

God's Favor - It's For You!

By Randal Stephens

Abel had it, but Cain didn't. Noah had it. The children of Israel had it. So did Samuel, Nehemiah and Esther. Saul had it but lost it; Jehoahaz didn't have it but found it. Those who had it received God's most amazing promises; those who didn't found only grief and failure.

This gift comes to those who earnestly seek him and it's always followed by honor and blessings. It changes everything and *you can have it*. What is it? Well, it's not salvation or spiritual gifts or even the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It's favor.

How does a person find favor with God or men? Is faith the determining factor, or is faithfulness? Is it obedience? Love? Will repentance bring it? Surrender? Does it come with God's calling or does He arbitrarily choose those upon whom He wishes to bestow His favor?

Well, take a look.

In Genesis 4, the Lord received Abel's offering with favor, but not Cain's because Abel brought the *first* and Cain just brought *some*. God tells Cain in v. 7, "If you do what is right, will you not be accepted?" (NIV) Abel received God's favor because he did what was right.

When the rest of the world was wicked, Genesis 6 says, "Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord." Why? "Noah was a righteous man," who "walked with God."

When the children of Israel left Egypt in Exodus 12, God told them to ask their neighbors for "silver and gold, and for clothing," and that "the Lord had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for."

In I Samuel 2:26, Samuel grew in "favor with the Lord and with men." (NIV) When Nehemiah left the service of King Artaxerxes to rebuild Jerusalem's wall, he had the favor of his king. Queen Esther also found favor in the eyes of her king.

Saul started out with it, was anointed King of Israel, but as time went on, his blatant disregard for God's instruction took him out of God's will and consequently, His favor. A few kings later, the Bible says Jehoahaz sinned as his father did. But after years under another pagan king, he sought God's favor and God listened to him.

God's favor is an amazing gift. If we have it, we escape wrath and judgment, and we prosper. So how do we gain it? The truth is there is no formula. Favor comes through faith and faithfulness, obedience and love, repentance and surrender. It comes through a sincere, passionate devotion to God. In fact, Christ said it best:

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33; KJV)

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