

## Foolish Pride and True Humility

We know that pride in the sense of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think is a sin, but just how great a sin is it? In his book, *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis makes the startling statement that pride is the "essential vice, the utmost evil."

He goes on to point out that "it was through Pride that the devil became the devil: pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind.: He goes on a few pages later to say that:

"...But pride always means enmity-it is enmity. And not only enmity between man and man, but enmity to God. In God you come up against something which is in every respect immeasurably superior to yourself. Unless you know God as that-and therefore, know yourself as nothing in comparison-you do not know God at all. As long as you are proud you cannot know God. A proud man is always looking down on things and people: and, of course, as long as you are looking down, you cannot see something that is above you."

Lewis was a great Christian writer, and his words ring very true in the light of God's Word. The purpose of this study is to simply compile as much as could be discovered about what the Bible says about a proud vs. humble spirit. May the sharp two-edged sword of His Word have a truly humbling effect on us that we may be workable clay in the Potter's hand.

### Contrasting Examples

Although it may sound simplistic, I think that it is a Scripturally true statement to say that when our actions, and thoughts are in agreement in the way Christ would act, it is good and pleases God. However, when we in any way behave like Satan, our actions are evil, because that opposes God and His nature. We have the clear example of Christ, who though He was the God of the universe, He humbled Himself on our account.

(Phil 2:5-9 KJV) "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: {6} Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: {7} But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: {8} And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. {9} Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:"

On the other hand, we have the evil example of Satan who fell through the pride of his heart.

(Isa 14:12-20 NIV) "How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! {13} You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. {14} I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High." {15} But you are brought down to the grave, to the depths of the pit. {16} Those who see you stare at you, they ponder your fate: "Is this the man who shook the earth and made kingdoms tremble, {17} the man who made the world a desert, who overthrew its cities and would not let his captives go home?" {18} All the kings of the nations lie in state, each in his own tomb. {19} But you are cast out of your tomb like a rejected branch; you are covered with the slain, with those pierced by the sword, those who descend to the stones of the pit. Like a corpse trampled underfoot, {20} you will not join them in burial, for you have destroyed your land and killed your people. The offspring of the wicked will never be mentioned again."

(Ezek 28:12-19 NIV) ""Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: ""You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. {13} You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. {14} You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. {15} You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. {16} Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. {17} Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. {18} By your many sins and dishonest trade you have desecrated your sanctuaries. So I made a fire come out from you, and it consumed you, and I reduced you to ashes on the ground in the sight of all who were watching. {19} All the nations who knew you are appalled at you; you have come to a horrible end and will be no more.'""

## **Foolish Pride**

Initially, when I decided that I personally needed to do a comparative Bible study on pride vs. humility, I thought that it would be a *small* Bible study. How wrong I was! The issue of pride must be hugely important to God, because I found no fewer than 130 verses that deal specifically with it. Just by aligning the sheer volume of Scriptures that deal with pride, the message comes across LOUD and clear just how much God hates the proud look. In fact, He lists it as the number one thing He hates in Proverbs 6:16-19.

(Prov 6:16-19 KJV) "These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: {17} A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, {18} An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, {19} A false witness *that* speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

But what does God mean by the pride that He hates? If you look at the meanings and context of the Hebrew and Greek words used, a very clear picture appears concerning what God detests as foolish pride. The Hebrew words used were geeh, gabaah, gaavah, zed, shachats, rahab and rachab. Together, they mean all of the following: lofty attitude, arrogance, to strut, height, haughtiness, swelling, insolent, to exalt self, to be presumptuous, pompous. The Greek words used were huperephanos and phusioo meaning appearing above others, puffed up, inflated or specifically to think more highly of yourself than others. The word huperephanos is used definitively in the following two specific references:

(Rom 12:3 NIV) "For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more *highly* than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you."

(Rom 12:16 NIV) "Live in harmony with one another. Do not be *proud*, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be *conceited*."

## **Definition of Pride by Context**

(Prov 21:4 NIV) "Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, are sin!"

(Prov 8:13-14 NIV) "To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech.

{14} Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power."

(Psa 12:3-4 KJV) "The LORD shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things: {4} Who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?"

(Prov 21:23-24 NIV) "He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity. {24} The proud and arrogant man--" Mocker" is his name; he behaves with overweening pride."

(Psa 10:2-4 NIV) "In his arrogance the wicked man hunts down the weak, who are caught in the schemes he devises. {3} He boasts of the cravings of his heart; he blesses the greedy and reviles the LORD. {4} In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God." ( Notice the insolence associated with pride.)

(Psa 73:6-9 NIV) "Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence. {7} From their callous hearts comes iniquity ; the evil conceits of their minds know no limits. {8} They scoff, and speak with malice; in their arrogance they threaten oppression. {9} Their mouths lay claim to heaven, and their tongues take possession of the earth."

(Ezek 28:2 NIV) ""Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "In the pride of your heart you say, "I am a god; I sit on the throne of a god in the heart of the seas." But you are a man and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god."

(Remember that in the first part of Ezekiel 28 the passage refers to an actual man called the prince of Tyre, whose excessive pride was a shadow of Satan's pride who is referred to as the King of Tyre beginning at verse 12. )

(Mark 7:21-23 KJV) "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, {22} Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: {23} All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

(Rom 1:28-30 NIV) "Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. {29} They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, {30} slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents;"

(1 Tim 3:5-6 NIV) "(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) {6} He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil."

(1 Tim 6:3-4 NIV) "If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, {4} he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions"

(1 John 2:16 KJV) "For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

(James 4:16 NIV) "As it is, you boast and brag. All such boasting is evil."

Now that it is clear what God means by pride, let's look at the volume and intensity of the Scriptures that He reserves for this sin. How thankful we are that we live in a dispensation of grace, and we can be sure that we do not have to suffer God's righteous wrath for our pride, but that Christ bore the punishment for this sin and all our sins! Still the following verses show just by their volume that how greatly God detests this sin.

(Prov 15:25 NIV) "The LORD tears down the proud man's house but he keeps the widow's boundaries intact."

(Prov 16:5 NIV) "The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished."

(Lev 26:18-20 NIV) ""If after all this you will not listen to me, I will punish you for your sins seven times over. {19} I will break down your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze. {20} Your strength will be spent in vain, because your soil will not yield its crops, nor will the trees of the land yield their fruit."

(Job 33:15-18 NIV) "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men as they slumber in their beds, {16} he may speak in their ears and terrify them with warnings, {17} to turn man from wrongdoing and keep him from pride, {18} to preserve his soul from the pit, his life from perishing by the sword."

(Job 40:9-14 NIV) "Do you have an arm like God's, and can your voice thunder like his? {10} Then adorn yourself with glory and splendor, and clothe yourself in honor and majesty. {11} Unleash the fury of your wrath, look at every proud man and bring him low, {12} look at every proud man and humble him, crush the wicked where they stand. {13} Bury them all in the dust together; shroud their faces in the grave. {14} Then I myself will admit to you that your own right hand can save you."

(Psa 31:23 NIV) "Love the LORD, all his saints! The LORD preserves the faithful, but the proud he pays back in full."

(2 Chr 32:26 NIV) "Then Hezekiah repented of the pride of his heart, as did the people of Jerusalem; therefore the Lord's wrath did not come upon them during the days of Hezekiah."

(Psa 94:2-3 NIV) "Rise up, O Judge of the earth; pay back to the proud what they deserve. {3} How long will the wicked, O LORD, how long will the wicked be jubilant?"

(Psa 101:4-6 NIV) "Men of perverse heart shall be far from me; I will have nothing to do with evil. {5} Whoever slanders his neighbor in secret, him will I put to silence; whoever has haughty eyes and a proud heart, him will I not endure. {6} My eyes will be on the faithful in the land, that they may dwell with me; he whose walk is blameless will minister to me."

(Psa 119:21 KJV) "Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments."

(Psa 138:6 NIV) "Though the LORD is on high, he looks upon the lowly, but the proud he knows from afar."

(Eccl 7:8 NIV) "The end of a matter is better than its beginning, and patience is better than pride."

(Isa 2:11-12 NIV) "The eyes of the arrogant man will be humbled and the pride of men brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted in that day. {12} The LORD Almighty has a day in store for all the proud and lofty, for all that is exalted (and they will be humbled),"

(Isa 13:11 NIV) "I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless."

(Isa 23:9 NIV) "The LORD Almighty planned it, to bring low the pride of all glory and to humble all who are renowned on the earth."

(Isa 26:5 NIV) "He humbles those who dwell on high, he lays the lofty city low; he levels it to the ground and casts it down to the dust."

(Jer 13:15-17 NIV) "Hear and pay attention, do not be arrogant, for the LORD has spoken. {16} Give glory to the LORD your God before he brings the darkness, before your feet stumble on the darkening hills. You hope for light, but he will turn it to thick darkness and change it to deep gloom. {17} But if you do not listen, I will weep in secret because of your pride; my eyes will weep bitterly, overflowing with tears, because the Lord's flock will be taken captive."

(Zep 3:11 NIV) "On that day you will not be put to shame for all the wrongs you have done to me, because I will remove from this city those who rejoice in their pride. Never again will you be haughty on my holy hill."

(Mat 23:12 NIV) "For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

(Luke 1:51 NIV) "He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts."

## **King Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar**

King Nebuchadnezzar wrote Daniel chapter 4 as a decree given to all his Kingdom. The central theme of Daniel 4 is that God gave Nebuchadnezzar His great kingdom, but in his pride he took the credit, and was thoroughly abased by God living as a wild beast for seven years. Nebuchadnezzar truly learned the hard way what God thinks of man's foolish pride. The entire chapter is a great commentary on the sin of pride, but I will include only the following synopsis, given in chapter five.

(Dan 4:37 NIV) "Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because everything he does is right and all his ways are just. And those who walk in pride he is able to humble."

(Dan 5:18-23 NIV) ""O king, the Most High God gave your father Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty and greatness and glory and splendor. {19} Because of the high position he gave him, all the peoples and nations and men of every language dreaded and feared him. Those the king wanted to put to death, he put to death; those he wanted to spare, he spared; those he wanted to promote, he promoted; and those he wanted to humble, he humbled. {20} But when his heart became arrogant and hardened with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory. {21} He was driven away from people and given the mind of an animal; he lived with the wild donkeys and ate grass like cattle; and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he acknowledged that the Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and sets over them anyone he wishes. {22} "But you his son, O Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. {23} Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways."

( Notice how Belshazzar was held even more responsible by God for his pride since he *knew* what had happened to his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar.)

## **National Pride**

There are a number of Scriptures that also rail against nations who corporately demonstrate undo pride and enmity against God. I will only include a few of those references for completeness.

(Isa 16:6-7 NIV) "We have heard of Moab's pride-- her overweening pride and conceit, her pride and her insolence-- but her boasts are empty. {7} Therefore the Moabites wail, they wail together for Moab. Lament and grieve for the men of Kir Hareseth."

(Jer 13:9-10 NIV) ""This is what the LORD says: 'In the same way I will ruin the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem. {10} These wicked people, who refuse to listen to my words, who follow the stubbornness of their hearts and go after other gods to serve and worship them, will be like this belt--completely useless!"

(Jer 50:31-32 NIV) ""See, I am against you, O arrogant one," declares the Lord, the LORD Almighty, "for your day has come, the time for you to be punished. {32} The arrogant one will stumble and fall and no one will help her up; I will

kindle a fire in her towns that will consume all who are around her."

## **Pride's Natural Consequences**

Pride like all types of sin also has its natural consequences. God has so designed the world that most often we reap what we sow, and pride yields strife and eventual fall.

(Prov 16:18-19 NIV) "Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. {19} Better to be lowly in spirit and among the oppressed than to share plunder with the proud."

(Prov 28:25 KJV) "He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat."

(Prov 11:2 NIV) "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom."

(Prov 13:10 NIV) "Pride only breeds quarrels, but wisdom is found in those who take advice."

(Prov 29:23 NIV) "A man's pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor."

## **Last Days**

Since we know that in the last days sin will increase on all levels, it comes as no surprise that pride also flourishes.

(2 Tim 3:1-3 NIV) "But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. {2} People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, {3} without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good,"

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## **Humility**

While He warns us not to be proud, God has further spoken much about how He highly values that truly humble spirit. I found no fewer than 50 verses that directly exhort us to be humble. We examined what God means by pride. Let's do the same with humility. The Hebrew words for humble include anah, kana, anav, mitsar, and shaphel. Collectively their meanings are as follows: to submit self, to weaken, gentleness, to depress, to kneel, to bring down, into subjection, under, to subdue, meek poor, lowly, to diminish self, little one, self, to abase, to bring down. The three Greek words translated humble are all part of the same root. They include tapeinos, tapeinoo and tapeinophrosune, which together have the same general meanings of cast down, base, of low degree, to bring self low, humiliation of mind and lowliness of mind. Tapeinos is significantly used first in the New Testament by the Lord Himself describing Himself in Matt11:28-30.

(Mat 11:28-30 NIV) ""Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. {29} Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. {30} For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.""

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## **False Humility**

However, also notice that the Scripture defines what is false humility, which God actually opposes and counts as being puffed up in your voluntary abasement.

(Col 2:18-223 KJV) "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, {19} And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. {20} Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances"Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? {23} Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh."

Rather, the scope of Scripture suggests that true humility is that self-forgetfulness and non-elevation in the presence of others, and knowledge that we are but grass in the sight of the Almighty. It is only His grace that lifts us up. A truly humble spirit realizes that we have nothing, and we are nothing that has not been given to us by the circumstances that God has graciously provided. As 1 Cor. 4:7 says, "**For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?**"

The rest of the Scriptures that deal with the humble spirit clearly show that it is the only approach to God and to each other which God esteems. Furthermore, God rewards, guides, and exalts those who humble themselves before Him.

(Psa 18:27 NIV) "You save the humble but bring low those whose eyes are haughty."

(Psa 25:9 NIV) "He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way."

(Psa 147:6 NIV) "The LORD sustains the humble but casts the wicked to the ground."

(Psa 149:4 NIV) "For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation."

(Prov 3:34 NIV) "He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble."

(Isa 66:2 NIV) "Has not my hand made all these things, and so they came into being?" declares the LORD. "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word."

(Mat 18:4 NIV) "Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

(Mat 23:12 NIV) "For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

(Luke 1:52 NIV) "He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble."

(Luke 14:11 NIV) "For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

(Luke 18:14 NIV) ""I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

(Zep 2:3 NIV) "Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the Lord's anger."

(James 4:6 NIV) "But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

(James 4:10 NIV) "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

(1 Pet 5:5-6 NIV) "Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves

with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." {6} Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time."

Likewise, God sometimes even humbles His own people to test and refine them as His servants.

(Deu 8:2-3 NIV) "Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the desert these forty years, to humble you and to test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. {3} He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."

(Deu 8:16 NIV) "He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you."

(1 Sam 2:7 NIV) "The LORD sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts."

## **Examples of Humility**

### **Moses**

Scripture is replete with examples of those who both humbled themselves and also refused to humble themselves before God.

Pharaoh hardened his heart repeated in pride against God, until finally it is said that God hardened Pharaoh's heart.

(Exo 10:3 NIV) "So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, "This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, so that they may worship me."

(Num 12:3 NIV) "Now Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth."

Consequently, Moses must be the best human example of true humility, much could be learned about what God deems true humility by carefully studying his life. Remember too, that Moses had a tremendously close fellowship with God as demonstrated by the following verse. Was this an outcome of his truly humble spirit?

(Exo 33:11 NIV) "The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend."

### **Daniel**

There are only two human characters in the Bible of whom there is no evil spoken, no faults mentioned. Those two are Joseph and Daniel. Daniel was highly esteemed by God and guess why. Yes, again it was his humble spirit before the Lord.

(Dan 10:12 NIV) "Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them."

## **Ahab and Manassah**

Evil kings of Israel abound in the Old Testament. One infamous example is Ahab. He and his wicked wife Jezebel led the people into gross idolatry and tried to kill the true prophets of God.

(1 Ki 16:30-33 NIV) "Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. {31} He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. {32} He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. {33} Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him."

Ahab, likewise had an extremely wicked son, Manasseh, who did the following:

(2 Ki 21:9 NIV) "But the people did not listen. Manasseh led them astray, so that they did more evil than the nations the LORD had destroyed before the Israelites."

Yet even, when these vial kings humbled themselves before God, He had great mercy on them.

(1 Ki 21:29 NIV) ""Have you noticed how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has humbled himself, I will not bring this disaster in his day, but I will bring it on his house in the days of his son.""

## **Other Examples**

(2 Chr 12:6-7 NIV) "The leaders of Israel and the king humbled themselves and said, "The LORD is just." {7} When the LORD saw that they humbled themselves, this word of the LORD came to Shemaiah: "Since they have humbled themselves, I will not destroy them but will soon give them deliverance. My wrath will not be poured out on Jerusalem through Shishak."

(2 Chr 12:12 NIV) "Because Rehoboam humbled himself, the Lord's anger turned from him, and he was not totally destroyed. Indeed, there was some good in Judah."

(2 Chr 33:12-13 NIV) "In his distress he sought the favor of the LORD his God and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers. {13} And when he prayed to him, the LORD was moved by his entreaty and listened to his plea; so he brought him back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the LORD is God."

(2 Chr 33:23 NIV) "But unlike his father Manasseh, he did not humble himself before the LORD; Amon increased his guilt."

(2 Chr 34:27 NIV) "Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before God when you heard what he spoke against this place and its people, and because you humbled yourself before me and tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the LORD."

(2 Ki 22:19 NIV) "Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people, that they would become accursed and laid waste, and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the LORD."

(2 Chr 7:14 NIV) "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land." (This Scripture is frequently quoted these days with reference to the moral decline in America. However, this promise was specifically given to the one and only nation ever called as a peculiar nation to God-Israel. Therefore, can this promise be generalized to include any nation at any time? )

(Zep 3:12 NIV) "But I will leave within you the meek and humble, who trust in the name of the LORD."

(Luke 1:46-48 NIV) "And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord {47} and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, {48} for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,"

## Humility with Others

Furthermore, God also expects His people to follow Christ's great example and to be humble with one another.

(John 13:3-5 KJV) "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; {4} He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. {5} After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded." (John 13:13-17 NIV) ""You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. {14} Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. {15} I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. {16} I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. {17} Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

(2 Cor 8:9 NIV) "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."

(Eph 4:2 NIV) "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."

(Col 3:12 NIV) "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

(1 Pet 3:8 NIV) "Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble."

(1 Pet 5:5-6 NIV) "Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." {6} Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time."

## Way to True Humility

I don't believe that true humility can be attained purely as a matter of our will. Otherwise, we are in danger of developing a false humility which the Bible equates with foolish pride. No, I really think that true humility is a direct outgrowth of knowing God through His Word and knowing ourselves more as God sees us. The more we know God, the more we can see and appreciate His omnipotent power and majesty and glory. Though knowing God is the great task of all eternity, if we can but scratch the surface in both knowing and acknowledging Him in this life, we can't help but be humbled in His awesome presence. We must also understand how He sees us and what we are without Him. Our life is but a vapor and all our fleshly glory is no more than the passing flower on a mere blade of grass. Once we really believe that, can we help but be humbled at His overwhelming grace to us poor creatures? I'll conclude with the following Scriptures that speak directly to these two points.

## **His Majesty**

(Isa 40:10-15 NIV) "See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. {11} He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. {12} Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens? Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket, or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance? {13} Who has understood the mind of the LORD, or instructed him as his counselor? {14} Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge or showed him the path of understanding? {15} Surely the nations are like a **drop** in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust."

(Isa 40:21-31 NIV) "Do you not know? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood since the earth was founded? {22} He sits enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He stretches out the heavens like a canopy, and spreads them out like a tent to live in. {23} He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing. {24} No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground, than he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff. {25} "To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One. {26} Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. {27} Why do you say, O Jacob, and complain, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause is disregarded by my God"? {28} Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. {29} He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. {30} Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; {31} but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

## **Who we are**

(Isa 40:6-8 NIV) "A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. {7} The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. {8} The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.""

(Psa 103:15-18 NIV) "As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field; {16} the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. {17} But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children-- {18} with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts."

(1 Pet 1:24-25 NIV) "For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, {25} but the word of the Lord stands forever." And this is the word that was preached to you."

(Rom 9:20-21 NIV) "But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? "Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, "Why did you make me like this?" {21} Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use?"

May God give us the grace to know Him better and to walk as truly humble vessels of clay in His mighty Hand.

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