

# Grace News Today



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*“Faith Alone in Christ Alone”*

Greetings to you, our partners who continue to stand with us *shoulder-to-shoulder, shield-to-shield* in the work of His Kingdom. We are immensely aware that no ministry is an island to itself, and so we are profoundly grateful to our Heavenly Father for your partnership with us. We salute and praise our Savior, who in His matchless grace has commissioned us to, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...teaching them to observe... [the whole realm of Bible doctrine]” (Matthew 28:19-20a).

Just as brutality and often bloodiness characterizes warfare, the warfare of evangelism is no exception as Satan maneuvers relentlessly to disarm and reduce to casualty those who bear the mark of our Lord Jesus Christ. Howbeit, our solace is cemented on our High Commissioner’s promise: “And lo, I am with you **always**, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20b). As a result, our souls are firmly rooted on the fact that “The battle is the Lord’s.” Let’s keep this assurance in mind as we read the words of the soldier for all-time, the apostle Paul, “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves; we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our body” (II Corinthians 4:7-10).

We are infinitely grateful to our Heavenly Father who, in His unsurpassing grace, has afforded us with the privilege to respond to His urgent plea: “...**The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest**” (Matthew 9:37, 38). For as laborers dwindle on the mission field, the Lord’s compassion for the lost and dying souls and His pressing plea for more laborers come to light.

Sadly, we report that the number on the mission field is considerably minute in reaching out to the hungry souls; therefore, we have spread ourselves thin in order to cover more ground than allotted and have often found ourselves intruding in other areas of ministry for lack of laborers at the expense of our primary objective, evangelism.

Approximately 30 years ago, our Lord made a grace overture bestowing upon me the gift of evangelist so that I may preach the good news to those without Christ and without hope. To this effect, He established Grace Evangelistic Ministries as a vehicle to accomplish this task; however, over the years we have involved ourselves in other ministries, though legitimate, they were distractions to the main thrust of our calling resulting in spreading ourselves so thin to the point of breaking down. Simply put, I was gasping for air and in need of spiritual reinforcement because of the workload—a danger in the spiritual arena. Suffice it to say, this ministry was on the verge of suffering shipwreck when the One who established it extended His Hand with a grace rescue.

Observably, the Lord has a terrific sense of humor. First, He took me to India and Pakistan where we conducted over half a dozen crusades, which to me were the highlights of my ministry in that God granted us magnificent success without any sweat on our part.

It was a thrilling experience for our team! In essence, God was saying: “Moses, the lost and dying world is waiting for the message of hope.” While I was still rejoicing over God’s work and anxiously looking forward to more crusades, He did the unexpected. He took a drastic

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measure and slowed me down by permitting a prolonged illness to take its toll on me. In His infinite wisdom, He has used this time to recharge my spiritual battery more than ever. And like Jonah being spit out of the belly of the fish, God reminded me once again of my mission, namely evangelism. In fact, it was for this very reason that I was publicly ordained and set apart as an evangelist at Berachah Church in Houston, Texas, on June 25<sup>th</sup>, in the year of our Lord 1995.

This experience with illness has been the most memorable and cherished time of my Christian life, for it has brought me closer to our Heavenly Father by intensifying the needed rest and refreshment provided only by drinking from the fountain of His infallible Word. Now it appears as if the Lord is saying, “Moses, step up to the platform and proclaim the message of My Son Jesus Christ to the lost and dying world.”

In response to the Father’s leading, G. E. M. will be focusing, primarily, on conducting crusades and following up with new converts wherever there are open doors. To this effect, we are taking necessary steps to restructure our organization to handle the demands of conducting crusades. Your prayer for guidance would be highly appreciated. We have included the revised Overview of Grace Evangelistic Ministries.

And so my partners, please continue to remain with us in your prayer support. Finally, accept my heart-felt gratitude for your relentless support over the years to the glory of the One who granted us the honor to serve in the Kingdom of His beloved Son. It’s my prayer that God, our Father, will reward you according to the riches of His grace in Christ Jesus. “Therefore, my dear brothers, **stand firm**. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.” (I Corinthians 15:58). “The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms” (Deuteronomy 32:27).

In the riches of His unchanging grace,



Moses Onwubiko, Evangelist  
Grace Evangelistic Ministries

## WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT

As I endeavor to bring you these words of encouragement, one important verse of Scripture stands out in my thoughts:

***“Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?”***  
(Jeremiah 32:27)

Nothing is too difficult for God! But, we do live and operate in Satan’s domain, and he “is the god of this world,” as the Scripture clearly spells out; therefore, we are constantly exposed to all sorts of demonic assaults as we endeavor to execute God’s plan for our lives. Acutely aware of this predicament, our Lord Jesus Christ forewarned us, “**These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world, you have tribulation [distress or suffering], but take courage; I have overcome the world [and its minions]**” (John 16:33). What encouragement from the *Lord of the Armies!* He has overcome the world. His victory is ours! It’s that simple.

You and I are Satan’s enemies—we are the targets of his antagonism—the objects of all his fiery missiles. But, what a comfort to know that he was defeated 2,000 years ago when Jesus Christ declared on the cross, “It’s finished!”— [mission accomplished!] So his weapons and assaults are effective only as our Sovereign Lord permits. Jesus warned the apostle Peter that “...Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat, but I [the Great High Priest] have prayed for you that your faith may not fail...” (Luke 22:31). What support from the *Lord of the Armies!*

Speaking of Satan’s fiery missiles, have you been hit by one recently? Has the enemy’s weapon pierced through the “wall of fire” and hit you right between the eyes? Has he knocked out everything you have and caused you to panic? Has his fiery dart hit you where it hurts? Are you experiencing what one might consider to be a helpless and a hopeless situation? Then, it’s time for us to remember who we are in Christ—“The pupil of God’s eye”—the objects of His unfailing love.

There's more good news: God has a plan for our lives and He often permits us to be hit hard in order to remind us of what we really are spiritually—a 'pile of rubbish' saved by His grace. Man is constantly vulnerable to "think more highly of himself than he ought to think," and sometimes God allows us to be leveled low to bring us to reality, or to rid us of all impurities (hurdles) in our spiritual advance. Whatever the reason may be, God's word can and does refresh our souls, "For I know the plans that I have for you," declares the Lord, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and hope'" (Jeremiah 29:11). That's right! Hope, right in the middle of Satan's domain. The Lord has certainly prepared for us a "table before our enemies."

Are you still thinking that all hope is lost? If so, let's listen to what the Lord wants us to hear: "...The things that are impossible with people are possible with God" (Luke 18:27). In other words, there's no such thing as a hopeless situation in God's plan. So, armed with this timeless truth, let's eavesdrop on God's dialogue with the Prophet Ezekiel which withstands the test of time:

*"The hand of the Lord was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley; and it was full of [dead] bones. And He [God] caused me to pass among them around about, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley; and lo, they were very dry. And He said to me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?'"* (Ezekiel 37:1-3a). Can these bones become living people again? Ezekiel told the Lord that He alone knew the answer to that. Today, we would say, "Of course not, Lord!"

Medically, when an individual's heart stops due to cardiovascular arrest, the paramedics have probably 15 to 20 minutes to rush to the scene before brain death occurs. The brain cannot last too long without oxygen. But here in the valley of dead bones, Ezekiel is face-to-face with human bones – not corpses.

Imagine paramedics summoned to a scene like this. What could they do? Obviously nothing!

*"...Prophesy [speak] over these bones [Ezekiel], and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.' Thus says the Lord God to these bones, 'Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life. And I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin, and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you will know that I am the Lord'"* (vv. 5-6).

Unquestionably, Ezekiel was faced with a seemingly impossible task of bringing human bones back to life – long dead, far beyond the possibility of resuscitation.

Are you thinking that your situation is so impossible that you might as well be facing a pile of dead bones? If so, then let's pause and take an inventory of our spiritual lives, rebound, and obey the command: "Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken" (Psalm 55:22) or, "Casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

Is your **dry-bone dilemma** employment? Are we suffering from a so-called incurable disease? Or suffering from a broken marriage? Have we failed the Lord miserably? Is the Lord capable of solving our dry-bone problem? Absolutely! Knowing who and what God is makes all the difference in facing our problems! So, let's look to the solution and reexamine the doctrine of God's sovereignty and omnipotence. He's the God of the universe—the Creator of all things, the Sovereign, and Omnipotent One. He is the King of the world! He has all the resources to accomplish His plan and purpose for our lives any time and anywhere according to His timetable.

So, Ezekiel spoke to the dried bones, and to his amazement, *"...There was a noise, and behold, a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to its bone [a complete human skeletal structure]"* (v. 7). *That's not all. "And I [Ezekiel] looked, and behold, sinews were on them, and flesh grew [instantly], and skin covered them...and the breath came into them, and they came to life, and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army'"* (vv. 8-10). That's right. Dead and forgotten came back to life! What an awesome God! The God of yesterday is the same God today and able to meet our needs at just the right time.

If our dry-bone dilemma is a spiritual one, then let's listen to His gracious and compassionate voice as He urges us through His Word, "Come now, and let us reason together. . .though your sins are scarlet, they will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they will be like wool" (Isaiah 1:18). God, the Father poured out His full wrath on His

Son, Jesus Christ, 2,000 years ago, and judged every sin of the human race! “But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; The chastening for our well being fell upon Him, And by His scourging we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).

God is ever ready to wipe our slates clean when we approach His throne in humility with a change of mind to return to His program. And so, the solution is to isolate those sins, name them to God (1 John 1:9), and walk away with His sublime grace as you march onward to the high ground of spiritual maturity. When God forgives us, we stand forgiven and Satan can't change that. “BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED. BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT” (Romans 4:7, 8).

If we think we have exhausted all our human solutions, then you and I can latch onto divine solutions and listen to His unfailing promises such as, “Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Surely I will help you, Surely, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10). What solace to know that our limitation in life is an opportunity for God to reveal His grace, love, compassion, omnipotence, and sovereignty! We can be assured that God has provided every solution in His infallible Word. The heroes of the Bible used God's solutions effectively and came out triumphant; we can do likewise (Job 23:10).

And so my beloved in Christ, whatever our dry-bone situation might be, we should always remember that heaven has provided us with maximum provision and security. We are under God's surveillance 24/7: “For the eyes of the Lord moves to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His...” (II Chronicles 16:9). “For He Himself has said, ‘I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU’” (Hebrews 13:5b). That's a promise!

## DOCTRINE OF GRACE

**THE HAND OF GOD IN THE SUFFERING OF JOSEPH:** Before we jump into the middle of a huge conspiracy contrived by Joseph's brothers, and see the hand of Almighty God at work, we need a little refresher course concerning Joseph. (For a complete study, please refer to Volume 27 and following).

Joseph, the first born of Rachel, was his father Jacob's favorite son. One possible reason Joseph was favorite could be because he was Rachel's child, the wife Jacob loved dearly. And Moses explains that “...Israel [Jacob] loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a varicolored tunic. And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms” (Genesis 37:3 & 4). Talk about vipers! We shall see how their envy and jealousy turned into high-powered rage toward Joseph! They probably wished that he'd never been born! Then, the flames of hate were fanned by Joseph himself when he told them of his two dreams—which suggested his own divine promotion and superiority over them (Genesis 37:5-10).

Now, let's look at the framework of the Master Planner, God the Father, so that we can better understand and see His hand in Joseph's suffering-turned-to-blessing. And, hopefully you'll be able to see it in your own life as well.

- First, God is the Master of all human history; nothing takes Him by surprise.
- God monitors everything that goes on in our lives: Billions of years ago, God predetermined 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 anything bad.
- The foreknowledge of God took into account various and simultaneous events that happen to us throughout our lives and allows them to run their course.
- There is no such thing as an accident or bad luck in God's immutable plan.
- God has the monopoly in converting a believer's suffering into blessing.
- Only a believer who has learned these things about God can have a tranquil soul while God is causing “all things” to work together for good.

We can see these principles as they weave in and out of Joseph's life from the time his brothers plotted his demise (which eventuated in slavery) to the awkward circumstances that led to his imprisonment in Egypt.

We pick up the plot, already in progress, in Genesis chapter 37. Jacob had just sent Joseph out to look for his brothers who were in the field tending the flock (Genesis 37:12): "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). Can you visualize their envy and jealousy boiling within? Whatever doctrine they may have once had, if any, at this point is wiped out, and human viewpoint is sucked in to fill up the void. They agreed 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). At this point, Satan had saturated their thinking with human viewpoint, which is totally evil. We can wonder if they laughed in derision or simply smiled at their own divisiveness.

Keep in mind, their evil scheme began with a hateful thought, and actions arise from thought. We learn from Solomon that "...as he [man] thinks within himself so he is" (Proverbs 23:7). And, Joseph's brothers were thinking about how to fake their own brother's death: "Then let us see what will become of his dreams," 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 wielding authority over them, and if that was God's plan, they would have to change it! Or so they thought! This is a good time to take a look at God's Providence.

**GOD'S PROVIDENCE:** Behind the scenes and far from the machinations of the conniving brothers, God has a grace solution! He planted Reuben, their own brother, in the right place and at the right time (Genesis 37:21-22). So Reuben's presence was not by accident but by the Providence of God. 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 freewill and Satan's declaration of God's unfairness would reign supreme. Thus, we consider it of paramount importance to zoom in on God's essence which we studied in our book, Biblical Doctrine of Salvation; however, we need to revisit some of the facets of God to see how they relate to His plan and purpose for our life and, in particular, Joseph's life.

**GOD'S OMNISCIENCE:** (Ps. 139:7-10) 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 murder. He also knew the time, the place, and how their plan would unfold. (III) Midst the hatred and intrigue, God arranged for Reuben to be there while his brothers conspired. And, God pre-arranged to safeguard His promise to Joseph, who didn't do anything to merit such favor from God! Isaiah has this to say about God's promises: "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of God stands forever" (Isaiah 40:8). No matter how many plotted against Joseph, or how clever they were, God would keep His word.

**GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY:** With one swift stroke, God entered every event in human history into His divine computer, and He predetermined what He would or wouldn't allow. He permanently deleted certain potential human actions which would run contrary to His will and purpose, and the events that He allowed to remain, remained eternally so. God actually programmed the way He would use man's failures and weaknesses to accomplish His will. The Scripture is loaded with evidence of God using evil men as vehicles to reveal His majesty: God turned the evil intent of Joseph's brothers into maximum blessing. "For I know the plans that I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope." (Jer. 29:11).

**GOD'S VERACITY:** 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 fails anyone who trusts in Him, God would no longer be the God of the Bible who 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. And I have no doubt in my mind that Joseph's confidence stemmed from what his father taught him about God's veracity. Joseph's faith in 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!

**GOD'S OMNIPRESENCE:** We tend to forget (too often) that God is everywhere. King David knew this 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; and wherever you go, 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).

This type of 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 ahead of him and was already in the pit before Joseph reached the bottom. Amazing, isn't it? How relaxing to know that God is at both ends of our sufferings. The last attribute we want to examine in God's essence is His omnipotence.

**GOD'S OMNIPOTENCE:** He is the Almighty—the All Powerful! You may ask, "Why hasn't God delivered me from my turmoil? 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.

**GOD'S PROVIDENCE AT WORK FOR JOSEPH:** We left Joseph in the PIT where, unbeknownst to Joseph's brothers, God started the ball rolling in a sequence of events that ultimately would bring fulfillment to His promise to Joseph. For now, Joseph's siblings have one objective in mind—to get rid of their younger brother. Their evil plot was jubilantly accepted by all—except for Reuben. Underlining God's Providence in all this, Reuben was directed to the right place at the right time! Actually, God would use Reuben to foil their scheme and bring about His own end result: Blessing for Joseph. "But Reuben heard this [plot] and rescued him out of their hands and said, 'Let us not take his life.' Reuben further said to them, 'Shed no blood. Throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, but do not lay hands on him'—that he might rescue him out of their hands, to restore him to his father" (Genesis 37:21-22).

They quickly bought Reuben's idea of throwing him to the pit and stripped him of his colorful tunic. Then as verse 25 tells us, they sat down to eat a meal! Imagine that! "...And as they [Joseph's brother] raised their eyes and looked, behold, a caravan of Ishmaelites was coming from Gilead, with their camels bearing aromatic gum and balm and myrrh, on their way to bring them to Egypt. And Judah [the ancestor of the humanity of our Lord] said to his brothers, 'What profit is it for us to kill our brother and cover up his blood? 'Come and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him; for he is our brother; our own flesh.' And his brothers listened to him. Then some Midianite traders passed by, so they pulled him up and lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. Thus they brought Joseph into Egypt" (Genesis 37:25-28).

The moment the transaction was complete, Joseph was on board the grace train of suffering—destination: Promotion and Honor.<sup>1</sup> Naturally, we speculate as to what must have been going through Joseph's mind as he walked the long, grueling road in shackles from Dothan to Egypt. One might wonder if he was disoriented as a believer?" Or did he lose focus on the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? There's no clue in Scripture to suggest that he did. We don't think so. On the contrary, his mental attitude when he finally arrived in Egypt—proved that he was much in focus. I believe he was poised, and perhaps was meditating on the things his earthly father taught him about God's faithfulness: "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 promised you**" (Genesis 28:15). This must have been in Joseph's thoughts. Further, Joseph probably was reflecting on how God caused Reuben to be in the right place at the right time, and the Midianites too! And, how God was with him in the pit, and on the long journey to Egypt.

**"THE LORD WAS WITH JOSEPH:"** If we take this phrase at face value, it has no meaning—"The Lord was with Joseph"—doing what? So here's the breakdown of this phrase we've heard so many times:

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<sup>1</sup> Grace News Today, volume 28, page 4

- **Protection:** Joseph had guardian angels by his side 24/7. The Psalmist wrote, “For He [God] will give his angels charge [duty] concerning you, to guard you in all your ways. They will bear you up in their hands, lest you strike your foot against a stone [or lest you have fatal injury]” (91:11-12; cf. Hebrews 1:14). Experientially, we are monuments to God’s faithfulness with regard to His protective game plan. Personally, I have had eight nasty and close calls—auto accidents—the last one was a head-on collision with a drunk driver. Several times, I have come face-to-face with death, and yet was rescued each time. Talk about guardian angels—talk about grace!
- **Provision:** “The Lord was with Joseph” includes God’s daily provision for Joseph. Undoubtedly, as a youth, Joseph learned about Abraham’s experience on his way to sacrifice Isaac—and he assured his son, Isaac, that “God will provide” (Genesis 22:8a). And He did (Genesis 22:13)! God has done the most—the giving and judging of His Unique Son, so your daily provision is nothing as far as God is concerned. The Lord Himself calls you to: “Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; and they have no storeroom nor barn; and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds!” (Luke 12:24).
- **Supervision:** God was constantly monitoring Joseph’s daily affairs, ensuring that every unfair circumstance was woven right into blessing. This is true for you also; God will never take His eyes off you—EVER (Hebrews 13:5)!
- **Guidance:** Divine guidance is a big part of “The Lord was with Joseph.” Divine guidance is God’s monopoly, so in someway and somehow He will guide you as long as your soul is not crowded with the details of this life to the extent that He can’t guide you: “For such is God, our [awesome] God forever; He will guide us until death” (Psalm 48:14).
- **Success:** God is the source of true success in life. You see, when you are the beneficiary of the expression, “God is with [you],” success in all your endeavors is prominent. The nature of your success will indeed baffle everyone—believer or unbeliever—because God will be the One causing your success. In Genesis we read, “The Lord was with Joseph, so he became a successful man. And he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian. Now his master saw that the Lord was with him and how the Lord caused all that he did to prosper in his hand” (Genesis 39:2, 3).

**GOD CAUSED ALL THAT JOSEPH DID TO PROSPER:** “Now his master saw that the Lord was with him and how the Lord caused all that he did to prosper in his hand. So Joseph found favor in his sight, and became his personal servant; and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he owned he put in his charge” (Genesis 39:3,4). Talk about God’s Providence—talk about grace! The same God who safeguarded and ran ahead of Joseph on his rugged journey to Egypt – who protected him during his enslavement in Potiphar’s house – is the very God who promoted him in the darkest moment of his life! Yes, God promoted him from slavery—while in a foreign country for that matter! And, he will do no less for any of His children who seek to grow in grace and knowledge of Him and stay on God’s pre-designed path where he runs ahead of us!

### **When Joseph’s testing was said and done, he knew that the brothers had intended evil, but that God meant it for good.**

Our journey with Joseph now leads us to look at the Biblical perspective of suffering...and the reason for suffering! 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. It’s important to keep in mind throughout this next increment that God has the power to stop any suffering at any time, anywhere.

**GRACE IN THE FURNACE OF SUFFERING:** Again, 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. When we think of grace, we usually think of a cozy, blissful experience, but it’s more than that—suffering is part of grace too! We pray that God will bless us, but when He answers by preparing us in His Furnace of Suffering, we pray for deliverance, although it’s the testing in God’s furnace that humbles us and causes us to become grace-oriented. Believers awash with Bible doctrine can utilize divine viewpoint in the heat of such a test. This was true in Joseph’s day and it’s even truer in our time because we have a lot more divine assets than did the Old Testament heroes. We can learn a lesson from the actual process of purging gold of its impurities in that God in His amazing grace purges us of the impurities which hinder our spiritual growth.

**SUFFERING AT LARGE:** All suffering that believers go through in this life is seared in the white-hot flames of God's Super Grace Furnace. The believer brings direct suffering upon himself through bad decisions and indirect suffering because he lives in a broken and shattered world. What many believers often forget is that suffering is a foundation for the Super Structure for Spiritual Growth Dynamics<sup>2</sup>. 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. This is a good time to look at the five categories of a believer's suffering:

**SELF MANUFACTURED SUFFERING:** Self-manufactured or self-induced suffering is the most painful of all 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). Abraham is a great illustration of this.

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.

**DIVINE DISCIPLINE SUFFERING:** 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 unfailing love (Hebrews 12:6). He deals with you in grace regardless of your spiritual status, and if you respond positively, it will 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).
- When God is through, 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 SUFFERING:** Our spiritual-school system (babyhood, adolescence, and adulthood) is quite similar to the academic experience (primary, elementary, and high school) in that there are three levels. In the spiritual classroom, the Bible is the manual; God the Holy Spirit is the Tutor through the 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" (Js 1:2-4).

In the academic world, the teacher gives a certain number of exams in order to pass to the next level. In the Spiritual realm, God the Father administers tests 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. Other tests may be administered in relation to one's wealth in that God may permit Satan to remove all that he has accumulated. The issue then is, will the

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<sup>2</sup> This is a book in progress dealing with levels of spiritual growth, namely babyhood, adolescence, and adulthood or spiritual maturity.

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?* 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).

**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.’” (Job 1:8). Without a doubt, Satan and his minions moan and groan while the elect Angels cheer whenever a mature believer is called to the witness stand in the final phase of Satan's appeal trial! The G4 Convention is made up of God the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and Satan, the accuser. The greatest honor that can ever be conveyed to you in this life is when the G4 Convention convenes concerning you, with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit working on your behalf! 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. The Angels swoop down to observe your every move and action under intensified suffering. 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 won't puff up in arrogance. This suffering does not go away. This suffering remains in order to constantly remind the 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).



## MISSIONARY REPORTS

### G.E.M. AFRICA

#### *Nairobi, Kenya*

Pastor Naboth reports:

Our partners in Kampala, Uganda organized a week long youth congress and invited me to speak. This doctrinal camp brought together 400 young believers from four east African countries. Our joy was cut short when we returned to the news of the death of Christine Selemani. GEM extends its love and prayers to Pastor Philippe Selemani (of Bujumbura, Burundi) and his family upon the death of his wife Christine. She left behind a loving husband and four children, the youngest who was but a few hours old when she died.

#### *Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe*

Pastor John Gumbo reports:

GEM has been successfully registered which allows GEM to carry on all phases of missionary work in Zimbabwe.

Grace Bible Church has become an integral part of many souls in Victoria Falls. At every meeting we give the clarion call to believe in Christ alone by Faith alone, accompanied by the accurate communication of Bible doctrine. In addition to Grace Bible Church Eastern Assembly in Chinotimba, we have formed Grace Bible Church Western Assembly in Mkhosana Township to accommodate believers living there. The two churches meet once every month.

Thank you GEM U.S.A. for sending us enough doctrinal literature for those who are starving for sound Bible teaching. This year, we received four bags full of books from you. GEM has never lacked in quenching our spiritual thirst to know

and have rapport with the living God. We consider it an awesome privilege to be a part of GEM.

We were blessed by a visit from Roy Hurst (doctrinal missionary). He taught about the two kingdoms: The Kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom of God. Believers are still talking about this. He also brought a great supply of literature from GEM, which was much appreciated.

It is nearly impossible for anyone to be granted land in Victoria Falls because it is under National Parks. It is a tourist zone protected from development, where animals and birds are kept in view. Victoria Falls keeps the Government of Zimbabwe running because tourism brings access to foreign currency. GEM has been the talk of the day when the whole town heard that they had been allocated land. Since 2002 I have been working toward this great achievement. The property assessor is busy assigning a value to the property.

We were all taken aback at news of Moses illness, and we intercede daily for Moses as he recovers inch by inch.



## **G.E.M. ASIA**

### *Lahore, Pakistan*

Pastor Anthony Azam reports:

Greetings to all GEM friends in the name of Jesus. I have wonderful news for you. First of all, we extended the church building and people in the church are growing in the Spirit. Every Saturday, people stay, and we all pray together. Every Sunday, we have an exciting and wonderful meeting and believe that the Lord will use each one of us to glorify Himself in our town. We are asking the Lord to shake our city and win every soul.

The Lord is giving us new prayer warriors; this is His grace. We are crying for the new souls and every Sunday we receive new souls. We will soon begin street evangelism meetings again, please pray for:

Our protection and wisdom,  
For new souls to be saved, and  
For the word of God in the meetings.

Editor's Note: When Moses was in Pakistan Pastor Azam told Moses, "Our greatest need is for people to come and teach us. Please send some people to teach us, it would be very much appreciated."



## **G.E.M. EUROPE**

### *London, England*

Rev. Elijah Dennis Ejila reports:

We will hold the London Grace Seminar on Friday and Saturday, February 25 and 26, 2005, at 7:00 p.m. The theme will be "The Ten Problem Solving Devices: You will experience freedom from cosmic stress, Satanic guilt, fear and falsehood as God's word is expounded through accurate, systematic, and categorical teaching." Elijah Dennis Ejila will be the main speaker. The venue will be St. Anselm Church Hall. All the various Bible classes Dennis teaches in London will gather together for this seminar. This will synchronize their teachings, they can meet each other and all will have a chance to bring friends and acquaintances. A young man Moses taught in Cornwall, two hours away, plans to come and bring friends. We are encouraged by the response and have been praying and planning with great enthusiasm. Please pray for us as the grace gospel goes out!

On another note a new door has opened. During Moses first visit he taught at the First Church in London. A few doctrinal bombs were dropped and the pastor withdrew. Still Dennis visited and extended Christian love to the pastor.

On Moses second visit a few members of the congregation attended the seminar. They returned to the pastor and put pressure on him to have Dennis come teach.

Dennis returned from Christmas holiday to find a letter of invitation from that Church to teach on Sunday. Last Sunday he taught for two hours. No singing, no dancing, unheard of in this church. In fact, they said “stop dancing we are going to have a Bible study.” They paid attention for two straight hours as Dennis gave them the grace gospel. The pastor was weeping as he saw his congregation respond wholeheartedly to the word of God. It was such a resounding success that he has been invited to teach a double session one Sunday each month. We thank God for the doors that open and the changes that occur slowly in peoples’ hearts..

## **MISSION TRIPS**

At this time all Mission trips have been postponed. Grace Evangelistic Ministries Board of Directors has asked Moses not to travel until such time as they are confident that his health is fully restored. Moses is gaining strength day by day. We are grateful for your prayers and hope for his speedy recovery so he may return to the mission field.



## **LETTERS TO G.E.M.**

Hello GEM friends,

I have been going through the books I received. I am reading them listening to Pastor Griffin's tapes on “literal-historical-grammatical” hermeneutics in which he frequently quotes theologians, among them Charles Ryrie and Mal Couch. I can tell you, we are privileged to have access to these doctrines that have been obscure for centuries and have only been rediscovered from the time of Martin Luther and the reformation. But I see much more has come to light in the last 100 years or so. I am beginning to more & more appreciate the phenomenal work Col. Thieme accomplished, by exploiting his spiritual gift through the mentorship of the Holy Spirit.

Without the ministry of the Holy Spirit all the genius in the world surely would not have even a clue as to what the game plan delineated in the Bible is since it is purely a grace system. Not only was Thieme able to discern the nitty gritty but he was also able to put it all together and then convey the message clearly to his congregation. It is simply mind-boggling.

Even more startling, to me, is the fact that someone, seemingly inconsequential, in a far away third world country could have access to this treasure and comprehend it. This says something about God's sense of humor and really about His integrity. In the final analysis, its not really about me it is about Him. He will not and can not compromise His integrity. I don't know what to say. Only that I am grateful to y'all for opening up this world of readily available doctrinal information and cannot thank you guys enough.

O.A.  
Lagos, Nigeria



Dear Fellow Christians at G.E.M,

I would like to thank you for sending me the book “The Biblical Doctrine of Salvation,” by Moses C. Onwubiko. I already have two of his books: Comfort in Suffering, and Focus on Christian Marriage. Both of them are outstanding and have helped me to grow immensely. I share the blessings with other Christian inmates. It is bad when you write three well known ministries, ask for books and get either no response or else are told, “my books are for sale not for free!” Shameful! It made me almost give up on trying to get books in here. Thank the Lord there are ministries like yours out there! At the present time I cannot give financially, but when I am able I'll send a donation.

Sincerely  
USA



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May the blessings of Jehovah God be upon you as you receive this letter. I am 29 years old and live in Georgia. I am a member of the Church of Christ. A friend of mine introduced me to a book he was reading entitled, "Focus on Christian Marriage." He let me read a small part of it, and I was overwhelmed with the wealth of knowledge I received from the little that I read. He showed me the grace financial policy and address at the end of the book, so I decided to write to see if you all would bless me with a copy of my own. Once I receive it, I can hardly wait to share the blessing with all whom I encounter, especially those whom I fellowship with at church.

Your brother in Christ,  
USA

P.S. If at all possible, could you also send a copy to my mother whose address is below? I will send a love gift as a token of my appreciation as soon as I am able.



Dear Moses,

"My grace has been and still is sufficient for you; all you need is my grace for my power is made operational in the status of weakness." 2 Cor. 12:9. I am thankful you are beginning to feel better. I thought I would share some thoughts with you that are intended to encourage you on the road to a full recovery. I am also including my four favorite verses which are a constant source of encouragement to me.

I am sure you have really made Satan angry and he is trying to devour you. Nothing would suit him better than to put you out of commission. Grace Evangelistic Ministries is one of his most effective enemies. I know you will continue strong in faith and bathed in God's wonderful grace and therefore have a substantial advantage over Satan. "No doubt about it; prosperity, benefit, happiness, and grace will pursue me all the days of my life both living and dying. And I will dwell in a state of perfect blessing in the House of the Lord forever." Psalm 23:6

"Humble yourselves under the powerful hand of God, the infallible Word of God, that He might promote you at the proper time." 1 Peter 5:6

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you." 2 Corinthians 13:14

USA



This was just one of hundreds of letters and e-mails of concern, prayer, and encouragement Moses has received from all over the globe.  
He wishes to extend his gratitude to you all.

### **SPIRITUAL HUNGER IN AFRICA & ASIA**

There is a tremendous hunger in Africa and Asia, not for food as such, but for the truth. Would you make it a burden to pray routinely that God would graciously provide enough doctrinal material for those who are starving for sound Bible teaching? And, that this ministry would never lack in quenching their spiritual thirst to know and have rapport with the Living God!

## PLEASE JOIN US IN PRAYER

### THANKSGIVING:

- We give thanks for many open doors around the world.
- For the strides made in Moses' recovery.
- For the knowledge that Jesus Christ controls history.

### PETITION TO OUR FATHER:

- For President Bush (for wisdom and guidance).
- Israel's protection and the U.S. Military.
- The U.S. (For a great revival, peace, and freedom from terrorism).
- The restoration of Moses' health.
- For protection of tape ministries, G.E.M. personnel, and foreign translations.
- Doctrinal pastors and their tape ministries.
- For the health of Col. and Mrs. R.B. Thieme, Jr.
- The spiritual growth of new believers.
- Indigenous pastors (that God will equip them in every way).
- For many open doors in the year 2005.
- Divine provision and sustenance for missionaries desiring full time work in the field.
- Energy, wisdom, and discernment for G.E.M.'s God-assembled team.
- That God will use the Tsunami disaster to glorify Himself. That victims will seek God and subsequently hear the grace gospel and be saved.

### IRS Disclosure

Grace Evangelistic Ministries is a non-profit, tax-exempt, missionary organization. And under the Internal Revenue code 501-C (3), all contributions to this ministry qualify for tax-deductions.

**If you would like to be on our mailing list to receive this bi-monthly issue of Grace News Today with no obligation, please contact us:**

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### **To receive updates and prayer requests**

**E-MAIL CAFE:** [debby@debbyhagar.com](mailto:debby@debbyhagar.com)  
Or visit us on the internet: [www.gracemissions.org](http://www.gracemissions.org)

**S***o Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free. John 8:31 & 32*

**SCRIPTURES CITED:** Verses in this work are from the New American Standard Bible (NASB). Used by permission. Words and phrases in brackets are not part of the text.

**FINANCIAL POLICY:** There's no charge for any material from Grace Evangelistic Ministries. Anyone who desires accurate Bible teaching, can receive our books without obligation, whatsoever, God provides Bible doctrine. We wish to reflect His grace.

## OVERVIEW G. E. M. – 2005

Grace Evangelistic Ministries is incorporated in the State of Tennessee as a nonprofit organization. We are a Christian, non-denominational, missionary-oriented ministry, dedicated to evangelism and sound Bible teaching. Our main focus is evangelism; all other activities support our main goal. Our mission, in obedience to the command of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, is to: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..." (Matt.28:19). We embrace the following:

### **Objective #1 - Evangelism**

Evangelize unbelievers, adults, and children 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 - New Converts**

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" (I Peter 2:2).
- c. Where possible, advise them in establishing their own local churches with their own funds.

### **Objective #3 - Preparation of Indigenous Pastors**

Because those who have responded to the gospel will become unfruitful if they are not exposed to sound Bible teaching, we will introduce pastors and prospective pastors to doctrinally sound tape ministries. Some indigenous pastors may wish to pursue seminary training on their own. To assist them we will seek to identify and direct them to sound theological seminaries who offer training in the original languages. The 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 - Missionary Opportunities**

We will provide opportunities for churches to send trained, doctrinally motivated men on short or long-term mission trips to minister to newly formed groups or churches.

### **Objective #5 - Outreach beyond Crusades**

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

### **Objective #6 - Supporter Outreach**

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

Publications Currently Available from G.E.M. Free of Charge.

[Please Click here to See Publications.](#)