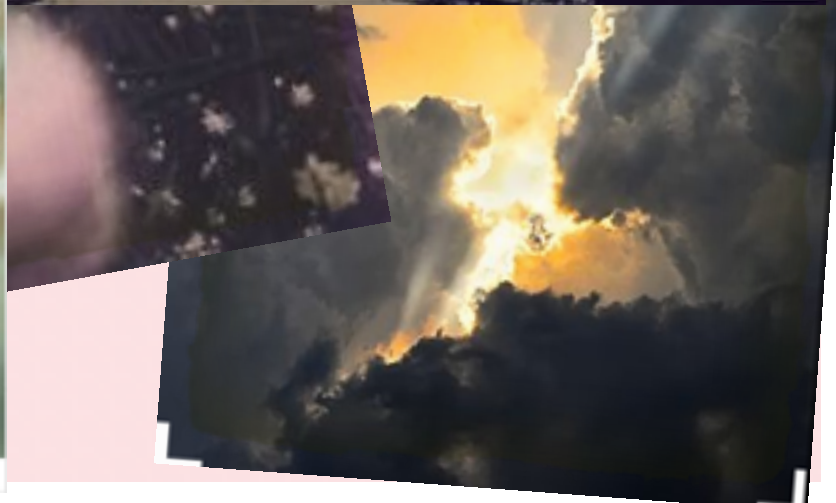


VISITATION AND FAVOUR OF GOD



Amanda Buys' Spiritual Covering

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VISITATION AND FAVOUR OF GOD

From the earliest of times, it seems that man yearns for a visitation from God. This may well be due to our understanding of the wonderful atmosphere and intimacy that was found in the Garden of Eden.



Our only description reads after it had all been lost, but somehow the beauty of that daily visit still lingers in the words:

Genesis 3:8 *And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the Garden in the cool [afternoon breeze] of the day, so the man and his wife hid and kept themselves hidden from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*

King David, it seems, also had experienced this **intimacy of a private meeting** and a personal relationship.

Psalm 8:1-4 *O Lord, our Lord, How majestic and glorious and excellent is Your Name in all the earth! You have displayed Your splendor above the heavens. 2 Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babes You have established strength because of Your adversaries, That You might silence the enemy and make the revengeful cease. 3 When I see and consider Your heavens, the work of Your Fingers, The moon and the stars, which You have established, 4 **What is man that You are mindful of him, And the son of [earthborn] man that You care for him?***

DO WE UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF A VISITATION?

I think it's fairly safe to say that most people look for a visitation as a means to derive solutions for problems and for personal direction. Whilst this can be a part of God's grace for us, it is not the primary purpose of a visitation.

If we only focus on a visitation from God for ourselves, to solve **our** problems, it means that we are immature sons / daughters of the Covenant. Paul talks about a level of maturity - he speaks of leaving the baby food behind and moving on to more solid foodstuffs.

If we take this one step further, then we can add to this to the concept of **fathers** who have wisdom.

We need to always keep in mind that we are all Living Stones in a Tabernacle:

- ~ that we are inter-connected with one another,
- ~ that we accept our roles within the Body of Messiah,
- ~ that we are operating to the fullest potential to bless the community.

A visitation to a mature believer will have an impact on the community.

UNDERSTANDING OF THE HEBREW WORDS

1) **Visitation:** Hebrew Strong's 6486

- 🕒 Oversight /custody
- 🕒 Office
- 🕒 Class of officers
- 🕒 To have charge

Psalm 109:8 *Let his days be few; And let another take his **office**.*

- 🕒 Visitation
- 🕒 Mustering
- 🕒 Store / riches - that which is laid up

Isaiah 15:7 *Therefore the abundance which they have acquired and **stored** away They carry off over the Brook of the Willows.*

To give account / numbers

2 Chronicles 17:14 *This was the **number** of them by their fathers' (ancestors') households: of Judah, the commanders of thousands, Adnah the commander, and with him 300,000 courageous men;*

2) **Favour / grace:** Hebrew Strong's 2580

- 🕒 Favour – good-will
- 🕒 Grace / charm—Pleasant / precious
- 🕒 Elegance
- 🕒 Acceptance

A visitation, from God therefore has the connotation of an accounting / numbering, that which is laid up for us, in the domain of grace / favour and acceptance.

HOW DO WE RECEIVE THIS FAVOUR AND VISITATION?

The Scriptures in Deuteronomy will show us that a **walk of obedience** is a basic requirement from God in order to receive this blessing / grace. But the same passages will reveal what happens when we fail to observe the protocol defined by God.

Let us study this in some detail:

The Old Testament defines the *favour* or the *grace* as ***taking possession of the Land.***

Deuteronomy 4:1 Now, O Israel, listen and pay attention to the statutes and the judgments (God's legal decisions) which I am teaching you to do, so that you may live and go in and ***take possession of the land*** which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you.

Psalm 41:11 By this I know that ***You favor and delight in me***, Because my enemy does not shout in triumph over me.

Psalm 44:3 For our fathers did not possess the land [of Canaan] by their own sword, Nor did their own arm save them, But ***Your Right Hand and Your arm and the light of Your presence***, Because ***You favored and delighted in them.***

While we read of a physical inheritance subject to our obedience to His Commandments, we will find ***exactly the same principle*** in **1 Corinthians 15:45** and onwards where Paul encourages us to experience this so that we can apply these same principles to the Spiritual domain.

Since we now know that victory over our enemies, taking possession of the Land equals God's *favour* / grace, let us ask ourselves how do we go about ensuring that we remain in His Favour.



THE BIBLICAL MODEL TO FIND FAVOUR

I have elected to use this simple model to highlight the interchange of ideas that make up THREE corners of our walk of obedience.



The verse that we have read uses a unique Hebrew word - translated as “hear” or “listen” - in fact has three major meanings - meanings that are inter-related.

Hebrew Strong’s 8085—“**shamah**”

(1) To hear or listen

- to hear with attention to detail
- to give heed
- to understand things heard

(2) To “see”

- to understand
- to show diligence
- to yield to
- to cause to be heard

(3) To do

to obey

Psalm 18:45 *Foreigners lose heart, And come trembling out of their strongholds.*

- to publish
- to declare
- to sound aloud
- to make a proclamation.

Let us revisit that first verse:

Deuteronomy 4:1 *And now, O Israel, **listen** to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, **and do them.***

The principle of finding favour is:

(a) **LISTEN** TO THE COMMANDMENTS

AND

(b) **DO** THEM

BUT WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO “SEEING”?

Human nature wants to *see first*—only once we have seen with our own eyes, will we believe. Seeing makes things concrete - they may be objects made of wood or stone - but they can be touched / felt / and so forth.

God tells us that He *cannot be seen* with the naked eye, which is why humans battle as soon as trials and tribulations come on the scene as it seems to us that we do not have a physical “something” to hold onto.

Deuteronomy 4:15 *Now, O Israel, listen and pay attention to the statutes and the judgments (God’s legal decisions) which I am teaching you **to do**, so that you may live and go in and **take possession of the land** which the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you.*

Paul teaches, however, that GRACE / FAVOUR are our portion, even during times of difficulty, provided we are walking in line with whatever God has asked you to do.

2 Corinthians 4:8-18 *We are pressured in every way [hedged in], but not crushed; perplexed [unsure of finding a way out], but not driven to despair; 9 hunted down and persecuted, but not deserted [to stand alone]; struck down, but never destroyed; 10 always carrying around in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the [resurrection] life of Jesus also may be shown in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly [experiencing the threat of] being handed over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the [resurrection] life of Jesus also may be evidenced in our mortal body [which is subject to death]. 12 So physical death is [actively] at work in us, but [spiritual] life [is actively at work] in you. 13 Yet we have the same spirit of faith as he had, who wrote in Scripture, "I believed, therefore I spoke." We also believe, therefore we also speak, 14 knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and will present us [along] with you in His presence. 15 For all [these] things are for your sake, so that as [God's remarkable, undeserved] grace reaches to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of [our great] God. 16 **Therefore we do not become discouraged [spiritless, disappointed, or afraid].** Though our outer self is [progressively] wasting away, yet our inner self is being [progressively] renewed day by day. 17 For our momentary, light distress [this passing trouble] is producing for us an eternal weight of glory [a fullness] beyond all measure [surpassing all comparisons, a transcendent splendor and an endless blessedness]! 18 So we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen; for the things which are visible are temporal [just brief and fleeting], but the things which are invisible are everlasting and imperishable.*



PATHWAY AWAY FROM FAVOUR

I am touching on this point now, so let us stop and make sure that we understand the significance of this wrong choice that you and I can make. You will note that the action which is **conspicuous in its absence** is "hear / listen".

The journey away from God begins with:

(1) **MAKE** an idol

AND

(2) **SEE** the false gods that you will serve

Deuteronomy 4:15-19 So pay attention and **watch yourselves carefully**— for you did not see any form [of God] on the day the Lord spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire— 16 **so that you do not act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved or sculpted image [to worship]** in the form of any figure, the likeness of male or female, 17 the likeness of any animal that is on the earth, or of any winged bird that flies in the [b]sky, 18 the likeness of anything that crawls on the ground, or of any fish that is in the waters beneath the earth. 19 **And beware that you do not raise your eyes toward heaven and see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, and let yourselves be led astray and worship them and serve them, [mere created bodies] which the Lord your God has allotted to [serve and benefit] all the peoples under the whole heaven.**

LET US RETURN NOW TO THE PATHWAY TO FAVOUR.

We take note of the clear order.

(a) **We listen.**

Listening is not easy. People at times, battle to find the right words to express themselves. People often associate different meanings to the same word. Often we listen with half an ear, while we are planning the next steps...

God speaks from a Spiritual domain - from a place of Holiness - while we live in the physical. Consider the story of the servant who thought that he and the prophet were all alone - how do you think he interpreted the words - there is a host of angels in the heavens with us!!

So listening means giving **attention, focusing** on the Words of God. One of the major problems is man's "old man" - our ego and or the fear of fellow man, which will cause us to want to embellish - to explain what we think people should hear.

And it is here where GOD says:

Deuteronomy 4:2 You **shall not add to the word** which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, so that you may keep the Commandments of the Lord your God which I am commanding you.

(b) **We do**

This part is relatively straight forward - in fact Y'shua / Jesus tells us – “do what I do because I do whatever the Father tells Me.”

John 15:7 If you remain in Me and My words remain in you [that is, if we are vitally united and My message lives in your heart], ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.

(c) “**Seeing**” is part of God’s model – BUT - it must remain in its rightful position.

To better describe this aspect we must turn to the **principle of the FIRSTBORN**.

On leaving Egypt, God demands that every firstborn son will be set aside to serve Him.

Exodus 13:1-2 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 2 “Sanctify to Me [that is, set apart for My purpose] every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of animal; it is Mine.”

As adopted sons / daughters of Abraham we are FIRSTBORN—and are called to serve Him.

I hope that you believe that you have been adopted into the family of God?

Paul repeats this concept a number of times - we receive the **FAVOUR** because we are children of the family.

Galatians 3:9,14,16,29 9 So then those who are people of faith [whether Jew or Gentile] are **blessed and favored by God** [and declared free of the guilt of sin and its penalty, and placed in right standing with Him] along with Abraham, the believer. 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might also come to the Gentiles, so that we would all receive [the realization of] the promise of the [Holy] Spirit through faith. 16 Now the promises [in the covenants] were decreed to Abraham and to his seed. God does not say, “And to seeds (descendants, heirs),” as if [referring] to many [persons], but as to one, “And to your Seed,” who is [none other than] Christ. 29 And if you belong to Christ [if you are in Him], then you are Abraham’s descendants, and [spiritual] heirs according to [God’s] promise.

What is the job description of the FIRSTBORN?

(1) **To hear** what the FATHER wants and **translate** that into **actions / deeds / words** of encouragement so that the other children can see the reflection of the FATHER’S attributes in the firstborn’s life.

And we have a role model - His Name is Y’shua / Jesus.

The actual Commandments were given thousands of years ago.



At that time, computers, Facebook, cars, internet, AND many other things had not been invented. The Commandments are also written within the context of a Middle-Eastern culture—something quite different from the performance-orientated individualistic nature of the Western culture.

So, as firstborn children, we are to “listen” to the Father, and prophetically interpret the exact instruction, within the context of today’s modern world, so that other non-believers can say—**truly you serve the only GOD.**

Deuteronomy 4:4-8 *4 but you who held tightly to the Lord your God are alive today, every one of you. 5 “Look, I have taught you statutes and judgments just as the Lord my God has commanded me, so that you may do them in the land which you are entering to possess. 6 So keep and do them, for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes and say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ 7 For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the Lord our God [is to us] whenever we call on Him? 8 Or what great nation has statutes and judgments so righteous (upright, just) as this whole law which I am placing before you today?*

Many people try to write off the Commandments as “Old Testament / law / legalism”. Yet look at all of the Biblical names who found **favour** with God—Noah, Joseph, Gideon, Ruth, Samuel.

Fact is Y’shua / Jesus tells us to **DO** what He does, and the BIBLE says that He kept ALL of the Commandments.

Yes, He had debates with the Pharisees - not about the Commandments but about the “traditions”—that which was ADDED / TAKEN AWAY from the Word of GOD.

The Bible says - you are have WISDOM and UNDERSTANDING when you are obedient to these Commandments!!!

Luke 2:52 *And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and men.*

1 Peter 1:13 *“Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

How do the non-believers know that? Because they see the FAVOUR / GRACE / BLESSING on your life.

Psalms 35:27 *Let those who delight in my righteousness shout for joy and be glad and say evermore, “Great is the LORD, who delights in the welfare of His servant!”*

Psalm 30:5 For His anger is but for a moment, and His **favor** is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.

A final thought

Sons / daughters, do what the Father says: Listen carefully—do exactly whatever He says. Ask for revelation understanding on how to apply these Commandments today.

Declaration:

I am a child of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—I accept my position in the Tabernacle of Living Stones, and I choose to walk in wisdom and understanding so that others can see the FAVOUR / GRACE ON MY LIFE!



Amen!

The Priestly Blessing ...

Numbers 6:24-26

“²⁴ The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:
²⁵ The LORD make his face shine upon
thee, and be gracious unto thee: ²⁶ The
LORD lift up his countenance upon thee,
and give thee peace.”

The Priestly Blessing ...

Hebraic Translation¹

"YHVH will kneel before you presenting gifts, and He will guard you with a hedge of protection, YHVH will illuminate the wholeness of His Being toward you, bringing order, and He will provide you with love, sustenance, and friendship, YHVH will lift up the wholeness of His Being and look upon you, and He will set in place all you need to be whole and complete."

¹ Translation by Jeff A. Benner, for more information, please see http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/12_blessing.html

The Priestly Blessing¹

יְבַרְכֶּךָ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ:

and may he guard you the LORD may he bless you

May the LORD² bless you³ and keep you⁴

יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחַנְךָ:

and show you favor on you his face the LORD May he shine

May the LORD make His face⁵ shine⁶ upon you and be gracious⁷ to you

יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם:

peace for you and establish on you his face the LORD may he lift up

May the LORD lift up⁸ his face to you and give you peace⁹

¹ This blessing is (ritually) recited (by the kohanim) during synagogue services during *Nesiat Kapayim* ("the Raising of the Hands"), though it is also recited over children on Friday night before the start of the Shabbat meal or as a bedtime blessing.

² The name *YHVH* (יהוה) represents God's attributes of love and mercy (מִדַּת הַרַחֲמִים), in contradistinction to the name *Elohim* (אֱלֹהִים), which represents God's attribute of justice and power as our Creator.

³ בְּרַכָּה (*b'rachah*). Jewish tradition considers this both material and spiritual prosperity. Pirkei Avot 3:15 says, "If there is no flour, there is no Torah," by which is meant that material benefits are intended to help you pursue study of Torah. The first occurrence of the word "blessing" in the Scriptures pertains to *pru urvu* (פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ), "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:22).

⁴ שָׁמַר (*shamar*): To guard, protect, heed, as in the exercise of diligent care. Only God has the power to secure the conferred blessing and keep it from turning sour or from fading away.

⁵ The word for "face" (פָּנִים) is plural with the 3rd person singular ending. It is considered metaphorical since God is incorporeal. The plural form is thought by some to indicate God's revealed and hidden attributes in creation.

⁶ The hiphil verb (יָאֵר) comes from the word "light" (אֹר), and is thought to refer to God's wisdom. "May God enlighten you" with His wisdom, i.e., the Divine Light that preceded the work of creation (Gen. 1:3).

⁷ May God grant you grace or favor (חֵן), i.e., to understand the "breadth and length and height and depth" of God's love (Eph. 3:18). Grace refers to the bestowal of an undeserved gift. The blessing is bestowed even though unearned or unmerited.

⁸ Since one's face is an indication of the heart's attitude, Rashi says that this means God will suppress His anger by "looking at you" (if God is angry at you, He "turns His face away" and refuses to admit your presence). The "lifting of face" also pictures God lifting you up as a father might lift up his child in joy. The "showing of face" indicates spiritual intimacy.

⁹ All of the other blessings are useless without the establishment of inner peace, and therefore it is the seal of the blessing. Shalom (שְׁלוֹם) is not simply the absence of strife, but a balance and harmony between the finite and infinite, the temporal and the eternal, the material and the spiritual realms. Shalom is a gift from Sar Shalom (שַׂר שְׁלוֹם), the Prince of Peace.