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The Fruit of the Ruach is Kindness 5: 22e

The fruit of the Ruach is kindness DIG: Do you think of kindness as weakness, or lack of conviction? Why? Why not? How did Yeshua show kindness or compassion? What is the essence of kindness? What are the three principles that we can learn from the parable of the Good Samaritan? Who was the wounded man's neighbor? The priest? The Levite? No. The half-breed who loved him enough to show him grace in action.

REFLECT: What does "captured by grace" mean to you? When have you experienced it? Are you afraid to help in unknown situations? Do you have a tendency to overthink situations that come up where you could show kindness? How can you change that? When you show kindness, who receives the blessing?

When **Paul** spoke of **walking by the Ruach** (**to see link click Bv – Walk by the Ruach, and Not the Desires of the Flesh**), **he** was not referring to following after mystical visions and revelations. Instead, **he** provided a list of attributes that describe a **Ruach**-led person. Thus, the evidence of **the fruit of the Ruach** is a changed life. **Paul** now presents the proper path according to which those faithful to **God** in **His Messiah** should **walk**. **The fruit** stands in contrast to **the deeds of the flesh**. **The Ruach's fruit** simply shows us the qualities which characterize the Kingdom of **God**. **But, in contrast to the deeds of the flesh, the fruit of the Ruach (singular, like a cluster of grapes) is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (5:22a). All of these elements should be a part of your life as you allow the Ruach ha-Kodesh to flow through you.**



Kindness (Greek: *chrestotes*) means *grace in action*. It relates to tender concern for others. It has nothing to do with weakness or lack of conviction, but is the genuine desire of a believer to treat others gently, just as our **Lord** treats us. **Yeshua's kindness** is our example. When **some children were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray, the apostles rebuked them. But Yeshua said, "Let the little children come to Me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:13-14).** On another occasion **He** said: **Come to Me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble at heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:28-29).** Just as our **Lord** is **kind, His** servants are commanded **not to be quarrelsome, but to be kind to all (Second Timothy 2:24).** And just as **He** does with all of the other manifestations of **His** divine **fruit, the Ruach ha-Kodesh** gives **God's** children **kindness (Second Corinthians 6:6).**

So what does **kindness** look like? There is probably no better example of **kindness** in the Bible than that of **the good Samaritan** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Gw – The Parable of the Good Samaritan**). There are **three principles** that we can learn about **kindness** from this parable.

First, kindness is not something that we talk about, it's something that we do. It's *grace in action.* Think about all the times that **Yeshua** showed **compassion** (a synonym for **kindness**) for people by doing something. Remember when **Messiah** fed the masses (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Fn – Jesus Feeds the 5,000**) **He saw the large crowd and He had compassion on them**

(Matthew 14:14a; Mark 6:34a)? Remember raising **Jairus' daughter** from **the dead** and He **healed a woman that was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Fh – Jesus Raises a Dead Girl and Heals a Sick Woman**)? **Yeshua's compassion**, **His kindness**, always led **Him** to *do something*. **Kindness** is *grace in action.*

Pastor David Jeremiah writes in his book, *Captured by Grace*, of a woman named Victoria. She lived in a rural area of the state of New York, and one night she was driving home from her daughters' music recital. Without warning, something came through the windshield of her car and struck her in the face. It broke almost all the bones in her face. She crashed her car and she and her daughter were taken to the hospital. She had to have multiple facial surgeries and her jaw was wired shut. She was in the hospital for over a month.

When the police investigated, they found out that there were four bored boys out looking for trouble that night. They had been in a little store and bought some things and one of them saw frozen turkeys. He thought how funny it would be to take one of those twenty-pound frozen turkeys and toss it in someone's direction as they drove down the road and cause them to swerve. After all, what could go wrong? So they decided that would be a funny thing to do. And as they approached Victoria's car driving toward them on the interstate, one of them rolled down his window and tossed that twenty-pound frozen turkey in her direction. Almost killing her.

When it was discovered who the four boys were, they were arrested. And there was an outrage in the community, and people were saying, "They ought to 'throw-the-book' at them." We have all had those same thoughts. When the trial came, and the jury had heard all the facts, they were found guilty (the boys admitted what they had done). But when the judge gave the sentence of six months in jail (which they had already served), five years on probation and counseling, there was outrage in the community. "That isn't fair for what those boys had done to Victoria! How could that be an appropriate punishment?"

That was their sentence because Victoria had requested it. She had asked the judge to be lenient. After all this had happened, she had gotten to know the families of the boys and she came to understand that the boy who threw the turkey was truly sorry for what he had done, not merely sorry for getting caught. And on the last day of the trial, Victoria walked across the courtroom to the boy, who was openly weeping for what he had done, and hugged him, saying, "I forgive you. I want your life to be

the best that it can be." The New York Times ran that story the next day, and the headline read, "Captured by Grace." I suggest to you that the headline could have been, "Captured by Kindness."

Second, sometimes kindness has to be fearless. In the parable of **the good Samaritan**, the story involves two other people who passed **him** by laying there in the road. There was **a priest** and **a Levite**. Why didn't **they** stop and help **the Samaritan** who had been **attacked by robbers**?

Thus the parable gives us a picture of **a priest** riding by, seeing **the wounded man** (presumably at some distance), and then steering **his** mount **to the other side of the road** and continuing on **his** way. **Priests believed that help offered to such a despicable man in this condition would be against what God Himself demanded because ADONAI detested sinners (Sirach 12:1-7).** Not only that, there was the possibility that this **sinner** in the ditch might not be Jewish, even worse, **the man** might be dead. If so, contact with **him** would defile **the cohen**, who collected, distributed the tithes. If **he** defiled **himself he** wouldn't be able to do any of those things, and **his** family and servants would also suffer the consequences of **his** actions.

Another part of **the priest's** decision to stop and render aid or avoid **the sinner** was the fact that **he** was **going down from Jerusalem to Jericho.** A large number of **priests** served in the Temple for two-week periods but lived in **Jericho**. Any **priest** leaving **Yerushalayim** on **his** way **to Jericho** would naturally be assumed to have fulfilled **his** period of service and be on **his** way home. We are told that ritual purification took place twice daily in the Temple by the priests. During the service a gong was struck at the time of the morning and evening offering. At that time the high priest would make all the unclean stand in the Court of the Women in front of the bronze altar.[144] **The unclean priests were also made to stand there in shame for contracting uncleanness (Mishna *Tamid* 4, 6).** It is easy to imagine the burning humiliation that **cohen** would feel if **he** contracted ritual impurity. Having probably just completed **his** two weeks as a leader of worship in the Temple, would **he** then return in humiliation and stand in the Court of the Women with all the other unclean **sinners**? Thus, it's not hard to understand **the priest's** predicament as **he** suddenly came upon an unconscious **man** beside **the road**.

More specifically, **the cohen could not approach closer than four cubits to a dead body without being defiled,** and **he** would most certainly have to get

closer than that just to evaluate the condition of **the man**. Then, if **he** *were* dead, **the priest** would probably tear **his** clothes. And that would have violated the Oral Law (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ei – The Oral Law**), commanding **him** not to destroy valuable things. **The priest's** wife, servant and colleagues would have applauded **his** neglect of **the wounded man** and the Pharisees would have found **him** justified in stopping, yet entitled to pass by. Hence, life for **him** had become organized in a system of do's and don'ts.[145] **He** was afraid to meet any of these consequences.

Likewise, a Levite followed **the priest down from Tziyon to Jericho. When he came to the place, and saw the wounded man, he also passed by on the other side (Luke 10:32). The Levite** was a descendant of **Levi** who policed the Temple and assisted **the priests** in various sacrificial duties. **The Levite** knew that there was **a priest** in front of **him** and that **he** had passed **the wounded man** because one is able to see the road ahead for a considerable distance for most of the 17 miles. Furthermore, a traveler on that road would be extremely interested in who else is in on it. Your life could depend on it. A question put to a bystander at the edge of the last village just before the desert begins; a brief exchange with a traveler coming the other way; fresh tracks on the soft earth at the edge of the road where men and animals prefer to walk; a glimpse in the clear desert air of a robed figure ahead; all of these were potential sources of knowledge for **the Levite** traveler.

So **the Levite** knowing this detail is significant to the story because **he** was not bound by as many regulations as **the priest**. **The Levite** was only required to observe ritual cleanliness in the course of **his** Temple activities.[146] Thus, **he** *could* give aid, and if **the man** were dead or died in **his** arms, the repercussions for **him** would not be as serious. We are told that **the Levite came to the place** where **the man** lay. **The Levite**, like **the priest**, could not find out whether or not **the wounded man** was **a neighbor**. This may be the reason **he** approached **him**. Perhaps **he** could talk? Failing to find out, **he** then **passed** on. So in contrast to **the priest**, **the Levite** seems to have crossed **the Oral Law** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Ei – The Oral Law**) prohibition of four cubits and satisfied **his** curiosity with a closer look. Then **he** decided against offering aid and **passed by to the other side.**

The fear of defilement would not have been a strong motive. Fear of **robbers**, however, may have been. More likely it is the example of the higher-ranking **priest** that deterred **him**. Not only could he say, "If **the priest** on ahead did nothing, why

should **I**, a mere **Levite**, trouble **myself**," but it might also be seen as a kind of affront to **his** superior.[147] More than subtly charging **the priest** with "hardness of heart" by stopping, **the Levite** would also be criticizing **the priest's** interpretation of **the Torah**! When **the** lofty **priest** interpreted **the Torah** one way, is **the Levite** to call **his** judgment into question? Hardly.

The Levite was of a lower social order than **the priest** and may well have been walking. In any case, **he** could have rendered minimal medical aid even if **he** had had no way to take **the wounded man** to safety. If **he** was walking, we can imagine **him** saying to **himself**, "I cannot carry **the man** to safety and am **I** to sit here all night and risk attack from these same **robbers**?"[148] Like **the priest**, **he** was also afraid.

But by taking **the wounded man** to a large city like **Jericho**, **the Samaritan** allowed **himself** to be identified and ran the grave risk of having the family of **the wounded man** seek ***him*** out to take revenge upon ***him!*** After all, who else is there? The group mentality of the Near Eastern peasant society makes a totally illogical judgment at this point. The stranger who involves himself in an accident is often considered partially, if not totally, responsible for the incident. After all, why did **he** stop? Irrational minds seeking a focus for their retaliation do not make rational judgments, especially when the person involved is from a hated minority. The cautious thing to do would have been to leave **the wounded man** at the door of **the inn** and disappear, in which case **the Samaritan** would be completely protected. But when **he** stayed at **the inn** overnight to take care of **the man**, and promised to return, anonymity was not possible. **His** courage was first demonstrated when **he** stopped in the desert (for **the robbers** were still in the area). But **his** real bravery was seen in this final act of **compassion** at **the inn**. Sometimes **kindness** needs to be fearless. Sometimes we need to be kind to someone when we really don't know what the end result of our showing **kindness** will be. But **ADONAI** says to us in **a soft whisper of a voice (First Kings 19:12)**, "This is an opportunity to show *grace in action*."

Third, kindness isn't rocket-science. You don't have to over think being **kind**. Sometimes we start thinking of all the consequences of taking the time for an act of **kindness** that we develop paralysis by analysis, and before we know it the opportunity has passed us by. **Kindness** doesn't do that. **Kindness** responds with the prompting of **the Ruach ha-Kodesh**. **The good Samaritan**, didn't over think **his** response. **He** went to **the wounded man**, **he bandaged his wounds**, **he poured oil and wine on his wounds**, **he put the wounded man on his own**

donkey, he took him to an inn in Jericho, he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, "Look after him," and finally, **he said, "When I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have."**

Too many times we see a need and we think to ourselves, "Well, how did you let yourself get in this mess! Why don't you just go out and get a job." Have you ever thought that? I have. But when we see a need and the Adversary sits on our shoulder and shouts in our ear, "How did you get yourself into this mess," we need to listen to the angel on our other shoulder whispering, "There but the grace of **ADONAI** go I." I need to ask myself if I were in that situation and someone crossed my path that had the opportunity to help me, would I want them to show **kindness** towards me? Yes! Therefore, I need to show **kindness** to them. Sometimes you may not feel very appreciated, which should remind us of how **God** puts up with us. And in showing **kindness**, sometimes **the blessing** can be yours more than the other person. Who is there for whom? Am I there for him, or is he there for me? **Finally, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, tenderhearted, and humble-minded. Do not repay evil for evil or insult for insult, but give a blessing instead – for it is for this reason you were called, so that you might inherit a blessing (First Peter 3:8-9).**

*Dear **Father God**, What an Awesome **Father You** are! Praise **You** for **Your** chesed love, which is both a deep loyal love based on faithfulness in a relationship. I am awed at the richness of meaning for **Your** chesed love, with three concepts always interacting – strength, steadfastness, and love. Like three cords of love that come together to richly express a strong and loyal commitment in a relationship, chesed love to **Your** covenant family is not just an obligation but also full of generosity, not only loyalty, but also merciful. Praise **You** for this wonderful, strong love. May **You** transform us to love others in very kind ways, following **Your** example **(First John 4:11-12)**. In the holy name of **Your Son** and the power of **His** resurrection. Amen*