



Grace News Today

VOLUME 28
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2002

An Outreach of Grace Evangelistic Ministries, Inc. • P.O. Box 17246 • Nashville, TN 37217-7246 • (615) 365-0015

“Faith alone in Christ alone”

Greetings from your partners and friends at Grace Evangelistic Ministries. Our words seem to be inadequate in expressing our gratitude to our Heavenly Father for the privilege He has given you and I to serve in His Kingdom. We cannot thank Him enough for what He has accomplished through this and other ministries that are honoring Him. He amazes us always. It's with this attitude that we pause to meditate on His matchless grace and to thank you for your relentless efforts through financial and prayer support. The outcome of your unwavering, unsolicited sacrifices will be fully revealed in eternity.

Paul said it best when he said, "[We] thank [our] God in all [our] remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in [our] every prayer for you all, in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. For [we] are confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus... [for your support is] a fragrant aroma, well-pleasing to God [because you give cheerfully without compulsion]. And [our] God shall supply all your needs [through His logistical grace support] according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:3-6; 4:18b, 19).

King David expressed awe when he wrote, "When I look up at the heavens, which your fingers made, and see the moon and the stars, which you set in place, I think, of what importance is the human race, that you should notice them? Of what importance is mankind, that you should pay attention to them..." (Psalm 8:3, 4 Net Bible). The apostle John expressed his awe like this: "See [imagine] how great [how immeasurable] a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we would be called children of God" (I John 3:1a). Then God went a step further and swore us in as ambassadors and priests in His Kingdom. So, we are His ambassadors—co-laborers with the Most High God. What an honor!

We recognize that because of His infinite mercy, we have been graced out with the privilege of bringing the message of hope to

both unbelievers and believers. Many unbelievers have come to embrace the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by faith alone in Christ alone. And many believers have accepted the challenge of making perception and application of Bible doctrine the number one priority in their lives. As a result, we continue to receive letters of appreciation from those who have benefited from this ministry. As we read these letters packed with heart-felt testimonies, we rejoice over your prayers and financial support, which are producing dividends both now and for eternity. We credit the success of this ministry to Him alone.

We encourage you (our beloved friends) to hold tenaciously to sound Bible teaching and to give learning, thinking, and its application your highest priority. Bible doctrine, as you know, is the anchor that provides stability and tranquility in this chaotic world and gives capacity to enjoy His blessings. We know that these blessings center around the quality of our spiritual life; and consequently, the quality of our spiritual life is molded through the utilization of grace provision, namely the perception and application of the infallible Word of God through the Mentorship of the Holy Spirit. It's our prayer that you will discover this secret to a victorious spiritual life with *super abundance of Happiness*.

Again, Grace Evangelistic Ministries does not solicit funds. We unequivocally believe that God provides financial support for this missionary body by permitting believers like you to exercise their free will with regard to becoming partners in spreading the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ, without regard to ethnic background or race, without turning your pockets inside out. The choice is solely a matter between you and the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Pauline epistle we read, "Let each one do just as he has proposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for God loves a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:7). Nonetheless, we ask that you remember us in your prayers as we toil day and night to glorify God to the maximum. In Him alone we slam our trust.

Dear Heavenly Father, we approach Your throne with gratitude in our souls. We pause to praise You for who and what You are. We thank You for Your unspeakable gift, our Lord Jesus Christ, and for His efficacious sacrifice on the Cross of Calvary. Thank You for the imputation of Your righteousness, which once and for all qualified us to be forever adopted into Your family. Thank You for what You are accomplishing through Grace Evangelistic Ministries.

Father, America is experiencing a great turbulence in every sense of the word. The enemy is fighting tooth and nail to slow down Your work through Grace Evangelistic Ministries. Recession is fast engulfing this great nation—USA, and as a result some are finding it hard to balance their budgets, let alone support Your work. We know that Satan is behind it all. So Father, we lift up all our partners before Your throne. We ask for mercy on each and every one of them. We humbly ask that You shield our partners from the heat of recession. O Heavenly Father, we pray for those who have lost their jobs, that they may find new employment. We pray for those who are in one business or another, that out of Your infinite mercy, You shield them from the economic turbulence.

Father, we pray for our president, George W. Bush, his cabinet members, members of the Senate and House, that You, O God, may clothe them with wisdom, so that they can make right decisions in the matters concerning Your client nation. We pray for our people in the military and for the law enforcement officers, that You may equip them with all the wisdom they need to serve this nation. We also ask that You may shield them from their enemies.

Father, we pray for the unbelievers and believers in this country. For the unbelievers, we pray that there may be a great awakening that many would come to You through faith alone in Christ alone. And for believers, that there may be a great revival—that many would embrace sound Bible doctrine, and stick to it, that many would be involved directly or indirectly in the missionary field.

Father, we pray for all the missionaries in the mission field that you may continue to meet their needs as they arise. Last, but not the least, we pause to remember pastors who are teaching accurately, that you may continue to encourage them by sending them the bearers. Father, we pray that You meet their needs daily as they toil day and night to glorify You through their indomitable will to remain faithful to sound teaching. Help this ministry as we work to glorify You to the maximum. All this we ask in the name of the One who loved us—our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Forever gripped 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

Taught by Reverend Moses C. Onwubiko

Lesson 14

(Continued from volume 27, lesson 13)

A PLOT TO KILL JOSEPH

Before we begin this in-depth study of the plot to kill Joseph, it's important that we use the grace method of getting in fellowship with Him by naming any current sins to God the Father (I John 1:9—a non-meritorious function that puts us in the divine sphere and frees our Mentor to make God's word understandable and usable to us). After that is accomplished, here are nine principles that will lay the groundwork for our study:

- God is the Master of human history—no detail escapes His knowledge.
- God monitors everything that goes on in your life—even the little headaches. Not one thing in Joseph's life was a surprise to God's omniscience.
- God the Father uses guided missiles of suffering to assist believers in their development of spiritual muscle or capacity; for you see, these are necessary before He can deliver His tailor-made blessings.
- Billions of years ago, God predetermined just how He would use **every circumstance**—good or bad—to accomplish His eternal plan and purpose; but keep in mind, God is never the source of evil.

- There is no such thing as an accident or bad luck in God's immutable plan—**nothing** happens without His stamp of approval.
- The sovereignty of God permits all the adverse circumstances that we (believers in Christ) experience—Joseph's sufferings are a perfect example.
- The foreknowledge of God took into account the outcome of events in our lives and allows them to run their course. Again, Joseph is in view here.
- Only God has the monopoly on converting a believer's suffering into marvelous blessing.
- Therefore, only a believer who possesses a reservoir of Bible doctrine (and applies it consistently) can have divine viewpoint, a relaxed mental attitude, and a tranquil soul while God causes "all things" to come to a sensational outcome for those who love Him!

We will see these principles interwoven in Joseph's life from the time his brothers plotted his demise, to his slavery experience, to the awkward circumstances that led to his imprisonment in Egypt. Our plot unfolds in Genesis chapter 37: "When they [Joseph's brothers] saw him from a distance and before he came close to them, they plotted against him to put him to death" (v. 18). Their envy and jealousy boiled within, and this kind of thinking led to irrationality and callousness. Whatever doctrine they once had in their right lobes, if any, was wiped out and they, consequently, sucked in human viewpoint through the pipeline of the old sin nature. They rationalized that this might be their only chance to get rid of their younger brother. "And they said to one another, 'Here comes this dreamer! Now then, come and let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; and we will say, 'A wild beast devoured him.' Then let us see what will become of his dreams'" (Genesis 37:19, 20).

Keep in mind; their evil scheme began with a thought... a hateful thought toward Joseph. Often, believers are admonished to guard their thoughts because actions arise from thoughts. Thus Solomon affirmed: "For as he [man] thinks within himself so he is" (Proverbs 23:7). At this point, Satan had saturated their thinking with human viewpoint, which is totally evil. They already had a plan figured out and how to fabricate the details of Joseph's death: "Then let us see what will become of his dreams," (Genesis 37:20) they said to one another. Apparently, they believed there was a slight possibility that Joseph's dreams would come true. Yet, in their ambition (powered by arrogance), they couldn't imagine Joseph usurping authority over them! In view of this, they tried to thwart Joseph's dreams as if they could actually

alter God's plan. Meanwhile, unbeknownst to the conniving brothers, God had a grace solution. He planted Reuben, their brother, in the right place and at the right time. So Reuben's presence was not by accident but by Providence. God would use Reuben to stop the heinous plot to kill Joseph. God allowed evil to foment but orchestrated the outcome. If God didn't permit evil to run its course, then that would be a violation of man's free will and Satan's declaration that God is unfair would reign supreme. This is a good time to take a look at God's Providence.

GOD'S PROVIDENCE: God's providence takes His entire essence into account—His righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, sovereignty, veracity, immutability, omnipotence, omnipresence, and His omniscience. And, we know concretely that His righteousness and justice safeguard His whole essence. In other words, His righteousness and justice ensure that no component of His essence is violated. At this crossroad, we consider it of paramount importance to pause and zoom in on God's essence. We have already studied God's essence in our book [Biblical Doctrine of Salvation](#); however, we need to revisit some features of God to see how they relate to His plan and purpose for our life and, in particular, Joseph's life.

GOD'S OMNISCIENCE REVISTED: God's omniscience is the Master key that unlocks the events of human history and goes hand-in-hand with His foreknowledge. For instance, God knew every minuscule detail of human history billions of years ago—not as it unfolds! He knew how each person would react or respond to certain events. That's not all. God knew every problem, suffering, heartache, disappointment, failure, or catastrophe you would ever face from the very nanosecond you were born to the very day you will exit planet earth. The beauty of it all is that God was, and still is, the Master Choreographer; and He determined how He would use the events of human history (good and bad) to bring about His divine will and purpose—like when He planted Reuben smack-dab in the middle of the Plot to Kill Joseph!

So what do these things mean to us? In bold letters, **it means that no matter what you experience, past, present or future, God has ordained those things to "work together for [your own] good"** as long as you are residing in His divine sphere and are adhering to His tailor-made plan for your life. David expressed it like this: "O Lord, You have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thoughts from afar. You scrutinize my path and my lying down, and are

intimately acquainted with all my ways. Even before there is a word on my tongue, behold, O Lord, You know it all!" (Psalm 139:1-4). He added, "Your eyes [omniscience] have seen my unformed substance [embryo—fetus], and in Thy book they were written, the days that were ordained [or allotted] for me, when as yet there was not one of them!" (v. 16).

When God, in grace, revealed Joseph's future to him in dreams, He foreknew that (I) Joseph's dreams would create animosity among his brothers and (II) their hatred would push them to the edge of plotting a homicide. He also knew the time, the place, and how they would carry out their plot to kill him. (III) Amidst the hatred and plotting, God arranged for Rueben to be there while his brothers conspired. And, God pre-arranged to safeguard His promise to Joseph, who had not earned or merited God's favor. Isaiah phrased it like this: "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of God stands forever" (40:8). No matter how many plotted against Joseph, God would keep His word. And in Matthew, Christ affirmed, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words [including My promise to Joseph or anyone] shall not pass away [or go unfulfilled!]" (24:35). With the preliminaries of our study in place, we venture forth to examine our Father's Sovereignty.

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY REVISITED: There's no question about it, God is total Sovereignty—"no ifs ands or buts" about it. Just like with God's omniscience, the subject of sovereignty has caused mayhem among Bible expositors. Some have even gone to the extreme of assigning evil deeds to God, just to ensure that they protect God's sovereignty. We need not protect anything about God! God is sovereign, period. The compelling question is, how does God's sovereignty fit into His plan? In His divine decree, He has pre-determined what He would allow to take place or not allow. With one swift stroke, God entered into the divine computer every event in human history. And based on His foreknowledge, He pre-determined what He would or wouldn't allow. He permanently deleted certain would-be human actions, which would run contrary to His will and purpose, and those that He decreed would remain, remained eternally so.

God actually programmed the way He would use man's failures and weaknesses to accomplish His will. Along these lines, the Psalmist sang, "For the wrath of man shall praise Thee" (76:10a). How? The Scripture has the answer: "You shine brightly and reveal your majesty as you descend from the hills where you killed your prey (Psalms 76:4 Net

Bible). The Scripture is loaded with evidence of God using evil men as vehicles to reveal His majesty: Pharaoh of Egypt being one example in the Old Testament (Romans 9:17) and Judas Iscariot being a perfect example in the New Testament (Acts 2:23, 24). In the course of this exposition, we will see how God used Joseph's brothers' scheme to transport Joseph to maximum blessing in time, but not before his intense suffering which became suffering for blessing.

GOD'S VERACITY REVISITED: Veracity (truth) is the foundation of the integrity of God. It holds God's being intact, like a shell holding a pie together. This means that if God could falter in any way, either in His promise of eternal life to anyone who believes in Christ, or by failing anyone who trusts in Him, God would no longer be the God of the Bible that we know and trust. Thus the Scripture affirms, "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man that He should repent [change His mind with regard to His plan]; has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19). It was on this truth about God and His promises that Joseph staked his confidence, as we will see.

I believe that Joseph, like his great grandfather Abraham, knew that even if his brothers were to mutilate his body that God was able to bring his body parts together, restore his life, and safeguard him until his dreams were fulfilled in detail! (Hebrews 11:17-19). And I have no doubt in my mind that Joseph's confidence stemmed from what his father taught him about God's veracity. As we advance in our study, we will see that Joseph's grasp of the subject of God's veracity explains why he never moans, groans, whines, or resorts to self-pity. He had absolute confidence in the promises of God, our Father, and so can we!

At this juncture, I would like to say dogmatically that God will certainly fulfill His plan for your life as long as you remain on His course... under His direction. Listen to what God said to Jacob: "And behold, I am with you, and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; **for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you**" (Genesis 28:15). And Luke wrote, "For David, **after** he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep [died], and was laid among his fathers and underwent decay" (Acts 13:36). That's point blank. You, as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, will not depart this life a minute later or sooner than God has planned. Joseph's hope was anchored on this truth. And obviously, when God is finished with us, He will call us home. Until

then, you are not going anywhere—not even at the hands of the worst terrorist you can think of. The question is, do you have absolute confidence in God's promises? Do you hold tenaciously, despite all odds, to the fact that God will never negate His own Word? Do you clutch His promises tightly? Whether it rains or shines, whether your spiritual journey is smooth or rugged, God will ultimately fulfill His promises—I mean all of them! We are ready for the next installment of God's essence.

GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE REVISITED: We tend to forget (too often) that God's presence is everywhere. King David intimately understood this truth when he wrote, "Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? If I ascend to heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the dawn, if I dwell in the remotest part of the sea, even there Your hand will lead me, and Your right hand will lay hold of me" (Psalm 139:7-10). What assurance to know that wherever you are the Lord is with you. It's intriguing to know that He goes ahead of you. In Moses' final recorded words to Joshua, we read, "And the Lord is the One who goes ahead of you; He will be with you. He will not fail or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed" (Deuteronomy 31:8). With this in mind, the following principles have emerged:

- God is always in the scene ahead of you.
- He sees all the pitfalls that await you before your arrival (Deuteronomy 33:26).
- Because God is ahead of you, because He has seen all the dangers that await you, He knows how to perfectly lead you around or through the pitfalls as long as you remain under His direction.

In fact, these three principles are the quintessence of God's protection and guidance for your life—through grace. He goes ahead of you to survey and develop strategies for your journey. Psalm 32:8 gives us insight: "I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you". Not only does He counsel you through Bible doctrine resident in your soul, He keeps His eyes upon you every nanosecond of your life. That alone ought to be your SOLACE! In His watch over you, He neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psalm 121:3, 4). The Psalmist sang, "The Lord is your keeper [Hebrew: *Shamar*= to hedge around, or to watch as a watchman]; the Lord is your shade on your right hand. The sun will not smite you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul. The Lord

will guard your going out and your coming in [because He is the Master of your journey—He will guide you] from this time forth and forever" (121:5-8).

This doctrinal concept was nestled in King David's right lobe: "The Lord is my Shepherd [One who watches over me], I shall not want [or lack anything]. He makes me lie down in green pastures [of His landscape of Bible doctrine]; He leads me beside quiet waters [by utilizing Bible doctrine in my soul through the Mentorship of the Holy Spirit]. He restores my soul [whenever I fail and acknowledge my sin to God]; He guides me in the paths of righteousness [His integrity] for His name's sake [because of who and what He is; and not because of who and what I am!]" (Psalm 23:1-3). Once more, **grace** is highlighted. The truth of the matter is, just as David understood that God dealt with him solely on the basis of who and what God is (grace), so did Joseph. And so must we. David went on to say, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I [will] fear no evil; for Thou art with me" (Psalm 23:4a).

This same confidence belonged to Joseph when he was thrown into a pit and left for dead. What a vicious act that was! In Genesis we read, "So it came about, when Joseph reached his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his tunic, the varicolored tunic that was on him; and they [callously] took him and threw him into the pit" (Genesis 37:23, 24a). Remember that God was already in the pit before he reached the bottom. Amazing, isn't it? What a comfort to know that God is at both ends of our suffering. Finally, we want to examine God's omnipotence.

GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE REVISITED: When God promises, He delivers, because He has whatever it takes to follow through—He is the Almighty. You may ask, "Why hasn't God delivered me from my turmoil?" "Why is He silent?" "I have prayed again and again for a solution to my dilemma, and yet He remains silent." "Why?" You need not be discouraged! I want to underscore this vital point: God's omnipotence and faithfulness are not measured in our own terms, but His. Generally, no human being wants any kind of suffering; however, all sufferings are a result of the fall of the first man, and they are inescapable. Keep in mind that God has the power to stop any suffering at any time, anywhere. With this knowledge, the following principles have surfaced:

- God uses every means within His realm to accomplish His purpose, and He does all this

in grace.

- Super grace suffering is essential for the development of spiritual muscle (capacity) so that God can graciously convey to you the super abundance of blessings both in time and eternity.
- No one, including the humanity of Christ, has ever received a crown of glory from God the Father without an abundance of suffering; yet no one's suffering will ever come close to Christ's—ever.
- Every believer, through Bible doctrine and the mentorship of the Holy Spirit, ought to learn how to live an abundant life in the midst of suffering. Keep in mind that God permits it and does not intend to remove it. With these important principles in place, we can now examine one of the most important doctrines in all of God's Word.

GRACE IN THE FURNACE OF SUFFERING

When we think of grace, we usually think of a cozy, blissful, experience, but it's more than that—suffering is part of it too! We pray that God will bless us, but when He answers by first preparing us in His Furnace of Suffering, we pray for deliverance. Unfortunately, some even go to the so-called deliverance meetings for help. Ironically, it's the testing in God's furnace that humbles us (believers) and causes us to become grace-oriented. Believers awash with Bible doctrine can utilize divine viewpoint in the heat of a test. This was true in Joseph's day and it's even more true in our time because we have a lot more divine assets than did the Old Testament heroes.

Take Job, for instance. He never saw a page of the Canon of Scripture but had a firm grip on the phenomenal doctrine of grace-induced suffering preceding super abundance of blessing: "But He [God] knows the way I take; when He has [tested or refined] me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). What confidence he had in his God! This dissolves the myth that a good thing always comes easy. Anyone who thinks that living the spiritual life is icing on the cake is probably not living the spiritual life yet. It's not an easy task, period! We can never accomplish the spiritual life in human energy, but only by total dependency on God's Word and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. That's the way God planned it. *A perfect plan for imperfect man.*

In the course of our study, we will endeavor to answer the question as to why God allowed Joseph to go through the suffering he went through and answer the question as to why you suffer as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. To

begin, let's direct our focus on this scripture: "Behold, I have refined you, not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction" (Isaiah 48:10). The word "tested" in the Hebrew is *bachbar* = *judged to be excellent after it has been tested*—it's considered to be the best. The Hebrew verb *tsaraph* rendered *refined* in the New American Standard Bible is the key word that sheds light on why suffering precedes super abundance of blessings. Whether we use the verb *tsaraph* in a literal or figurative sense, it means to refine. Literally, it means "to fuse metal, melt a metal; to purge bronze, silver or gold through a furnace of fire". Interestingly, these three elements represent the three categories of spiritual growth—babyhood, adolescence, and maturity. God is fair, and in His fairness, He rewards you based on your spiritual quality. The apostle Paul clearly delineated this truth in I Corinthians 3:12-14: "Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones [or bronze]...he shall receive a reward [based on the quality of his spiritual life]."

Let's look at the verb *refine* in its literal meaning—using a lode of gold. First, a gold miner has to locate the gold. Then, armed with his tools he digs several feet, mixing his sweat with mud as he digs through the earth. At long last, he sees a lode, but that's just the beginning of a long ordeal. Secondly, he has to wash the lode with flux in order to separate out micro impurities and protect it from oxidation in the furnace. With a few more steps, the gold finally makes it to a furnace where it will be purged further of micro impurities that are not part of its composition. At long last, the splendor of the finished product emerges in all its glittering glory! I am not a goldsmith, but I do know one thing, gold goes through some intense purging and extreme heat before it becomes a valuable and "sought after" piece of metal. The lesson learned is that purging, in the process of refining gold, signifies the impurities that God in His amazing grace purges from us—before we can become what I call Gold-believers.

Now, let's look at the figurative meaning. But first, let's look at a grace comparison: When it comes to producing gold, the gold miner does **all** the work; and similarly, when it comes to producing a Gold-believer, God does all the work, leaving us with no room to take any credit. Figuratively, the Hebrew verb represents your purification before you become a Gold-believer in the Lord. It's interesting to know, that since the fall of man, man is full of impurities which include:

- Lack of authority-orientation: Satan succeeded in the Garden in causing the first parents to

reject God's authority.

- Lack of humility-orientation: This is also a by-product of pride—self-absorption. We have a built-in tendency to think we are better than others; we don't need anyone to tell us what to do. That's a result of the Old Sin Nature.
- Lack of grace-orientation: Total rejection that everything you have or will ever have in this life or in the eternal future comes directly from God—unearned and unmerited.
- Lack of gratitude: Genuine gratitude is not a by-product of the Old Sin Nature.
- The drive to sin: The drive to live a lifestyle of carnality is the end product of the Old Sin Nature.
- Pride: This is the sin of the first rebellious creature, Satan. In Isaiah chapter 14:12, pride caused him to formulate his five "I wills." We all have a room for pride. Usually it requires God's fiery furnace to cause us to recognize that apart from God we are nothing more than a pile of rubbish.
- Self-dependency: Man is full of himself caused by the fall in the Garden. We always want to show what we are capable of doing. Of course, pride is the source of self-dependency in the spiritual realm.

Now that we have listed some of the impurities that need to be purged when a believer passes through the grace furnace of suffering, we are almost ready to answer the question as to why God permitted Joseph to go through suffering before he was promoted to a place of glory. But first, let's briefly examine suffering.

SUFFERING AT LARGE: All suffering, directly or indirectly, that believers go through in this life are seared in the white-hot, flames of God's Super Grace Furnace. The believer brings direct suffering on himself through bad decisions and experiences indirect suffering because he lives in a broken and shattered world. What many believers often forget is that suffering is a foundation, a Super Structure for Spiritual Growth Dynamics¹. Suffering is extremely vital, if one is to glorify God to the maximum. It's necessary if one is to develop spiritual muscles (capacity for life) and the strength to swim in the ocean of God's blessings. I consider it wise to exposit the five categories of a believer's suffering: 1. Self-manufactured suffering; 2. Divine discipline; 3. Spiritual growth dynamics; 4. The G4 convention endorsed suffering—the ultimate and glorious suffering that any believer can go through, and finally; 5. The thorn-in-the-flesh suffering. We begin with self-manu-

factured suffering:

SELF-MANUFACTURED SUFFERING: Self-manufactured or self-induced suffering is the most painful of all suffering that any believer can go through. This type of suffering inevitably germinates as a result of making bad decisions from a position of weakness. When you fail to properly apply doctrine to the circumstances of life, you end up making wrong turns. The apostle Paul, through the Mentorship of the Holy Spirit, warns: "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for **whatever a man sows, this he will also reap**" (Galatians 6:7). Paul was repeating what is already on record in the Old Testament: "For they [carnal believers] sow the wind and they reap the whirlwind [or hurricane]" (Hosea 8:7). The irony is that whoever falls into this pit of bad decisions climbs out looking pretty shabby. Take marriage for instance. A believer can by-pass divine principles in marriage and marry an unbeliever. The horrible experience that can follow such a union is not even worth discussing. That's just one example. There are other bad decisions that bring forth self-induced sufferings. We can cite two men in Scripture to illustrate our point, namely Abraham and his grandson, Jacob.

It's beyond the scope of this study to elaborate on the sins of these two believers. But we can take a quick look at their failures. God promised Abraham a son, and when the promise was not forthcoming according to Abraham's calendar, he listened to his wife's advice and committed adultery with Hagar, his housemaid, which resulted in the birth of Ishmael—the source of the Arab nation (Genesis 16:1-15)! So you see, the hostility between the Arabs and the Israelites is simply because of one man's bad decision. Abraham sowed the wind of adultery and reaped the hurricane of great animosity between the two nations he begat. If he were alive today, he'd witness the aftermath of his impatience.

The second person in our illustration is Jacob. Scripture reveals how Jacob deceived his aged father (partially blind) by pretending to be his elder brother Esau, and thus received the blessing that was due to Esau (Genesis 27:1-29). In return, after many years, Jacob reaped deceit from his would-be father-in-law, Laban. The agreement between Jacob and Laban was that Jacob would serve him seven years and at the end, he would give Rachael to him in marriage...the one Jacob loved so much. At the end of the seven years, Laban deceived Jacob by giving

him Leah in place of Rachael (Genesis 29:1-25). These examples should make us acutely aware that when you sow the seed of deception, or willfully commit sin, sooner or later that seed will germinate. This brief exposition prepares us to examine the next category of suffering...divine discipline:

DIVINE DISCIPLINE: Divine discipline is adjacent or perpendicular to self-manufactured suffering. When you choose to sow the seed of a lifestyle of carnality, God, in return, will multiply the pain of your self-induced misery. What is most sobering is that God's intensification of your suffering is parallel to His grace policy and unailing love (Hebrews 12:6). He deals with you in grace regardless of your spiritual status. When He takes you through the grace furnace of suffering, if you are humble enough to listen to Him through the suffering, it would achieve the following:

- It will cause you to take your spiritual life seriously.
- It will draw you closer to God and jumpstart your spiritual growth, necessary for super grace blessing (Hebrews 12:9-15; cf: Acts 20:32).
- Last, but not least, as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, when God is through with His divine discipline, you will think long and hard before you ever travel that road again!

The Psalmist lamented, "Before I was afflicted [in the grace furnace of suffering], I went astray [Hebrew: *shagag* = to transgress, to err], but now I keep Thy word" (Psalm 119:67). He added, "It is good [beneficial] that I was afflicted, that I may learn Thy statutes [biblical principles]" (v. 71). Though self-induced and divine discipline are optional, no believer in his right mind would ever take that route on purpose.

People often ask me, "How do you determine that your suffering is related to divine discipline?" The answer is in four words: Divine discipline is unbearable! Why? Because the pipeline of divine solution and energy is blocked by carnality! Many believers have actually committed suicide as a way of escape from the unbearable heat of divine discipline. With this enlightenment, we are ready for the next increment:

SPIRITUAL GROWTH DYNAMICS SUFFERING: This category of suffering can best be delineated by looking at the academic experience. Students

¹ This is a book in progress dealing with levels of spiritual growth, namely babyhood, adolescence, and adulthood or spiritual maturity.

receive a well-rounded education and are tested accordingly. Ideally, they are equipped to face the real world in all its ugliness. The system is divided into three sections: primary or elementary, secondary or high school, and college or a university. In the primary grades, the student receives basic instructions to prepare him for advanced learning. He is then tested several times to see how much he has learned and to determine whether he is ready to handle the next grade. The tests get harder as does the curriculum.

Our spiritual-school system is quite similar and can be classified in three branches: babyhood, adolescence, and adulthood (parallel to primary school, secondary, and college respectively). In the spiritual classroom, the Bible is the manual; God the Holy Spirit is the Tutor through the human communicator—pastor-teacher; and suffering is the spiritual testing. "Consider it all joy [consider it honorable], my brethren when you encounter various trials [or sufferings], knowing that testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing" (James 1:2-4).

God the Father administers tests on all levels to see how much of His Word we have grasped. For example, a lesson may be given with regard to one's love for God versus his love for the things of this world. Tests may be administered in relation to his wealth in that God may permit Satan to remove all that he has accumulated. The issue then is, will the believer remain intact knowing that his Source is eternal or will he become disoriented to God's plan? Will he recognize the fact that *if he has everything without the Source that he has nothing; and if he has nothing but has the Source that he has everything?* The truth of the matter is that there are no two ways about it, every believer will face suffering in one way or another, for our moral fiber is refined through the grace furnace of suffering (Psalm 18:30; 119:140; 66:10; Isaiah 1:25; Proverbs 30:5; I Peter 1:7). Thus suffering for spiritual growth accomplishes the following:

- It brings you to a helpless situation, having exhausted all human solutions.
- It brings about obedience in you.
- It causes you to rely on God's power, and on His provisions alone.
- It deflects your pride, and implants the attitude of humility in you.
- It prepares you not for logistical grace support, which every believer winner or loser receives, but for super abundance of blessings that are

related to spiritual growth (James 1:12).

- It makes you a comforter to those who suffer—those whom God may bring to you (II Corinthians 1:3-5). We have to be very careful here (Galatians 6:1). You ought not to take this to an extreme. We are never called to be counselors, or set up offices for the purpose of counseling; however, often God brings a suffering individual to us, and we are to guide the believer to the well of Bible doctrine.
- Above all, it causes you to appreciate the grace of the Most High God!

Now for a look at the fourth category, which is G4 Convention Endorsed Suffering.

G4 CONVENTION ENDORSED SUFFERING:

"And the Lord said to Satan, 'Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, fearing God and turning away from evil [a man of spiritual integrity, who has attained above and beyond spiritual maturity status]" (Job 1:8). Without a doubt, Satan and his minions mourn and sigh while the elect Angels cheer whenever a mature believer is called to the witness stand in the final phase of Satan's appeal trial! Ironically, the G4 Convention is made up of God the Father [the Chief Judge and the Author of the unique plan of human history], the Son [the Sacrificial Lamb, the Pioneer of the unprecedented spiritual life and the believer's defending Attorney], the Holy Spirit [the believer's Mentor and Energizer in the Spiritual Courtroom] and Satan [the accuser]. Simply put: The greatest honor that can ever be conveyed to you in this life is when the G4 Convention convenes on your behalf! There is nothing like it in all of human history. The greatest privilege that you can receive from the Supreme Court of Heaven is when God considers you as a material witness for Satan's cross-examination.

In Satan's cross-examination, he will be permitted by God to hit you with different categories of suffering. When you take the witness stand against all the flaming darts that the enemy can fire at you, the whole world stands still to watch. The Angels swoop down to observe your every move and action under intensified suffering. The good news is that it's the only opportunity you will ever have to glorify God to the maximum, and to be sworn in forever in the Hall of Fame of those who glorified God above and beyond the call of spiritual duty. There is no other way! So if you are growing in grace, and are advancing to the Mega Gate of spiritual maturity, be watchful because sooner or later you will have the opportunity to receive the ultimate suffering for the maximum

glorification of God. This clears the table for the fifth category of suffering—Thorn-in-the-flesh.

THORN-IN-THE-FLESH SUFFERING: God designed this type of suffering to keep privileged, graced-out, elite believers in check so that they do not easily puff up in arrogance. This suffering does not go away. It stays to constantly remind the elite believer that whatever he has become, both to the elect Angels and the believers in Christ, is totally because of the marvelous grace of God. The apostle Paul, the greatest apostle in human history, had this thorn-in-the-flesh suffering throughout his life (II Corinthians 12:1-10). Now that we have briefly gone through the five categories of suffering, we are ready to answer the question as to why God permitted Joseph's suffering.

WHY GOD PERMITTED JOSEPH'S SUFFERING

(To be continued volume 29—Lesson 15)

FINAL THOUGHT

We are reminded that our position in Christ is by grace all the way. The apostle Paul wrote, "But by His doing [minus anyone's effort] you are in Christ Jesus. . ." (I Corinthians 1:30a). God is perfect and His work is perfect. God the Son purchased you (I Peter 1:18, 19)—eternal transaction. God the Holy Spirit sealed you (II Corinthians 1:22)—eternal sealing. God the Father keeps you saved by His power (John 10:29)—eternal security. God provides salvation in grace. We have nothing to add. We are the objects and beneficiaries of His grace forever.

"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling [*losing your salvation*], and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, 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).

WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Undeniably, you are living and operating in the enemy's territory. Scripture makes it clear that Satan is "the god of this world" (John 12:31). Thus our Lord asserts, "you are not of this world" and prayed for your protection (John 17). But, what does the truth that "Satan is the god of this world" mean to you? It means that

you are operating in a hostile environment. In Satan's hostility, he has become fierce—outrageously insane—pacing back and forth, "... the devil prowls like a roaring lion, seeking someone [a careless believer] to devour [to tackle; to put out of action]" (I Peter 5:8). What a relief to know that "... greater is He [God] who is in you than he [Satan] who is in the world" (I John 4:4 cf. II Kings 6:8-17). The good news is that you are totally encapsulated by the wall of fire (Zechariah 2:5) as you live and operate in his territory. Satan knows that God has provided you with the most maximum security that Heaven can offer (Job 1:10)! That should be your solace! That's the beauty of God's amazing grace!

As a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, as long as you are learning and applying His Word on a daily basis, you will enjoy God's maximum security. It's that simple. It boils down to this: There is no system of sophisticated weaponry, no act of terrorism, no attack by Satan—visible or invisible—that can pass unnoticed by God's security and get to you without His sovereign endorsement! Not now, not then, and not ever! He is your Shield (Genesis 15:1)! However, if you have been hit by the enemy's flaming dart, do not fear. Relax. Because God, who allowed it to pass through His sovereign security, is at work right now on your behalf! Again, nothing gets by God without His knowledge. There is absolutely no reason to fall apart, or hit the panic button, or retreat to self-pity—the "why me syndrome." Instead, listen to His words that are sweet to the taste: "[Happy] is a man who perseveres under [adverse circumstances]; for once he has [passed the spiritual test], he will receive [super abundance of blessing in time, and] the crown of life [in eternity], which the Lord has promised to those who **love** Him [those who have acquired spiritual capacity]" (James 1:12).

James puts it this way: "Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials [when the adversities of life hit you hard], knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance [through application of doctrine] have its perfect result, that you may be [fully equipped] lacking in nothing" (James 1:2-4). In fact, what Paul wrote fits perfectly: "And we know that God causes all things [pleasant and unpleasant situations]

to work together for good to those who **love** God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). God knows exactly what He is doing in your life; and while you may not be able to fathom all of it, one thing is crystal clear: There is absolutely no such thing as bad luck or an accident in God's plan, because God can blend the bad with good to come up with extraordinarily marvelous results! Essentially, we can face a seemingly bad situation and expect the good that will follow. Such is our awesome God!

Here's the apostle Peter's take on this subject: "But to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exaltation" (I Peter 4:13). Finally, the apostle Paul put it this way: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! (Philippians 4:4). Hence, we should rejoice in each and every event in our lives—pleasant or unpleasant, for our Father is at work on our behalf 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year! Allow Job's confidence in God to be yours: "But He knows [what I am going through]; when He has [tested] me, I shall come forth as gold [way better than before!]" (Job 23:10). And no matter what, always remember God's promise: "I will strengthen you, **surely I will help you**, surely I will uphold you with My [integrity]" (Isaiah 41:10c).

OUR MISSIONARY JOURNEY TO ZIMBABWE

We realize that it's almost impossible to give you a full report of what the Lord is doing through this ministry; therefore, any information we give is just a chip off the iceberg. Moses and Steve Rye (G.E.M. board member) traveled to Zimbabwe towards the end of July and the early part of August. The people of Zimbabwe continue to seek God in the midst of economic chaos in their country. Hardships have caused lots of positive volition toward God. Moses and Steve's report indicate they had a fruitful ministry in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. They witnessed wherever they were open doors for the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. In addition, Moses taught Bible classes for a week to Pastor John Gumbo's congregation which included new converts. And at the end of the confer-

ence, doctrinal literature was distributed freely to those who came. Many expressed their gratitude for the efforts Moses and Steve took to bring them the truth!

Simply put, the newly planted church in that part of the country has outgrown their meeting place! (They are currently trying to buy property to build a local church for the fast-growing congregation.) They really need your prayers in that regard. Many are leaving their old churches to embrace the grace teaching of John Gumbo. We are truly grateful to God for what He is doing for and through Pastor Gumbo. Grace Evangelistic Ministries recently furnished the young pastor with a library so that he can have access to Biblical truth.

OUR MISSIONARY JOURNEY TO GERMANY & POLAND

During the months of August and September, Moses traveled to Germany to meet his missionary friend George Mueller. Moses had the opportunity to speak in four different cities in Germany before driving to Poland. There seems to be a small bit of positive volition in Europe. It's not the scope of our report to speculate as to why so many are dormant toward God's Word. We pray and hope that this might change in the near future; meanwhile, the major problem is that those who are positive don't have the availability of doctrinal material in their language, as many do not speak English. We solicit your prayers that our Heavenly Father would increase our funds so that we can translate our work and Thieme's literature in German and other languages.

Leaving Germany, George and Moses drove to Poland, covering over 2,200 miles on the road. Interestingly, Polish people are more positive to the gospel and doctrine. Again, Moses had the privilege to speak in three churches. One of the churches had him speak three times. He also was invited to give the gospel to the prison inmates. Talk about God's sense of humor: A young man from Nigeria, Dr. Ali, who studied Medicine in Poland, was Moses' translator! That's right. Moses only met him in Poland. They really responded to George and Moses' message. The Polish people also have the same problem of linguistics!

The highlight of the trip: A man came from Gdansk and met with George and Moses and told them that their church is teaching from Moses' book, The Biblical Doctrine of Salvation. They are translating a portion at a time. Indeed, God is honoring Himself through Grace Evangelistic Ministries and its associates.

PROGRESS REPORT

Our purpose is to inform and bring you up-to-date 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

Demand for our publications continues to grow. Many of our partners have joined us in the distribution of our materials to positive believers. Our mailing list gets larger by the week, causing us to stand in awe and reverence of the Almighty God for what He is doing.

OVERSEAS

- We currently support pastors teaching doctrine in the churches we established in Africa until they become financially independent.
- Right now, we have six men that we sponsor at GEM's recommended seminaries in Africa. Dozens more are on the waiting list.
- Today, our mailing list includes addresses from Australia, Canada, China, Croatia, Germany, India, Philippines, Scotland, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Gambia, Kenya, Nigeria, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The list grows as God directs and removes linguistic, racial, cultural, and geographical barriers to make Himself known to those who seek to know Him. We consider it a great privilege to be His instrument in spreading the gospel and doctrinal truths.

NEW PUBLICATION

By the grace of God, we have published a new

book: Focus on Christian Marriage for both married and unmarried believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. This publication is a reply to many questions we encounter about marriage as we travel from coast-to-coast. We believe that this book will help everyone who wants to understand the spiritual battle that rages on in marriage. More than that, it will enlighten everyone who aspires to glorify God in marriage. What does the Bible mean when it says, "Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave His life for her?" Or "Wives, be submissive to your own husbands as to the Lord?" These two mandates carry equal weight and are explained in this book.

Our stand with regard to financial policy remains the same: The book is free. We do not charge for books or any other material that is of spiritual value. We do not solicit funds; your contribution to this ministry is solely a matter between you and the Lord. Every believer has the privilege and honor to contribute to the work of this ministry as we endeavor to bring maximum glory to our heavenly Father. This is a grace ministry.

LETTERS TO GRACE EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES

We would like to share some letters we received to show how your partnership is producing dividends for the glory of our heavenly Father. As you read, please join us in giving thanks to God, for the Scripture is crystal clear concerning who does all the work in a ministry that is honoring to Him: "For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

This letter was received in '97; however, we wish to let those who were concerned, and prayed for her, know that the Lord still holds her; and she is now 89!

Dear Grace Evangelistic Ministries,

I received your tract "Riding the Death Train" and enjoyed it so very much. I rejoiced that a missionary was teaching and preaching pure grace. I am 84 years old, and would enjoy very much getting tracts and booklets from you. I write lots of letters and would love sending them out. The friend who sent this tract to me said she was reading your book, "Comfort in Suffering" and would send it when she was through reading it. . . .

I have congestive heart failure and I look forward to my departure to see my Blessed Lord face-to-face. Oh! What a joy that would be. . . . I live every day as unto the Lord and enjoy every minute of it, even sometimes in pain. I will put your ministry on my prayer list.

Yours in Christ,

USA

What a comfort to know that terminal illness or an accident cannot shorten our lives until we fulfill God's plan for our lives. Luke echoed: "For David, **after** he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep [died]. . . ." (Acts 13:36).

Dear Debby [a GEM missionary],

With tears of joy I write to express how grateful I am and to acknowledge receipt of a parcel from you. It contained 52 cassettes, 5 books, and 2 cassette players!

In fact, God used you to answer this silent prayer of mine—it has been my genuine desire to find enough time for my daily devotion and without making this request known to you, you promised some cassettes and not just that, you included cassette players! Since receiving it four days ago, I can now listen to God's Word during my break period in the office, at home while in the kitchen or while eating. What a way to find a solution to a problem! What a way to answer prayers! May God who used you to achieve this, reward you abundantly in Christ's name I pray.

It will interest you to know that I have formed a tape group. A colleague grabbed the other cassette player before I could even think of taking it home. Many are eager to share the good news especially as they are getting it without charge.

I appreciate all that you have done with hope that you would visit us again next year, God willing.

With kind regards,

Nigeria.

It's amazing how our Heavenly Father meets the needs of the positive believers.

Dear Rev Onwubiko,

Calvary greetings in the precious name of Christ Jesus. Thanks for your books sent to me with the

following captions: "The Biblical Doctrine of Salvation"; "God's Plan after Salvation"; "Comfort in Suffering"; "Eternal Security of the Believer" and "Riding the Death Train".

In fact these books are remarkably rich. Your arguments are very strong and every point substantiated by the Scripture. And may God add more wisdom and strength in your calling and ministry.

Sir, we will need more of your materials including tapes for evangelism. Furthermore, as I indicated in my previous letter to you, we are missionaries working among the French Community. They are thirsty for the Word of God. And their level of understanding of the Word of God is very poor. I believe we can partner with you in the spreading of this gospel among our French-speaking brethren.

Yours in His Kingdom,
Abidjan, Cote d'ivoire

Dear Onwubiko,

I have had many questions answered by your book, "The Biblical Doctrine of Salvation." It has increased my understanding of my salvation and has helped me to witness to others. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to read your other books listed in the back. I cannot send a love offering at this time, but will retain

your address and will commit to a future donation. I pray that God continues to bless your ministry and meet your needs. I know He will. His Word emphatically states this concept. Again, thank you for giving of what God has given you.

Your brother in Christ,
USA

SPIRITUAL YARDSTICK

"Therefore, leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ [basics], let us press on to maturity" (Hebrews 6:1a).

The command is to advance to the high ground of spiritual maturity. The question is how are you advancing spiritually? There are three stages in the

Spiritual

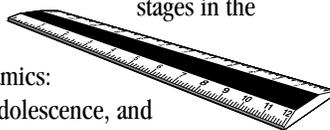
Growth Dynamics:

Babyhood, Adolescence, and

Adulthood (Maturity). Would you join

me as we objectively measure our spiritual growth using God's yardstick:

- ✓ Are we easily distracted from making perception and application of Bible doctrine the highest priority in our lives? If so, we are probably in the first stage of spiritual



growth.

- ✓ Are you more preoccupied with the things above than you are with the earthly things? If so, it's more than likely you are in the adolescent stage or a foot beyond.
- ✓ Are you constantly preoccupied with Christ, have unselfish love for everyone and are in a state of absolute contentment? If so, it's very likely that you've entered the Mega Gate of spiritual maturity.

HERE IS THE TRUTH

(Continued from volume 26)

Does the believer's blessing depend on tithing? And what about Malachi 3:10? "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, 'if I will not open for you [the nation of Israel] a blessing until it overflows.'"

CHANGE OF PRIESTHOOD WARRANTS CHANGE OF LAW (Hebrews 7:12)

"For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also" (Hebrews 7:12). "For, on the other hand, there

The Overview of Grace Evangelistic Ministries

Grace Evangelistic Ministries is incorporated in the State of Tennessee as a nonprofit, non-denominational, sound Bible teaching missionary oriented Christian organization.

Our Mission: In obedience to the command of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.....

"Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation " (Mark 16:15)

WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES:

Objective #1

Evangelize unbelievers with the simple, grace gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. We will depend solely on the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit to make the gospel clear without resorting to gimmicks or imposing our personal views on others. We must present the gospel, but leave the decision "to believe in" or "to reject" Christ to the hearers.

Objective #2

For those who choose to believe in Christ, we will seize the opportunity to assist in the following ways:

- a. Help them form Bible study groups;

b. Provide them with doctrinal materials, including recorded Bible lessons and literature, enabling them to fulfill the command: "As newborn babies desire the sincere milk of the word [sound Bible doctrine] that you may grow thereby." (1 Peter 2:2);

c. Where possible, assist them in establishing their own local churches;

d. Help them select pastors who teach sound Bible doctrine; and

e. As the Lord makes funds available, provide financial assistance until they are self-supporting.

Objective #3

Because those who have responded to the gospel will become unfruitful if they are not exposed to sound Bible teaching, we will seek out or establish theological seminaries to prepare indigenous pastors. Their training will be consistent with Paul's mandate to Pastor Timothy to "study to show yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth." (II Timothy 2: 15)

Objective #4

As the need arises, we will send doctrinally motivated, short-term and long-term missionaries to minis-

ter to newly formed groups and churches.

Objective #5

We will use literature and other media to reach and nurture those to whom we cannot minister in person. To minimize expenses, we will establish overseas centers for audiocassette duplication of recorded Bible lessons and reproduction of doctrinal literature. In keeping with our grace policy, individuals and groups will never be charged for these materials.

Objective #6

Offer humanitarian assistance as the Lord provides and directs us. This may include, but is not limited to:

- a. Provision of used and/or new clothing;
- b. Provision of food;
- c. Provision of medicines and medical care; and
- d. Assist Grace Evangelistic Ministries associates as necessary.

Objective #7

Prepare periodic newsletters, which include Bible exposition and testimonies, for distribution to our associates by mail and the Internet.

is a setting aside of a former commandment [including the law concerning tithing] because of its weakness and uselessness..." (v. 18).

There are roughly 613 laws in the Old Testament. Tithing is one of these divine laws given specifically to the Jews. Although there was no divine law when Abraham tithed to Melchizedek, he was just fulfilling the law of the land (Salem) as we have already delineated in our previous exposition. At the cross, the Mosaic Law came to a screeching halt (Romans 10:4), and thus opened a brand new page superior to the Mosaic laws. We live in a totally new dispensation called the Church, and its instruction manual is the mystery doctrine.

The apostle Paul made it clear when he wrote, "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Romans 10:4). Because of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, the following was achieved:

- Salvation and eternal security for anyone who believes
- The Mosaic Law was scratched out, including the yoke of tithing
- Inauguration of a new program under the umbrella of grace (Romans 6:14)
- Free will offerings are the only divinely approved method of contribution in the Church Age (II Corinthians 9:7)
- Last, but not least, there's a change of Levitical priesthood: Christ is the only High Priest and each believer is a Royal Priest.

Levites were the only people entitled to collect and use tithe revenue as an inheritance from God (Numbers 18:23). However, since the Levitical function has been set aside, so does their duty to collect tithing, or anyone else for that matter.

Therefore, spiritual giving is quite clear in Scripture: "Let each one do just as **he has purposed in his heart**, not grudgingly or under compulsion [as tithing is], for God loves a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:7). I'm sure you will agree with me that there's nothing cheerful about not having enough money to provide food for your family, but being required to give from the little you have (I Timothy 5:8). We hope we have shed light on this subject.

(To be continued volume 29)

ANNUAL MISSIONARY WORK SUMMARY

By God's doing and His marvelous grace:

- We currently support seven churches, financially, until they become self-supporting.
- We sponsor seven students in seminaries we recommended in Africa.
- We have five audiotape groups and two videotape groups.
- Today, our mailing list includes addresses from Australia, Canada, China, Croatia, Germany, India, Poland, Philippines, Scotland, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Cameroon, C'ote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Gambia, Kenya, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- We distributed thousands of gospel and doctrinal literatures
- We visited five countries and have four more to visit between now and December.

We owe our gratitude to God for His faithfulness over the years; and we will remain forever grateful to you...partners in our Lord's mission field.

BIBLE DOCTRINE FOR THOUGHT

The apostle John wrote, "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15). Have you, in your right lobe truly separated yourself from the things of this world? You may wish to meditate as we have done.

GOD WILL PROVIDE

"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 believ-

ers 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 that He has assigned. Take a moment and think about the following question: When we work to accomplish a job that 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."

BUDGET SHEET FOR THE UPCOMING TRIPS

Provisions for conferences and soul winning for Christ are entirely up to the Lord. Our stand regarding financial provision remains unchanged: If God has opened these doors for our ministry, He will provide. If He does not provide, it is a clear indication that He did not open these doors, and Rev. Moses and his team would go fishing!

- ✓ **Gambia: (November....)**
- ✓ **Dakar, Senegal: (November)**
- ✓ **Cameroon: (November / December)**
- ✓ **Nigeria: (December)**

BUDGET BREAKDOWN:

- Total Airfare\$3,500.00
- Room and Board\$2,900.00
- Venue\$1,700.00
- Publicity (Radio, Banners, flyers) ..\$2,300.00
- Local Transportation\$2,000.00

REV. MOSES' ITINERARY (JULY-DECEMBER 2002)

- Zimbabwe (Victoria Falls) July 31 - August 8
- South Africa (Durban) August 9 - 17
- Poland August 23 - September 1
- Germany September 2 - 7
- US (Washington) September 12 - 14
- US (Houston, Sweeney: Berachah & Gulf Coast Bible Church) .. September 21 - 24
- US (California) September 27 - 30

US (Nashville)	October
Gambia (Banjul)	November 6 – 15
Senegal (Dakar)	November 16 – 22
Cameroon	November 23 – December 13
Nigeria (Umuahia)	December 14 – 27
USA	December 28 – 31

CONTAINER SHIPMENT TO AFRICA

Over the years, many of our associates have called wanting to donate one thing or the other. We are now accepting donations for shipment to Africa.

ITEMS NEW OR USED:

- ❖ Bibles (good versions for new converts and study tools for doctrinal pastors)
- ❖ Computers, monitors, copy machines, printers
- ❖ TVs & VCRs for tape groups
- ❖ Doctrinal literature
- ❖ Etc. (If you have something else to donate, other than those listed, please call us.)

Houston, Texas is our shipping depot; therefore Mail donations to:

Grace Evangelistic Ministries

% Mr. Danny Warner

7706 Fairdale

Houston, TX 77063

(Please do call us should you need receipt for your donation for tax purposes)

JESUS CHRIST THE PERFECT EXAMPLE OF A PRAYER WARRIOR

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: "As it was at this time that He [i.e., 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: "And in the early morning, while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lone 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 withdrew from them [i.e., 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 me 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 YOU JOIN US IN PRAYER

As we pray for:

- ❖ President George Bush (For wisdom in all decision-making)
- ❖ The US (For a great revival, peace, and freedom from terrorism)
- ❖ The US military
- ❖ God to provide for the missionary work in Africa (November-December, 2002)
- ❖ The safety of Moses and his team as they travel
- ❖ Col. Thieme Jr.'s ministry and his wife's health
- ❖ The spiritual growth of the churches we formed
- ❖ Seminary students that we support (that God will equip them in every way)

- ❖ Special fund to establish a printing press for reprinting of GEM's and Thieme's publications in Africa
- ❖ Israel's protection
- ❖ His provision for three budgeted publications this year
- ❖ For the provision of many open doors in the year 2002
- ❖ Our partners (that God would continue to meet their needs)

INTERNAL REVENUE DISCLOSURE

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BIBLE QUOTATION:

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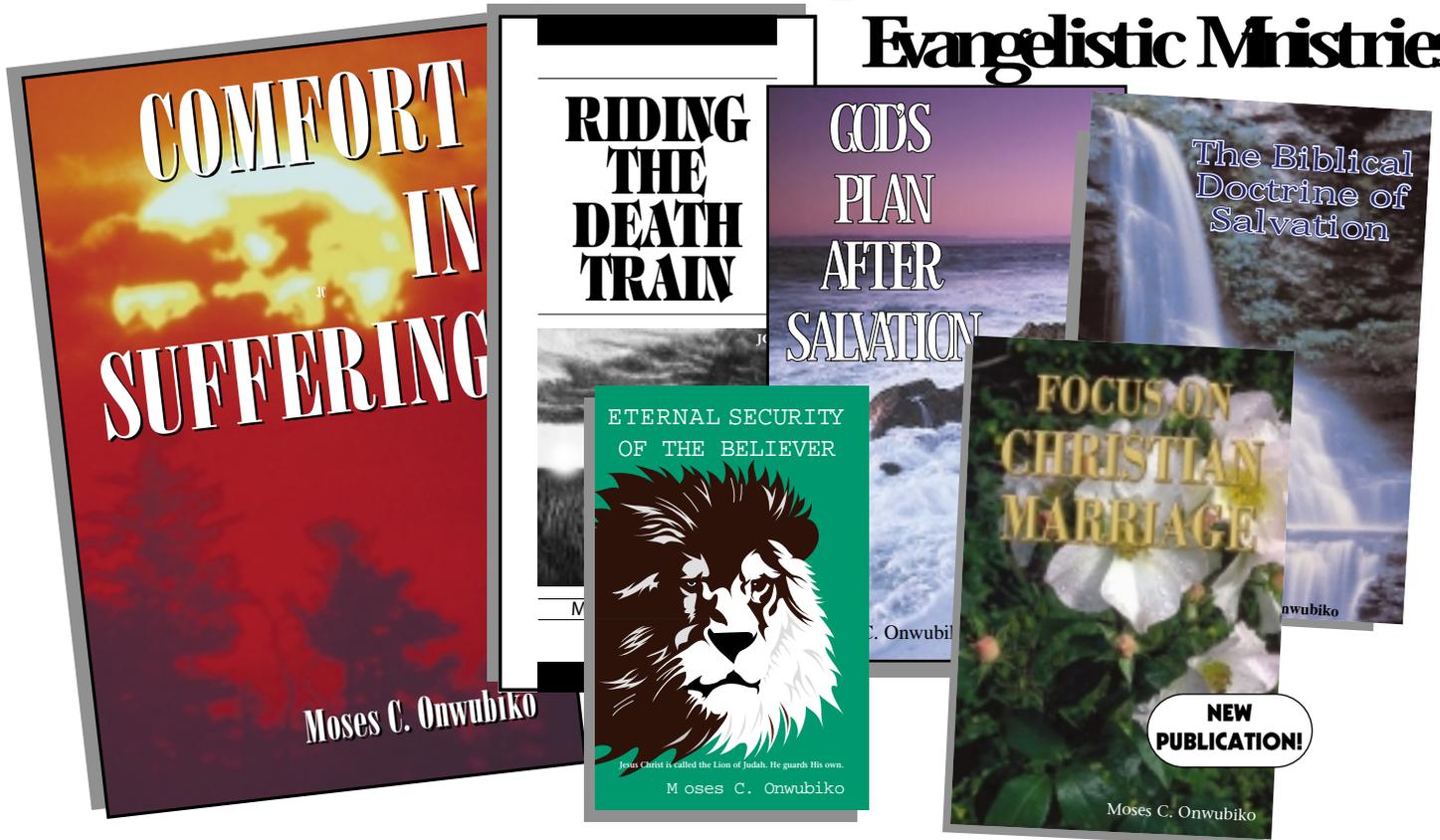
Grace Evangelistic Ministries
PO Box 17246

Nashville, TN 37217-7246

or call us at (615) 365-0015
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