

LESSON 7

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

PART- III

Reading : Eph. 1:1-2:10.

Memory verses : Psa. 103:6, Eph. 2:4-8

Theme : *To understand the grace, mercy and faithfulness of God, be thankful to Him and to reflect those attributes in our lives.*

Introduction : Which are the attributes of God that we learned in the last lesson? What do we have to do because God is holy? Where has the love and righteousness of God been revealed most clearly? Can you mention some other moral attributes that are important for us as human beings?

I. THE GRACE OF GOD:

"The Lord is compassionate and gracious" (Psa. 103:8). What is meant by grace? Let us imagine that the only son of a father is killed by a man without any reason. The father can get justice through the authorities or allow the murderer to go free by pardoning him. He can in addition accept the man as his own son and receive him into his house. This is grace. The grace of God is the love that flows from Him towards man who is unworthy to receive it. Grace grants worthiness to the unworthy and forgives all debts standing in his name.

The grace of God is a wonderful reality:

Noah found favour in the eyes of the Lord when wickedness abounded on the earth and the world was fit to receive punishment from God (Gen. 6:8). Noah and his family were protected from punishment. We see Apostle Paul as a great witness of the grace of God. His sole aim in life was to preach about the grace of God (Acts 20:24, Gal. 1:15, Rom. 3:23-24, Eph. 2:4-8, 2 Cor. 4:15, 9:14, 12:9, 1 Tim. 1:13-14). His testimony was that he received his salvation, his calling, his election,

his ministry, his standing and his power were all because of the grace of God. Let us also meditate continually on the grace of God that we have received and live as witnesses to the same.

What does the grace of God do?

1. **It saves:** It is the grace of God which saves mankind from the slavery of sin and death. "We are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24). "It is by grace you have been saved, through faith" (Eph. 2:8). Election (Rom. 11:5-6)), rebirth (John 1:12-13, 3:8), calling (Gal. 1:15, 2 Tim. 1:9-10), justification (Rom. 3:24), eternal life (Rom. 5:21, 6:23), glorification (Heb 2:9-10) and all blessings connected with our salvation come to us by the grace of God.
2. **It strengthens:** We receive the strength to face adverse circumstances and temptations of Satan by the grace of God. (2 Cor. 12:9, 2Tim. 2:1, 1 Pet. 5:10).
3. **It sustains:** (Heb. 13:9, Luke 2:40, Acts 13:43, 14:26, 1 Cor. 15:10)
4. **It enriches:** It is by the grace of God that Jesus Christ became poor to make us rich (2 Cor. 8:9). Is it not a great thing that we are blessed with all heavenly blessings through Christ? The grace of God sustains us in this life by giving us all that we need.
5. **It gives us blessed hope:** The grace of God that brings salvation gives us the vision of the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior. Jesus Christ which is our blessed hope (Titus 2:11-12).
6. **It blesses us with many gifts:** God, by His grace, gives Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts to His people (Eph. 4:7). As these spiritual gifts are given to us by God's grace, they are also called gifts of grace. These gifts are described in detail in 1 Cor. chs 12&14. There are the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, healing, prophecy, tongues, interpretation, helping, administration, etc. which are given by the grace of God for the spiritual growth of the church and individuals.

Let us praise God for His grace which has come to us through Jesus Christ and endeavour not to waste it.

The mercy of God:

Both grace and mercy are the same for God. But they are different in relationship with man. God's mercy comes into effect when, in His

love, He deals with the miserable and sinful condition of man. God's mercy is revealed throughout the Bible. References to God's mercy in Old Testament are four times the number in New Testament. But Israel could not enjoy the mercy of God because of their unbelief. Hence the message that they heard was of no value to them (Heb. 4:2). We can enjoy His mercy if we approach His presence with boldness and total trust in Jesus Christ.

God's mercy is a reality: Read Psa. 103:8, 62:12, 145:8, 86:15, Deut 4:31.

Whom does God show His mercy?

1. To those who are miserable: Even if a mother forgets her child, God will never forsake His people who are suffering (Isa. 49:13, 14).
2. To those who love, fear, trust and walk before Him with all their heart (Exo. 20:6, Deut. 7:9, 2 Chro. 6:14, Psa. 32:10, 103:8, 11, 13, 17).
3. To those who repent and forsake their sins (Prov. 28:13).
4. To those who call upon Him in truth (Psa. 8:5, Rom. 10:12).

How does God show His mercy?

1. He shows His mercy by forgiving the sins of those who repent (Exo. 34:7, Isa. 1;18, 55:7, Jon. 3:10, Mic 7:18, 1 John 1:9).
2. He shows His mercy by His patience with those who do not repent (Neh. 9:16-18, 26, 27, 30, 31). Thus His mercy leads them to repentance (Rom. 2:4).
3. He shows His mercy by saving mankind from their sicknesses, sorrows and misery (Exo. 3:7-9, 15:13, Pa. 46:1, Phil. 2:27).
4. He is a place of comfort when His people are oppressed by their enemies (Isa. 25:4, 32:1-2, Psa. 59:16).

III. THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD:

The faithfulness of God is also part of His personality. When we say that God is eternal and unchanging, His faithfulness is self evident. The word used for faithfulness in the original language has the meaning: 'upholding'. Therefore faithfulness of God implies that He will uphold or

He can be trusted. God is omniscient, omnipotent and unchanging. The knowledge and thinking of man undergo changes. So man cannot be fully trusted. But God is faithful.

The faithfulness of God is a reality: Read Deut. 7:9, 32:4, 1 Cor. 1:9, 10:13, 1 Thes. 5:24, 2 Thes. 3:3 1 John 1:9.

The uniqueness of God's faithfulness:

- a) God's mercy is new every morning; His faithfulness is great (Lam. 3:23).
- b) His faithfulness reaches up to the skies (Psa.36:5).
- c) It is established in heaven (Psa. 89:2).
- d) God is faithful in all He does (Psa. 33:4).
- e) It stays for generations (Psa. 119:90)

How has God revealed His faithfulness?

1. He shows His faithfulness by fulfilling His promises and statutes (Heb. 10:23, 1 Kings 8: 20-24). The promise that God made with David were fulfilled at the time of Solomon. Even though the people of Israel were unfaithful, God is still fulfilling His promises made to their forefathers. They were scattered to different parts of earth because of their sins (Deut. 28:64). But they have been gathered together in their home land in this century according to His promise (Deut. 30:3-5). The fulfillment of the promises connected with Jesus Christ also declares the faithfulness of God (Isa. 7:14, Matt. 1:22). "Even if we are faithless, He will remain faithful" (2 Tim. 2:13).
2. God delivers His people from their sufferings. He keeps them from falling into the hands of the enemy (2 Thes. 3:3). When they are tempted, He provides a way out (1 Cor. 10:13). He shows that he is faithful.
3. He helps His people to remain steadfast in faith so that they may be found blameless at the second coming of Christ. (1 Cor. 1:8, 1Thes. 5:23).
4. He shows His faithfulness by punishing His children when they go astray and forgiving their sins when they repent (Psa. 119:75, John 1:8).

We can find solutions to all our problems because our God is full of grace, mercy and faithfulness. We should reflect the same qualities in our lives, too.

Questions

1. How do the grace and mercy of God differ in relation to our life?
2. Explain what is meant by grace.
3. How does the grace of god work for us?
4. How is the mercy of God revealed?
5. Explain the greatness of the faithfulness of God.
6. How does God show His faitfulness?
7. How can you show mercy and faithfulness in your life?

