

THE LORD LISTENED

“For a multitude of the people...had not cleansed themselves yet they ate the Passover contrary to what was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying: ‘May the good Lord provide atonement for everyone who prepared his heart to seek God, the Lord God of His fathers, though he is not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.’ And the Lord listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.” 2 Chronicles 30:18-20

Many travelers heeded the call of Hezekiah to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. There were so many, in fact, that the priests and Levites were having difficulty keeping up with the offerings given for cleansing. This resulted in many who participated in Passover who were not able to offer a cleansing offering. Hezekiah interceded for them and the Lord extend His grace. The word “healed” means to make whole or to mend thoroughly. In other words, God fixed the problem by extending His love and grace.

The Lord has rules and regulations which He expects to be obeyed but He is not so rigid as some might think. God is one who considers the heart of man and in this story He gave grace because circumstances prevent the worshippers from complete obedience when it came to celebrating Passover. As leaders we will find people who are not fully following the Lord. Perhaps they are ignorant of God’s ways because they are still young in the Lord. Perhaps they have tried but failed to give themselves fully to Jesus and they are still struggling over the flesh, yet their hearts are fully God’s. As leaders it is our responsibility to instruct them in righteous, but also to pray asking for the mercies of God to cover them.

Grace in leadership is no small matter. Grace given for appropriate reasons will help bring healing to those we love and care for. Grace does not excuse sin lightly, for sin cost our Savior greatly, but it does provide for “second chances” . It considers the weakness of people where the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. To be gracious is to be like God. To cover those we lead with grace through prayer is what God expects.

Address areas of weakness in those you lead, encourage the weak, and extend the love and grace of our Lord. Take some time to intercede for those people who are struggling to fully obey God. When you do this God will cover them, mend them, and bring healing to their lives.