



# The G.E.M.

Volume 3 Edition 5

The Grace Electronic Magazine

May 2009

## REFLECT ON GRACE

**G**race is such an awesome word, yet something that is often overlooked and even misunderstood. What does it mean to live in grace?

Our main article on page 3 answers just that question as we reflect on this amazing gift from God in this month's edition of *The G.E.M.*

Our usual product reviews are on page 2, along with the next instalment of *Bible Basics*, this time on the last book of the Pentateuch, Deuteronomy.

The majority of the public holidays may be behind us for this year, but guys and girls, don't forget Mother's Day on Sunday 10 May.

As the minister who married us said at our wedding: "The best thirteen years of my life, were spent in the arms of another man's wife; my mother." So visit us today for books, music, DVDs and gifts for that special woman in your life.

As an added bonus for all the avid fiction reading moms out there, all adult fiction titles are less 10% until Saturday 16 May.

God bless,  
Glyn and Linda. †



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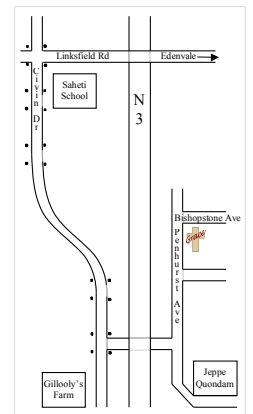
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## BIBLE BASICS

### Deuteronomy The Book of Covenants

This is the last of the five books ascribed to Moses. The English title for this book comes from the Greek *deuteros nomos*, meaning “the second law.”

**Date:** It is traditionally accepted that this book was written somewhere towards the end of the exodus (about 1400BC).

**Content:** The book contains three sermons by Moses to Israel shortly before his death. At the time, the nation was camped on the plains just east of the Jordan River across from the Promised Land.

#### Basic Outline:

The book of Deuteronomy has a clear organisation and unity:

Moses' First Sermon: What God has Done for Us (1:1-4:43)

God's actions reviewed (1-3)

Israel's allegiance required (4:1-43)

Moses' Second Sermon: Life Under the Covenant of Law (4:48-28:68)

Principles of Covenant Life (5-12)

Details of Covenant Life (12-26)

Covenant Ratification Required (27)

Blessings and Cursings (28)

Moses' Third Sermon: Call to Commitment (29-30)

Exhortation to Commitment (29:1-15)

Warnings to be Heeded (29:16-28)

Forgiveness Assured (30:1-10)

Appeal to Choose Life (30:11-20)

The Last Days of Moses (31-34)

**Value:** Jesus often referred to the book of Deuteronomy to find a principle that He applied to His own life or of His hearers. Even though we no longer live under the law covenant, the deep expressions of love, and the obedience it motivates, are the same for us today.

There are many lessons for us today: about who God is, about our relationship with Him and others, and particularly the need for full commitment to God, which will greatly enrich our lives.

**Duplication:** Even though at times one reads much material that one has read previously in Genesis to Numbers, approximately fifty percent of the material in Deuteronomy is new.

Where there are repetitions of what appears in Exodus for example, the Deuteronomy passages are generally longer. This is because Moses' sermons here stress the application. Exodus on the other hand simply stated the principles.

**Death of Moses:** The book closes with a sensitive report of Moses' death. God leads him, alone, into the mountains overlooking Canaan. Peering together across the Jordan, God shows Moses the Promised Land. Moses dies there, and God buries His faithful servant in a secret grave.

Moses is dead, but a new leader is about to bring the nation of Israel into her promised heritage - Joshua. †

## PRODUCT REVIEWS

### CRAZY LOVE by Francis Chan



It is so easy when one has been a Christian for a number of years to slip into a bit of a rut. We know that God sustains us and has blessed us in ways that we can not imagine, but there comes a time when we feel as though something is missing.

Francis Chan challenges us through this book to regain that first love that we had for Christ when we first became Christians.

The chapter that spoke especially to me was chapter 4, “People of the Lukewarm”. In his reference to the Parable of the Sower, Francis Chan challenges: “Do not assume you are good soil.” Our first thought is so often, “Of course I am. I go to church, read the Bible, give to the ministry and the poor, sing in the choir, etc.”

But then Chan asks, “Are you totally in love with Jesus Christ? Or has the stuff of the world become too important to you? Have these things wooed you away from a total commitment to God? Do the words half-hearted, lukewarm or partially committed fit better?”

As one then works through the profiles of what it means to be lukewarm, one cannot help but be convicted of how evident it is in one's life. One then has to ask oneself, “Would my lukewarm, saltless, life even spoil manure? Is my present Christian witness changing lives? Is this how Jesus sees me and my church in the twenty-first century?” Sobering questions that need honest answers by all who claim to be Christians.

This is a book for everyone who is serious about their faith and their walk with Almighty God. A God whose love for us is glorious. A God whose desire is for our affection for Him alone and not for all the things that He provides for us. A God who desires a mutual relationship of all out *Crazy Love*. This book asks all the right questions and directs us to the correct answers.

**Our Price: R 140**

### THE OTHER SIDE OF GRACE by Louie Giglio



The core of the Christian message is captured by one simple, yet profound word, grace.

We have all heard the definitions before; God's unmerited favour, receiving that which we did not deserve, etc. Possibly even the acronym; God's Riches at Christ's Expense. But none captures the very core of the issue like the definition Louie gives on this DVD; God in action.

Through a series of three talks, Louie Giglio presents to us the concepts of grace that we so easily miss in our workaday lives. Starting with the fact of God being holy and how we should see Him as such, to the relationship between grace and works, giving and living a life of discipline, wholly devoted to God.

**Our Price: R 220**

Other Louie Giglio titles available:

#### DVDs

Indescribable	R 180
How Great is Our God	R 180
Hope: When Life Hurts Most	R 180
Fruitcake and Ice Cream	R 180
Alive	R 200
Canvas	R 220
Tattoo	R 220
Passport	R 200
2 Words That Changed Everything	R 300
History	R 200
Big Picture God, Little Picture World	R 60
Marvelous Light	R 60
Prayer: A Remix	R 220

#### Books

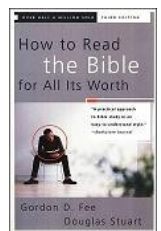
Wired for a Life of Worship	R 120
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## Top 25 Must Reads

### How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth by Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart

Understanding the Bible is not for the few, the gifted, the scholarly. The Bible is accessible. It is meant to be read and comprehended by everyone from armchair readers to seminary students. A few essential insights into the Bible can clear up a lot of misconceptions and help you grasp the meaning of Scripture and its application to your twenty-first century life.

Covering everything from translation concerns to different genres of Biblical writing, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* is used all around the world. In clear, simple language, it helps you accurately understand the different parts of the Bible – their meaning for ancient audiences and their implications for you today – so you can uncover the inexhaustible worth that is in God's Word.



**R 180**

## LIVING IN GRACE

Romans 6:14 tells us that we are not under law, but under grace. Amen, thank you God for that. However, there is an aspect of grace that we so often forget, and that is law. Now, before you get too confused about that, let us go back to the Old Testament, where grace originated.

In Deuteronomy 6:4-9 we read, *“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates.”*

These verses are known as the *Sh'ma Isreal* to our Jewish brothers, and to this day in Orthodox Jewish homes the *Sh'ma* is said at the beginning and end of every day.

### Law

Let us begin with the law since it is so prominent in these verses.

We need to bear in mind that Moses had just re-presented the Ten Commandments in the previous chapter, first given at Mount Sinai some forty years earlier shortly after the exodus from Egypt (Exodus 20).

The first thing to notice is that Moses' reference to God's commands is done in the context of man's well-being (v2). If the people of God do as God tells them, things will go well with them. It is so easy to read this as a threat, do this or else. Granted, Deuteronomy does contain many curses, however we should rather understand it to be showing God's desire for life to go well with man. God wants man to be well, and the recipe for that is contained within His laws.

Secondly we need to remember that there are basically two ways the word law can be used.

1) Sometimes a law reflects the way someone decides things should be. For example, a sign showing the speed limit on a certain stretch of road is 60 km/h is a law. However, if the traffic department decides to raise or lower the speed limit at a later stage, they are well within their rights to do so as it is something that they decide on how it should be.

2) Other times law reflects how things are in all situations. For example, the law of gravity. This is a law that is always there and is not dependant on whether or not you believe it to be true or not. Try jumping off a cliff and say to yourself that the law of gravity does not exist.

Too often we make the mistake of thinking that God's laws are like speed limit signs, that they are not absolute and can be changed. Instead we should see God's laws

to be more like gravity, they are how things should be. Granted, some laws have been completely fulfilled through Christ's death on the cross and no longer valid, and some are not directly relevant to the twenty-first style of living, but they still serve a purpose in giving us principles on how we should be living.

Therefore we see that God's laws are not meant to spoil our fun, restrict our freedom or to make us perform merely like robots. They are aimed at our well-being, to live life to the full, experiencing the joy and goodness that God intends for us.

### Grace

So where then does grace fit in? If you read the whole of chapter 6 you see a number of images relating to God's prior grace to the nation of Israel. God showed His grace to the nation in leading them out of Egypt, and now in their entering the Promised Land. But once they were in the land, they were to follow the law. Grace came first, then the law. Keeping the law was not the prerequisite to entering Canaan, but how they lived afterwards.

In verses 10-20 we see quite clearly that the Israelites would eat grapes from vines that they did not plant. They would drink water from wells they did not dig. They would inhabit cities they did not build. In other words, they would be living on the gifts of God. It would not be a result of their hard work as rewards for the spiritual brownie points they had collected, or on anything else that was dependant on man's efforts.

The law only makes sense when one keeps grace in mind and remember that it came first. As long as people remembered all that God had done for them, the law would remain in its proper place. That is why in verses 20-25, when a son asks his father about the stipulations of God's laws, the father is to begin by talking about the grace of God before the law. One needs to understand God's grace before the finer details of His law.

### Righteousness

In verse 25 we read: *“And if you are careful to obey all this law ... that will be our righteousness.”* It is so easy to think from this verse that the Israelites were aiming at a works-righteousness. That

they had to earn a righteous status before God. However, in light of the grace already coming beforehand, this righteousness is the keeping of God's laws as the only sensible, logical, and appropriate thing to do in response to God's grace.

Think of it this way: people generally get married because they are in love. The love does not come into being only after the minister pronounces them as husband and wife, it was there in the first place. But once that commitment is made as a result of that prior love, there are certain rules a couple must follow. An obvious one is not to cheat on one's partner, but there are other ones too - rules that help govern the relationship.

Within the relationship, the behaviour is to be a natural out flowing of the marriage commitment. Keeping the rules do not create the marriage, love does, but the rules are what keeps the marriage strong. You do not marry in order to keep a bunch of rules, but the rules do become a natural part of your identity as a couple.

It is the same with man's relationship with God. God's Laws do not create the righteousness, but they are part of what it means to be righteous. In the same way that there are consequences to breaking the rules in marriage, there are consequences to breaking God's laws. And those consequences exist not to merely punish a person, but to put man back into the right relationship with God as He forgives us.

### The World

As I mentioned earlier, God's laws are like the law of gravity, and only through experiencing God's grace can we expect to be able to fully understand how we are to obey them. Yet so often we become worked up about the world not obeying the laws of God. Our society is way different to the Israelites. They were a nation that was formed and ruled by God, and He wanted them to live as lights in the world to show the rest of the world how to live. They were not to impose their laws. To do so is like telling a single man to be kind, considerate, faithful and forgiving towards a wife he does not have.

We must never forget that without God's prior grace, other people are not going to share our view and so we should not be shocked when they do not live according to God's laws. Instead we need to show grace before we try to enforce laws. We need to demonstrate that our own righteousness is a fruit of grace because that is the only way we have a chance of helping others understand why we value God's law.

If we do so, people will come to us and ask us to tell them about the joy and hope that is so obviously inside us. That will lead us to be able to expand on God's grace and bring more people into the Kingdom of God.

That is what it means to live in grace. †



**God wants man to be well**

**Our society is way different to the Israelites**

**Coming Soon**

**Come What May DVD**

Caleb, a Christian student at Patrick Henry College, is caught in a moral tug-of-war as he challenges the 1973 Roe vs Wade decision at the National Moot Court Championship. At the same time his mother, a feminist attorney, argues the case at the US Supreme Court, but on the opposing side.

Appropriate for the whole family and will be a conversation starter around issues within the context of families.



**R 170**

# THE BACK PAGE

## THAT'S IN THE BIBLE?

### How well do you know the Good Book?

All answers are found in the book of Deuteronomy.

1. What area was given to the children of Lot as a possession?
  - a. Ar
  - b. Uz
  - c. Og
  - d. Nod
2. In the KJV the word "rayment" is mentioned in Deuteronomy 8:4. What does that word mean?
  - a. Shelter
  - b. Love
  - c. Clothing
  - d. Animal
3. Where did Aaron die?
  - a. Canaan
  - b. Moserah
  - c. Egypt
  - d. Rome
4. What happens if a man has an affair with a married woman?
  - a. They will both die
  - b. He will die
  - c. She will die
  - d. Nothing
5. The enemies of Israel are compared to the venom of what snake?
  - a. Asp
  - b. Viper
  - c. Boa
  - d. Cobra
6. Where did Moses die?
  - a. Canaan
  - b. Moab
  - c. Egypt
  - d. Turkey
7. Who do the "secret things" belong to?
  - a. Moses
  - b. Man
  - c. Israel
  - d. The Lord
8. What is the last word of the last verse of Deuteronomy?
  - a. Moses
  - b. Aaron
  - c. Israel
  - d. Peace

Answers in the Next Edition

Last Month's Answers: 1. Ganniel (Nu. 2:20) 2. Dan (Nu. 2:31) 3. 20 years (Nu. 3:30-31) 4. Kohathite (Nu. 3:30-31) 5. Nadab & Abihu (Nu. 3:4) 6. Southern (Nu. 3:29) 7. 22,000 (Nu. 3:39) 8. Simson & Gad (Nu. 2:10-16)

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E Z W O R S H I P B U X D S E H F F Z S N A I I L S L R  
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L M W J N T M Z Y N S O E T I S W X J R M A E W G N V W  
E P O S I G K G M Z Z T S J F L T Q Z R Z Z H V X Y K G  
V C W W S J T O X M U H O J Q J L I P Y S V T Q A G M C  
L W G S Z U O D V D O E M B Q R Y Q R K K P A I F R J T  
K D P V W X L H Y H B R K F L A C E T E O Z F K N V D W

Find the following words in the above grid.

Adultery	Calf	Covet	False	Father	Glory
God	Holy	Honour	Idol	Kill	Lord
Moses	Mother	Mount	Name	Sabbath	Seventh
Sinai	Steal	Stone	Tablets	Witness	Worship

Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds.

Psalm 73:23-28

## DIARY OF EVENTS

### Beauty for Ashes Women's Conference

22-24 May 2009.  
Rivers Church, Sandton.

### Integrity Worship Summits

22, 29 May & 5 June 2009.  
Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town.

### Preparing the Church for 2010 Conference

22-25 June 2009.  
NG Moreletapark, Pretoria.

### Willow Creek Conspire Promiseland Conference

25 July & 1 August 2009.  
Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg.

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"Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky?  
This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come  
back in the same way you have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11

Acts 1:11