

## Exceeding Abundance

Eph. 3:20 “Now unto Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”

Rom. 5:21 “...But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound...”

In many different forms, Scripture reminds us that all that God does is super-abounding, greater than can be compared with others, and having no possibility of being exceeded by anything of man. This form of expression is based on different Greek words, but they bring us to the same conclusion and remind us of the incomparable greatness and superlative results of all of God’s works.

In Eph. 3:20, Paul uses more than one of these expressions. Kenneth Wuest has said about the first one, “exceedingly”, this “...characterizes Him as One who is able to do *huper panta*, literally, "above all things," thus, "in a measure exceeding all things, beyond all things." The second word, “abundantly”, “...speaks of Him as able to do *huperekperissou*. The word is made up of *perissos*, "exceeding some number or measure, over and above, more than necessary," *eh*, which is perfective in force here, intensifying the already existing idea in the verb, here adding the idea of exhaustlessness, and *huper*, "above." The compound word is a superlative of superlatives in force. It speaks of the ability of God to do something, that ability having more than enough potential power, this power exhaustless, and then some on top of that.” This is an example of Paul multiplying words to try to emphasize the greatness of what he is describing, and it indicates a value that is found in God alone that exceeds our ability to grasp. It is overwhelming to think that this is the power that works in a child of God to produce the kind of character that God desires to see in us!

The ending of Rom. 5 is a magnificent description of the value of the work of the Savior. Sin abounded increasingly as the waves on the seashore rise during a storm. Sin had been increasingly displayed from its beginning, but the grace of God was also evident in His provision of the means by which sins could be forgiven, even in the OT. But sin reached its climax at the cross when men

unitedly joined to reject the Son of God and ultimately, to crucify Him. But that great climax of sin was super-abounded by the grace of God that He manifested through its provision and triumph. Even when sin again reaches its height in the Antichrist, God's grace to deliver His people will be seen in overwhelming power once again and the greatness of His gracious work to save will reach its climax.

We learn that God has displayed His abundant mercy when He begat us through the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (1 Pet. 1:13). This expressed the unsurpassed greatness of His power and purpose to give such life to our souls, those who were dead in sins. Paul could rejoice in 1 Tim. 1:13-14, that he, who was "before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; obtained mercy...and the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant..." He seems to never lose sight of the wonder that God had shown such grace to him. Such a remembrance on our part would have a similar effect on our lives to produce great love and devotion to Christ and an eagerness to serve Him faithfully. When Paul writes to Titus, he reminds him (and us) that our salvation is "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." (Tit. 3:5-6). The entire work of redeeming grace that was accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit is one that couldn't be carried out by anyone short of a Divine Person. He reminds us of what we were in the past (including himself, v. 3) and it is a miraculous work that has brought us to enjoy such a place of acceptance before God in Christ.

Peter looks to the future when he exhorts believers to "give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 1:10-11). This isn't indicating that one's salvation could fail to become a reality through lax behavior; rather it emphasizes the value of seeking to be so live and serve so that our reward and position in the kingdom might be clearly seen and rightly expected as a result.

One more striking scripture, this from the Old Testament, is found in Isa. 55:7. Perhaps this summarizes the basis and reason for all the actions of God toward us. We read in God's appeal to Israel as He calls for their repentance and return to Him, "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." The abundance of His grace and mercy is what moves our hearts to seek to please and honor Him even more.