

CHAPTER 1

GOD IS GRACIOUS

*The LORD longs to be gracious to you,
And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you.
For the LORD is a God of justice;
How blessed are all those who long for Him.*

ISAIAH 30:18

Before sin entered the world, Adam and Eve experienced God's goodness not as a response to their demerit (since they didn't have any) but still without deserving God's goodness. You can't deserve to be created. You can't deserve, as a non-being, to be put into a lavish garden where all your needs are met by a loving Father. So even before they sinned, Adam and Eve lived on grace. And God's will for them was that they live by faith in future grace—God's daily, fatherly care and provision.

JOHN PIPER, *Future Grace*

FROM ITS OPENING PAGES SCRIPTURE shows us that God has always longed to be gracious. His creation of a marvelous world out of nothing is amazing evidence of His grace, and He placed His children in it to be recipients of His grace. In the Garden, Adam and Eve were immersed in God's goodness. They did nothing to earn their place there, and they did nothing to receive His love. God simply chose to be kind, merciful, and compassionate

to them. Charles Ryrie observes, “God’s love for man is the first motive for His acting in grace on behalf of man.”¹ From creation onward we find that God has showered upon us His undeserved favor. Truly He is the God of all grace.

 GOD’S SMILE

1. Just as God in His sovereignty chose to create Adam and Eve in order to love them, He also created relationship with His chosen people in order to love them. Read Deuteronomy 7:6-11 and record the evidences of Israel’s undeserved favor.

2. Derek Kidner portrays Old Testament grace as the “smile of God.”² Read the verses below and describe God’s “smile” on Noah, Abram, Jacob, and Joseph.

GENESIS 6:5-8 

GENESIS 12:1-3 