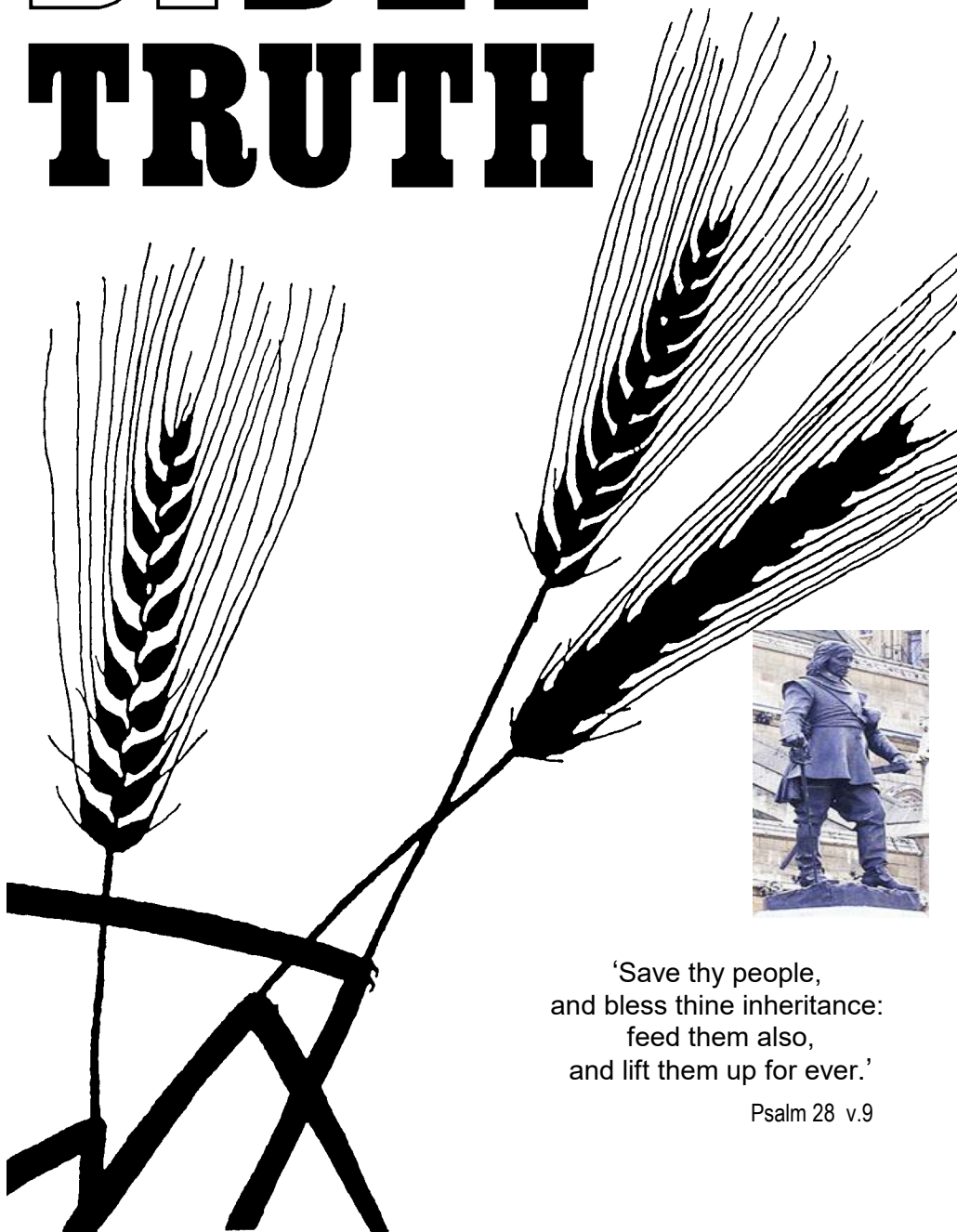


# BIBLE TRUTH

No. 299  
September/December  
2020



‘Save thy people,  
and bless thine inheritance:  
feed them also,  
and lift them up for ever.’

Psalm 28 v.9

# GRACE - by H. Thomas

On that first day of Pentecost, following the death and resurrection of Jesus, a number of people came together to observe it as they had always done, although then it would have been known as the Feast of Weeks. But that year it was different. A new era had begun with God's Holy Spirit made available to those who were responsive to God's calling. The Apostle Peter stood up and addressed the people thus.

'... Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: ... This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.

Acts ch.2 vv 14 & 32-33

After hearing Peter and the other Apostles, the people were stirred up to ask what they should do.

'Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?'

Acts ch.2 v.37

Nowhere will you read in the Scriptures, of the Apostle Peter saying, 'You don't have to do anything, for by the grace of God and His love for us, you are now saved'. What Peter did say was this.

'... Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'

Acts ch.2 v.38

That word 'repent' means you have to do a one hundred and eighty degrees about turn, but for what and why? For the remission of sins! What Peter said here was not about grace. It was about repentance of sin. This is what Peter was inferring, the repentance of what sin is - the transgressing of God's law, as stated in the first Epistle of John.

'Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.'

1 John ch.3 v.4

So, what Peter was saying to them was this. They were not only to stop breaking the law, but they were to keep and abide in the law.

‘For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.’

Romans ch.2 v.13

The above verse, which God inspired the Apostle Paul to write circa thirty years after the resurrection, infers that the law was still there to be kept and had not been replaced by God’s grace.

Let us take a closer look at the following verse written by the Apostle Paul.

‘For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:’

Ephesians ch.2 v.8

To obtain God’s grace requires faith, a living faith, not a dead faith. This is what the Apostle James had to say about the living faith that is required to obtain God’s grace.

‘Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. ... For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.’

James ch. 2 vv 17-24

Works are a manifestation of a person’s faith. Abraham proved his faith by his works, his willingness to obey God even at the expense of his son Isaac.

Just recently, I heard a message from a person standing in a pulpit saying, ‘The law cannot give life, the law kills. It is Jesus who gives life. Law and grace do not mix’. This is not what God says. As we read above ‘the doers of the law shall be justified’. Who should one believe? The Bible or that person in a pulpit? He might be right in saying ‘the law kills’ however, it is the breaking of the law that kills, not the keeping or doing of the law. The keeping or doing of the law

'justifies' (Romans ch.2 v.13). One may come up with the argument that we are not under the law and then go on to quote the Apostle Paul saying.

'What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?'

Romans ch.6 v.1

To carry on sinning would be a transgression of the law but Paul continues,

'What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: ...'.

Romans ch.7 v.7

'Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.'

v.12

See also Psalm 19 vv 7-12 as well as the whole of Psalm 119 and in doing so be mindful of what the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy.

'But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.'

2 Timothy ch.3 vv 14-17

The only scriptures available in the time of Timothy's childhood were those of the Old Testament.

The same person who said, that the law and grace do not mix also said, 'the place of grace where we are safe' and went on to say that we are saved from God's wrath by quoting the following.

'Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.'

Romans ch.5 v.9

He then continued, 'God's anger is not for us'. His interpretation of grace, which is a common belief and taught by some, is nothing more than a false sense of security. It infers that God's love for us is so great that he overlooks our sins. He forgives us and accepts us as we are. He pardons our sins, we are saved without having to repent. We can go straight into God's Kingdom. That is what people are being led to believe. Grace is being used as a loophole by which a person can evade the works of the law. God is not going to give or

grant grace to an unrepentant sinner. God will not accept those who do not repent of their sins into His Kingdom. God is not going to give or grant grace to disobedient and rebellious people, unless they repent (see Acts ch.2 v.38 and Acts ch.5 v.32).

Grace comes with faith. Faith requires works. Works are about obedience to God's laws. Laws expose sin of which we are to repent so that we may receive the Holy Spirit and enter into God's Kingdom. I think that, when giving a sermon on grace, one should not take it out of context and isolate or divide it from such words as repentance, works or law.

'... and the scripture cannot be broken;'

John ch.10 v.35

The word grace in the New Testament is translated from the Greek word 'charis, which is most likely the origin for the English word 'charity'. Nowhere does *Strong's Concordance* or *Young's* suggest that grace refers to unmerited or undeserved pardon. 'Favour' is the most acceptable definition, but that does not necessarily mean unmerited or undeserved pardon. There is a harmony throughout the Bible, in a good translation. Any apparent conflictions may be due to a poor translation.

'Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.'

2 Corinthians ch.3 v.17

The above verse does not say, that by grace we are liberated from the law. It is saying, we are not condemned by the law but that we have liberty from the condemnation of the law. We are not breaking the law to be condemned. We are free, we have liberty. But if that person is habitually breaking God's law, he will have no favour with God. He will not receive the grace of God until such a time that he should repent.

'For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.'

Matthew ch.5 v.18

The Law remains until all is fulfilled.

\*\*\*\*\*

See 1 Samuel ch.17 v.49