

Lessons from Torah – 14

The Curse of Grace – Genesis 8-9

1. How we respond to God's grace – or how deeply we allow that grace to affect us – will determine for us whether that grace ends us being a blessing in our lives or a curse
2. God's intervenes in human life with grace offers hope, but grace neglected leads to deeper sin:
 - a. Genesis 4:1-7 - The grace shown to Adam and Eve led to the first murder – the death of Abel
 - b. Genesis 4:8-24 - The grace shown to Cain led to the arrogant violence of Lamech
 - c. Genesis 9-10 – The grace shown to Noah led to the evil of the Tower of Babel and the tyranny that would be human religion and tyranny
 - d. 2 Kings 20-21 - Grace shown to Hezekiah in granting a longer life led to the reign of his young son Manasseh and his evils that led to Judah's captivity
 - e. Matthew 11:20-24 - Grace shown by Jesus in Galilee, though it led to the salvation of many, led those who rejected that grace to a fate worse than Sodom.
 - f. Grace shown to Judas in being called to be an apostle led to his betrayal of Jesus
3. 1 Peter 2:7-9 - The grace of God offers a firm foundation for life to those who live in it, but only results in the fall of those who disdain it.
4. The danger rests not so much in the gift of grace itself as in the way that grace is handled by those to whom it is offered.
5. "Palm Sunday" offers an example of this lesson:
 - a. When Jesus entered Jerusalem on the donkey, offering a fulfillment of the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9, his coming offered a choice:
 - i. Admit my own sinfulness and my need of forgiveness, a new heart, a new nature - viewing Sin is my enemy and reconciliation with God as my greatest need
 - ii. Seek only to be free of Rome's domination and recapture Israel's 'glory days' – viewing Rome as the enemy – she is evil, but I am good
 - b. Israel refused to recognize her own need and though she was willing to benefit from Jesus as King she refused to serve Jesus as Lord
 - c. As a result, she was destroyed, and her hopes dashed with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple
6. Will we receive Jesus as Savior and seek to be transformed by his Spirit alive and influential in us, or will we only seek to claim Jesus for the blessings he offers, seeing ourselves as worthy of those blessings and not needing change? We grace be our blessing or our curse?