

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOUSE

As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the LORD is round about his people from henceforth even for ever.

Psalm 125:2

The wonders which the LORD formed, when HE created the Earth out of nothing, cannot be fathomed nor completely discovered by men. *"He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds; and the cloud is not rent under them. He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He hath compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud."* (Job 26:7-12)

Though man has set out to explore the depths and heights of this world, he has of yet not uncovered all that there is to see in it. Even in this modern age there are places where the foot of man has not been and wonders which his eyes have not beheld. Men boast of their scientific "discoveries" (of one type or another) and regale their own generation with this or that bit of knowledge that they have gained only to have their "discoveries" overturned by subsequent generations who see more clearly (as they suppose) than those that went before them.

Then when we consider that the Earth is but a miniscule portion of the vast array which we know as "outer space", we are overwhelmed at the magnitude of that creation, only to be reminded that this is the part of GOD's creation which can be seen by mortal eyes, and does not encompass the even more magnificent realms which comprise that which cannot be seen by natural man. We are caused then to fall upon our faces in worship as we cry out with the Psalmist, *"LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him! Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away."* (Psa 144:3-4) This is that same thought which Job expressed in utter amazement, *"What is man, that thou shouldest magnify him? and that thou shouldest set thine heart upon him?"* (Job 7:17)

Yet we are made aware that man in his religious zeal does not embrace this sobering truth, but rather assumes that he has the power and right to converse and meet with this Glorious SOVEREIGN upon his own terms. That which goes under the guise of modern "christianity", continually tells us of the intrinsic worth and value which men (in general) have with HIM before whom the Heavens and the Earth shall flee away. This concept is manifested as they tell us that we must bring our hearts to the LORD, we must give our offerings, and decide to let HIM rule over us. HE is pictured as doing HIS best to rescue all of mankind; yet failing because of man's power to thwart HIS desire. How foolish is such a notion. We stand in awe that HE has not snuffed us all out in a moment, and certainly we are humbled in the dust as we read that HE does indeed save some of this vast creation according to the good pleasure of HIS will.

The man who balks at the preaching of Sovereign Grace has never understood the desperate position that man is in as a rebellious sinner before a HOLY GOD. Apart from HIS determination to show mercy (to whom HE will show mercy), we would all justly perish in our sins, and none could bring any accusation against HIM nor even question HIS doing, should we all be destroyed.

It is with this in mind that we rejoice as we read of the faithfulness of the LORD to deliver and preserve that unworthy rabble of those whom HE chose in CHRIST from before the foundation of

the world. We marvel as we read that this remnant was as worthy of that destruction as those HE has ordained unto this very end. *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were **by nature** the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved:) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."*(Eph 2:1-7)

The Psalmist describes the fidelity of the LORD to those whom HE calls "HIS children", by using the illustration of the "mountains" which surround the city of Jerusalem. This Jerusalem of which he speaks in his illustration is that which is located in the Mideast. Yet that "Jerusalem" which is surrounded by the mountains of HIS mercy cannot be found on any map drawn by men. Rather it is that "holy city" which is one and the same with that which John saw coming down out of heaven. (see Rev.21:2)

As the mountains which can be seen by the eyes of men, these "mountains" cannot be moved and stand as a testimony of enduring strength and power of the ONE who neither slumbers nor sleeps but ever watches over that city in which HE delights. *"Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."* (Psa 121:4) This is HIS vineyard of "red wine" which HE will keep. *"I the LORD do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day."* (Isa 27:3) *"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."* (Jude 1:24-25)

The prophet Isaiah declared, *"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it."* (Isa 2:2) Those "last days" have now come as John testified, *"it is the last time"* (1 John 2:18). The writer of Hebrews sets forth that which has now come to pass, *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."* (Heb 1:1-2) This is the "day of SALVATION." We wait for no other for HE who was prophesied from the beginning has now come to redeem HIS bride and is presently calling her out of every tribe and tongue upon the Earth. Surely, *"all nations shall flow unto it."* This HOUSE which the LORD built and not man, is fitted exactly for those whom HE would save.

There is a high mountain (the name of which we cannot be certain) surrounding Jerusalem, where the LORD took Peter, James, and John and was "transfigured" (i.e.; transformed with a shining light surrounding HIM) before them. The FATHER spoke to them saying, *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."* (Mat 17:5) The glory of the "law" (i.e.; Moses) and the "prophets" (i.e.; Elijah), faded in the presence of HIM who is ALL in all.

Another mountain which surrounds Jerusalem is the Mount of Olives. It was here that the LORD JESUS poured out HIS soul unto death, as HE sweat great drops of blood because of the anguish which overwhelmed HIM as HE became a sin offering for HIS people. It was here that HE was betrayed by Judas. It was here that HE demonstrated HIS mastery over those who came to arrest HIM as HE identified HIMSELF saying "I AM", and they fell backward as dogs cower before their MASTER. It was here that HE submitted HIMSELF into the custody of those who were ordained by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of GOD to crucify HIM.

Yet there is another "mountain" which ever stands as a silent testimony to the wickedness of men and the justice of a holy GOD. We speak of Mount Calvary, "the place of the skull", which is where our LORD was crucified between two thieves. No mercy was found there that day as the spotless LAMB of GOD was put to death for sin. The JUST died for the unjust. Yet three days later not far from where HE bled, mercy blossomed at an empty tomb as HE arose from that death in triumph over the sin which put HIM there. O glorious MOUNTAIN of the LORD's House! mam