



God's Greater Grace for Humility, Repentance, Fasting, & Prayer (James 4:6-10)

*6But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
7Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. James 4:6-10*

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Challenging Times

B. God's Solution to Difficult Times: is to humble ourselves and to fast and pray

C. Lou Engle's Invitation: to fast and pray from March 1st through April 9th. (<https://thejesusfast.global>)

II. EXEGESIS

A. A Greater Grace: He gives a greater grace; this consists of divine strength to do His will.

B. Humbling Ourselves

1. Repenting of Pride: a pride that implies a "vast contempt for all" of one's fellow humans and that "shuts itself off from God for three reasons": "it does not know its own need," "it cherishes its own independence," and "it does not recognize its own sin." (Blomberg, Craig L.; Kamell, Mariam J. (2009-10-06). *James (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)* Kindle Edition, 5539-5541)
2. Abasement Before Exaltation: We go down before we go up

C. Lament & Mourn & Weep: We stay at acknowledging the gap between our heart and our actions. We acknowledge our half-hearted efforts to draw near and to actively resist the enemy. We agree that we are not where we need or want to be.

1. Being Poor in Spirit (theirs is the kingdom of heaven, Mt. 5:3) –
 - a. To acknowledge that we are in great need of help to sustain a right heart before God.
 - b. Realize our poverty before God.
 - c. Poverty of spirit is the beginning place of the Kingdom in this age.
2. Mourning for Breakthrough
 - a. To be desperate enough to be "extreme" in pursuit of breakthrough
 - b. Allen Hood: This is not worldly sorrow. It is the groan of a broken heart over the weakness of our frame in regard to sin and the sad estate of the human experience. It is the basis of intercession.

D. God's Rewards

And it is impossible to please God without faith. Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him. Hebrews 11:6

Our Responsibility	What this looks like	God's Promised Rewards	What this looks like
Submit to God	Place ourselves under His Lordship and obey Him in every area of our life; acknowledge our "gaps"; commit to and then walk in obedience		
Resist the devil	Counter his oppression by speaking against it; declare our resistance to the devil and his ways and command him to go!! <u>Don't be discouraged by the time gap</u>	The devil will flee	The oppression, strife, fog, or demonic difficulty will dissipate and leave.

Our Responsibility	What this looks like	God's Promised Rewards	What this looks like
Draw near to God	TIME with Him; singing worship to Him, talking to Him, listening for His voice, leisurely cultivating His presence and being with Him; <u>Don't be discouraged by the time gap</u> of our actions and God's response.	He will draw near to me	God <i>tenderizes my heart</i> enabling me to <u>feel</u> more of God's desire for me and giving me a softness for the things of God; feeling God's feelings in my heart God <i>enlarges my desire</i> for Him by encountering His desire for me. I want to be with Him God <i>illuminates my understanding</i> with revelation of God's beauty. I am moved by His beauty and have greater understanding of Him/His ways God <i>imparts zeal for righteousness</i> which helps me in my struggle with besetting sins. I find it easier to walk as I should
Cleanse my hands (actions)	Stop doing the things that displease Him and that are contrary to His Word. What actions or non-actions displease You?		
Purify my heart (attitude)	Acknowledge to God where our heart is impure; repent and ask for His cleansing forgiveness. <i>O Abba, reveal our heart & bring Your purity!</i>		
Mourn and weep (over my sin)	Stay at acknowledging the gap between our heart and our actions; also our half-hearted efforts to draw near and resist the enemy; acknowledge we are not where we need to be. Do not move off the mark by lowering God's standard within our own consciousness.		
Humble myself before the Lord	Fasting our time, food, money, and words is a form of humility. Actively trusting and letting God open the doors or promotion, privilege, or opportunity in front of us is humility. Being conscious that our boss, friend, or coworker cannot keep God's will from being accomplished in us.	He will exalt me	He will bring promotions, blessings, opportunities, breakthrough, softened hearts of those around us, favor with others, and a peace in the waiting for these things to occur.

III. EXHORTATIONS

A. Blessings Are Ours Because of Yeshua (taken from Mike Bickle's teachings): We are now under the reign of grace. We received a new position, power, nature, insights, and destiny.

1. ***God's Acceptance with Affection:*** The result of receiving this new position is that God enjoys and delights in relating to us as sons of God and the Bride of Messiah. There is no condemnation or rejection from God (Rom. 8:1).
2. ***Indwelling Spirit:*** The Spirit gives us new power with new desires and insights that we may know God, His Word, and His will. We received supernatural power to resist sin and Satan. We received a new nature when our spirit was born again and made righteous. The Teacher dwells on the inside of us. We turn our attention inwardly and thank the Spirit for His presence in our spirit.
3. ***The Spirit's Fruit:*** The fruit of His presence in us is love and peace (Gal. 5:22). We do not have to yield to the promptings of sin. As we thank the Spirit for His peace that is in our spirit by His indwelling presence, then we will experience them in our soul (mind and emotions).

Olsen's God's Greater Grace for: Humility, Repentance, Fasting, & Prayer (James 4:6-10) (20-0215)

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness... Gal. 5:22

4. **Authority**: We were given the authority to use Yeshua's name to release the works of God and hinder the works of Satan in our life and circumstances, as well as in others. We are seated in heavenly places with Yeshua with access in prayer to God's presence.

...raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Messiah... Eph. 2:6

5. **Divine Destiny**: We have a lasting purpose in God that goes beyond our physical death. We will forever reign with Him. Every day is relevant as we do God's will because He sees our effort and it so moves Him that He gives us eternal rewards for our faithfulness even in small things (Lk. 19:17). Our faithfulness is remembered by God regardless of how small our impact is.

6. **A New Creation in Our Spirit-Man**: The "he" that is a new creation is our spirit man. All things pertaining to our spirit become new. The "real you" is your spirit man, which is alive in Messiah.

B. Blessed Are You?

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when *people* insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matthew 5:3-12

C. Suffering & Difficulty

1. **Suffering Promised**: We are promised difficulty

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12

29 "Yes," Jesus replied, "and I assure you that everyone who has given up house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or property, for my sake and for the Good News, will receive now in return a hundred times as many houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and property—along with persecution. And in the world to come that person will have eternal life. 31 But many who are the greatest now will be least important then, and those who seem least important now will be the greatest then." Mark 10:29-31

2. **Suffering Increases**: As we follow the Lord, in some ways we will suffer more

a. He is working in us; He will reward us; He is with us

b. We often have this unbiblical notion that things will get easier as we follow God

3. **Do Not Be Surprised**

12 Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. 13 Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.

14 If you are insulted because you bear the name of Christ, you will be blessed, for the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. 1 Peter 4:12-14

So don't be surprised, dear brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. 1 John 3:13

C. Different Difficulties

1. **Living in a Fallen World**: The following are common to all people (both Believers and unBelievers): sickness; accidents; hardships; interactions with sinful, weak, broken people.

2. **Because of the Gospel**:

a. we help others when we don't feel like it

b. we step up to responsibilities that produce greater pressure

c. we experience the counterattack from the enemy

D. There is a Temptation to Give Up or Shrink Back: this is a trap

E. These Difficulties are Producing Something in Us

14We know that God, who raised the Lord Jesus, will also raise us with Jesus and present us to himself together with you. 15All of this is for your benefit. And as God's grace reaches more and more people, there will be great thanksgiving, and God will receive more and more glory.

16That is why we never give up. Though our bodies are dying, our spirits are being renewed every day. 17For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! 18So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.

2 Corinthians 4:14-18

F. Don't Give Up or Lose Heart: Yeshua commands us to be persistent

7"Ask (and keep on asking), and it will be given to you; seek (and keep on seeking), and you will find; knock (and keep on knocking), and it will be opened to you. 8For everyone who asks (and keeps on asking) receives, and he who seeks (and keeps on seeking) finds, and to him who knocks (and keeps on knocking) it will be opened. 9Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? 10Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 11If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him! (Matthew 7:7-11)

1One day Jesus told his disciples a story to show that they should always pray and never give up.

6Then the Lord said, "Learn a lesson from this unjust judge. 7Even he rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? 8I tell you, he will grant justice to them quickly! Luke 18:1, 6-8

IV. APPLICATION

A. Individually (in the context of community): our personal relationship with God is the place we are to provide the greatest focus and energy.

B. Family/Friends: This is the hardest (but most important place) to focus on living out our lives as Believers. Mourn about and invest some energy and prayer into the areas you are deficient with those closest to you.

1. Get Help: focus on tools/resources that will help you in these areas (e.g. marriage class)

C. Congregation:

9Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. 10So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. Galatians 6:9-10

D. Neighbors/Coworkers: Reaching out to and blessing those unsaved folks around us

E. Empty Fields: We are to proactively go after those who have not yet responded to the Gospel

19Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20

V. CONCLUSION: 40 DAYS & NEW BEGINNINGS

14Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land. 2 Chronicles 7:14

A. Take These Days Seriously: From March 1 – April 9 (Passover)

B. Invitation:

1. Fast: To fast in a way that requires God's greater grace

- a. food
- b. media

2. Pray:

- a. To commit to at least one hour a day in prayer and God's word
- b. To commit to at least one one-hour corporate prayer time with other Believers

3. Family/Friends:

- a. If married, at least one 30-minute time each week of prayer with spouse; if not married, with a friend
- b. One weekly *family altar* time on erev shabbat (or another time)