

# A LITTLE SPACE OF GRACE

<sup>8</sup> *And now for a little space grace hath been [shewed] from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. <sup>9</sup> For we [were] bondmen; yet our God hath not forsaken us in our bondage, but hath extended mercy unto us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to give us a reviving, to set up the house of our God, and to repair the desolations thereof, and to give us a wall in Judah and in Jerusalem.*

Ezra 9:8,9

Five portraits of God's little space of grace in Ezra's and our day.

## I. A remnant of grace

A. Like a piece of cloth torn from a robe and kept safe (I Kings 11:26-40), God always preserves a remnant that remain faithful to him. (I Kings 19:18; Isaiah 1:9; 10:20,21; Malachi 3:16-17)

[1Ki 11:26-40 NIV] <sup>26</sup> *Also, Jeroboam son of Nebat rebelled against the king. He was one of Solomon's officials, an Ephraimite from Zeredah, and his mother was a widow named Zeruah. <sup>27</sup> Here is the account of how he rebelled against the king: Solomon had built the terraces and had filled in the gap in the wall of the city of David his father. <sup>28</sup> Now Jeroboam was a man of standing, and when Solomon saw how well the young man did his work, he put him in charge of the whole labor force of the tribes of*

*Joseph. <sup>29</sup> About that time Jeroboam was going out of Jerusalem, and Ahijah the prophet of Shiloh met him on the way, wearing a new cloak. The two of them were alone out in the country, <sup>30</sup> and Ahijah took hold of the new cloak he was wearing and tore it into twelve pieces. <sup>31</sup> Then he said to Jeroboam, “Take ten pieces for yourself, for this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘See, I am going to tear the kingdom out of Solomon’s hand and give you ten tribes. <sup>32</sup> But for the sake of my servant David and the city of Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, he will have one tribe. <sup>33</sup> I will do this because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of the Moabites, and Molek the god of the Ammonites, and have not walked in obedience to me, nor done what is right in my eyes, nor kept my decrees and laws as David, Solomon’s father, did. <sup>34</sup> “‘But I will not take the whole kingdom out of Solomon’s hand; I have made him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of David my servant, whom I chose and who obeyed my commands and decrees. <sup>35</sup> I will take the kingdom from his son’s hands and give you ten tribes. <sup>36</sup> I will give one tribe to his son so that David my servant may always have a lamp before me in Jerusalem, the city where I chose to put my Name. <sup>37</sup> However, as for you, I will take you, and you will rule over all that your heart desires; you will be king over Israel. <sup>38</sup> If you do whatever I command you and walk in obedience to me and do what is right in my eyes by obeying my decrees and commands, as David my servant did, I will be with you. I will build you a dynasty as enduring as the one I built for David and will give Israel to*

you. <sup>39</sup> *I will humble David's descendants because of this, but not forever.*” <sup>40</sup> *Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but Jeroboam fled to Egypt, to Shishak the king, and stayed there until Solomon's death.*

[1Ki 19:18 NIV] <sup>18</sup> *“Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him.”*

[Isa 1:9 NIV] <sup>9</sup> *Unless the LORD Almighty had left us some survivors, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah.*

[Isa 10:20-21 NIV] <sup>20</sup> *In that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, will no longer rely on him who struck them down but will truly rely on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.* <sup>21</sup> *A remnant will return, a remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God.*

[Mal 3:16-17 NIV] <sup>16</sup> *Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name.* <sup>17</sup> *“On the day when I act,” says the LORD Almighty, “they will be my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as a father has compassion and spares his son who serves him.”*

- B. From the remnant that has survived everything and has assimilated nothing he will bring a new beginning.
- C. Yet if disobedience is chosen and persisted in this will only be a brief space of relief.

## II. A gracious nail in his holy place

- A. A nail pounded into the sanctuary wall bespeaks a foothold of permanence, stability, and security in the land. (Warren Wiersbe)
- B. Yet if God is rejected, it will be only a tent peg driven into the ground speaking of a temporary stability.

### III. Gracious light to their eyes

- A. This speaks of legitimate new life and new joy—the dawning of a new day. (I Samuel 14:27; Psalm 13:3;34:5)

[1Sa 14:27 NIV] <sup>27</sup> *But Jonathan had not heard that his father had bound the people with the oath, so he reached out the end of the staff that was in his hand and dipped it into the honeycomb. He raised his hand to his mouth, and his eyes brightened.*

[Psa 13:3 NIV] <sup>3</sup> *Look on me and answer, LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,*

[Psa 34:5 NIV] <sup>5</sup> *Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.*

- B. Not fairy dust or magic wands

### IV. A little reviving in our bondage

- A. The presence of the remnant and temple in the land was like a resurrection from the dead.
- B. Their departure from Babylon was like the resurrection of a corpse from the grave.
- C. God will now raise dead things with signs and wonders only he can perform. (Lazarus miracles)

### V. A wall in Judah and in Jerusalem

- \* This speaks of the sovereign protection that God has given his people, turning even the hearts of Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, and Artaxerxes I

## VI. Right Now Light Rises Wow

**Remnant**

**Nail**

**Light**

**Revival**

**Wall**