracious</u> and righteous; our God is full of <u>compassion</u>
כִּי חָסֵד חֲפָצְתִּי וְלֹא־זִבְחַת יְרַעַת אֱלֹהִים מֵעֹלוֹת	<b>Hos 6:6</b> For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. → <b>Mt 9:13</b> Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and <b>not sacrifice</b> .' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.
<b>Mt 9:13</b> ἔλεος θέλω καὶ οὐ θυσίαν· οὐ γὰρ ἦλθον καλέσαι δικαίους ἀλλὰ ἁμαρτωλοῦς	
<b>Heb 4:15</b> οὐ γὰρ ἔχομεν ἀρχιερέα μὴ δυνάμενον συμπαθεῖσαι ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν, πεπειρασμένον δὲ κατὰ πάντα καθ' ὁμοιότητα χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας	<b>Heb 4:15</b> For we do not have a high priest who is unable to <u>sympathize</u> with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin

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**0. INTRODUCTION**

**0.1. THE ATTRIBUTE OF GOODNESS**

- "goodness" as understood today → having good *feelings*, getting *things*, ... ["good" = "pleasant", "pleasurable"]
- "goodness" in the Bible → *getting to be more like God*... → sanctification
- Goodness and being (the medievals understood God's goodness, in terms of being: goodness and being are interchangeable)

- Goodness and act
  - → judicial (God's position and acts of a JUDGE)
  - → personal (God's attitudes and acts as a PERSON) [→ the attribute of *personality*]

## 0.2. THE LOVE OF GOD REFRACTED

- **Ps 145:8** The LORD is **gracious and merciful** (הַגִּבּוֹר וְרַחוּם), slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love (אֶרְךָ אַפִּים וְגִדְל־חַסֵּד).
- → judicial acts: the GRACE of God
- → personal relationship and embrace: the MERCY of God
- אֱמֵן and אֱהָב, רַחוּם, חַסֵּד, חֶסֶד.

[SPURGEON Ps 145:8] The Lord is gracious. Was it not in some such terms that the Lord revealed himself to Moses? Is not this Jehovah's glory? To all living men his aspect: he is gracious, or full of goodness and generosity. He treats creatures with kindness, his subjects with consideration, and his saints favour. His words and ways, his promises and his gifts, his plans and his poses all manifest his grace, or free favour. **There is nothing suspicious, diced, morose, tyrannical, or unapproachable in Jehovah.**—he is condescending and kind. And full of compassion. To the suffering, the weak, the despondent, he is very pitiful: he feels for them, he feels with them: he this heartily, and in a practical manner. Of this pitifulness he is full, so the compassionates freely, constantly, deeply, divinely, and effectually. In fulness in a sense not known among men, and this fulness is all fragrant sympathy for human misery. If the Lord be full of compassion there is no in him for forgetfulness or harshness, and none should suspect him What an ocean of compassion there must be since the Infinite God is full of Slow to anger. Even those who refuse his grace yet share in long suffering. When men do not repent, but, on the contrary, go from bad to worse, averse to let his wrath flame forth against them. Greatly patient and anxious that the sinner may live, he "lets the lifted thunder drop", and still bears. "Love suffereth long and is kind", and God is love. And of great mercy. This is his attitude towards the guilty. When men at last repent, find pardon awaiting them. Great is their sin, and great is God's mercy, need great help, and they have it though they deserve it not; for he is good to the greatly guilty.<sup>1</sup> (...on je milostivý, plný dobroty a prajnosti. So svojími stvoreniami zaobchádza láskavo, so svojími poddanými uvážlivo a svojím svätým prejavuje priazeň. Jeho slová, jeho sľuby a jeho dary, jeho plány a jeho postoje – všetky sú prejavom jeho milosti, nezaslúženej priazne. V Hospodinovi niet ničoho podozrivého, hranatého, morózneho, tyranského ani neprístupného – skláňa sa a je milý. A plný súcitu. Veľmi cíti s trpiacimi, nešťastnými a slabými – robí to zo srdca a praktickým spôsobom. Tejto ľútostivosti je plný, takže súciti bez našich zásluh, neustále, hlboko, božsky a účinne. V takej plnosti a v takom zmysle, ktorý je neznámy medzi ľuďmi a to všetko zo súcitu s ľudským trápením. Ak je Hospodin plný súcitu, niet v ňom zábudlivosti ani tvrdosti a nikto by ho nemal z toho podozrievať. Aký to musí byť oceán súcitu, keď nekonečný Boh je trpezlivý. Dokonca aj tí, ktorí odmietajú jeho milosť sa podieľajú na jeho trpezlivosti.)

## 1. THE MERCY OF GOD

- *personal* character; attitude; feeling; the “emotional” life of God → anger; hatred of sin...
- compassion, sympathy, empathy; pity; kindness;
  - <sup>KJV</sup> **Ps 25:6** Remember, O LORD, thy **tender mercies** (רַחֲמֶיךָ) and thy loving kindnesses (וְחַסְדֶּיךָ); for they *have been* ever of old.
- → the parable of the prodigal son (the Father Heart of God) [the danger of over-psychologizing] **Isa 64:8** Yet, O Lord, You are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of Your hand

### 1.1. THE WORD “MERCY”

Racham also represents the beautiful expression 'tender mercy' wherever it occurs; thus the Psalmist prays, 'According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions' (Ps. 51. 1).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> SPURGEON, C. H. *The Treasury of David*.

<sup>2</sup> GIRDLESTONE, R. B. *Synonyms*, p. 180.

- **Gn 43:14** May God Almighty cause the man to be merciful (וְאֵל שְׂדֵי יִתֵּן לָכֶם רַחֲמִים לְפָנַי הָאֵישׁ) to you → **Gn 20:18** ...the LORD had completely closed all the wombs (כָּל־רֶחֶם) in Abimelech's household...
- **Phil 1:8** I yearn for you all with the affection (ἐν σπλαγγχνοις) of Christ Jesus.
- **Jer 31:20** Therefore my heart yearns for him (לִּי הִמּוּ מַעֵי לוֹ); I will surely have mercy on him, declares the LORD.
- **Ex 34:6-7** The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD (יהוה יהוה), a God **merciful** and gracious (רַחוּם וְחַנּוּן), slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness (אֶרְךָ אַפַּיִם וְרַב־חַסֵּד וְאֱמֶת),<sup>7</sup> keeping steadfast love (חַסֵּד) for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin (נִשְׂא עוֹן וְפֹשַׁע וְחַטָּאת), but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

## 1.2. DIVINE MERCY TOWARD...

### 1.2.1. ...THOSE WHO ARE WEAK

- **Ps 68:5** Father of the fatherless (אֲבֵי יְתוּמִים) and protector of widows (וְיָרִין אֶלְמָנוֹת) is God in his holy habitation

### 1.2.2. ...THOSE WHO ARE SUFFERING

- **Jdg 10:16** So they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the LORD, and he became impatient (וַתִּקְצַר נַפְשׁוֹ) over the misery of Israel (בַּעֲמַל יִשְׂרָאֵל).
- **Is 63:9** In all their affliction he was afflicted (בְּכָל־צָרָתָם לוֹ צָר),
- **Ex 22:27** ...it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate (כִּי־חַנּוּן אֲנִי)
- **Zech 2:8** ...he who touches you touches the apple of his eye (הַנֶּגַע בְּכֶם נֹגַע בְּבֶכֶת עֵינָיו)
- **Ps 56:8** You have kept count of my tossings (נִדְרֵי סִפְרָתָהּ אָתָּה); put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book? (שִׁמְמָה דְמַעְתִּי בְנֹאדְךָ הֲלֹא בְסִפְרָתְךָ) → Ps 107

### 1.2.3. ...THOSE WHO ARE LOST

- **Eze 18:23** Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? (הֲהִפְצִין אֲהַפְצִין מוֹת רָשָׁע)
- **Eze 33:11** I have no pleasure in the **death** of the **wicked**, (אִם־אֲהַפְצִין בְּמוֹת הַרָשָׁע) but that the **wicked** turn from his way and live (כִּי אִם־בְּשׂוּב רָשָׁע מִדְרָכּוֹ וַחַיָּה)
- **Mt 9:36** When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, (ἐσπλαγγχίσθη περὶ αὐτῶν) because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.
- **Mk 2:17** Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but **sinners**."

## 2. THE GRACE OF GOD

*judicial* → “undeserved favour” (In various new testament passages the understanding of grace as *undeserved favour* is inappropriate → Lk 2:40)<sup>3</sup> → forgiveness

### 2.1. THE WORD “GRACE”

The word ‘emunah is synonymous with tsedeq (“righteousness”—cf. Isa. 11:5), with chesed (“lovingkindness”—cf. Ps. 98:3, NASB), and with mishpat (“justice” cf. Jer. 5:1).<sup>4</sup>

- **Rom 3:24** Being justified freely by his grace (δωρεάν τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι) through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.
  - “freely” (δωρεάν חִנָּם) who hate me without cause (**Ps 35:19**).
- **2Cor 12:9** ...“My grace is sufficient for you...”

<sup>3</sup> McCLURE, J. B. *Grace Revisited*, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> VINE, W. E. *Complete Expository Dictionary*.

## 2.2. DIVINE GRACE IN SALVATION

[LLOYD-JONES] This word 'grace' is one of the **great words** of the New Testament. ...There is no more **wonderful** word than 'grace'. It means unmerited favour, or kindness shown to one who is utterly undeserving. Here again the purely gratuitous character of our salvation is brought out. It is something that results from the sole exercise of the spontaneous love of God. It is not merely a free gift, but a free gift to those who deserve the exact opposite, and it is given to us while we are 'without hope and without God in the world'.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.2.1. FREE

- **John 1:16** And from his fullness we have all received, **grace upon grace**. (ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ πληρώματος αὐτοῦ ἡμεῖς πάντες ἐλάβομεν καὶ χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος·) ["one grace after another grace"]

which I am going to describe." The terms, *grace for grace*, which are often translated: *grace upon grace*, contain a sort of play on words. In reality, the preposition *ἀντί*, *for*, *in exchange for*, strictly characterizes the legal system. Under the law, a grace is received *in exchange for* some desert. But in the new order of things, it is a grace received which becomes our title to receive a new grace. In no other way could the method of complete gratuitousness be better expressed. It was therefore of set purpose that John wrote this *ἀντί*, *in exchange for*, instead of *ἐπί*, *upon*, which would simply have designated one grace *added to* another, as in Phil. ii. 27, and ordinarily. There is a boldness in this application of the very formula of the opposite dispensation to the economy of grace, which betrays the paroxysm of exultation. He thereby

### 2.2.2. SUBSTITUTE (IDENTIFICATION)

- Grace = GIVING → **John 3:16** For God so loved the world, that he gave (ἔδωκεν) his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
- **2Cor 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

## 3. THE WISDOM OF GOD → THE CROSS

- **Eph 2:4-5** But God, being rich in mercy (πλούσιος ὢν ἐν ἐλέει), because of the great love with which he loved us (διὰ τὴν πολλὴν ἀγάπην αὐτοῦ ἣν ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς),<sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved (χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι)

### 3.1. SACRIFICE IN THE BIBLE

- **Heb 9:22** ...without the shedding of **blood** there is no **forgiveness** of sins.

### 3.2. THE THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS

- **Rom 5:8** God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
- **2Cor 5:14** ...the love of Christ controls us (συνέχει ἡμᾶς), because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died (οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον)
- **John 12:32** And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw **all people to myself**. (καγὼ ἐὰν ὑψωθῶ ἐκ τῆς γῆς, πάντας ἐλκύσω πρὸς ἑμαυτόν)

<sup>5</sup> LLOYD-JONES, D. M. *Romans 3*,

**4. TO REMEMBER**

- The goodness of God is reflected in all of God's attitudes and actions.
- For our salvation it is most important to understand how his LOVE is expressed in his MERCY and GRACE.
- The fullness of the love of God is expressed in the Cross of Christ.