

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 REIGN OF CHRIST

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!

Isaiah 52:7

Many are of the opinion that CHRIST will some day in the future be manifested as a KING over a universal Kingdom upon the earth. It is true that HE shall indeed reign in the ages to come but we are certain that HIS reign as KING of kings and LORD of lords has already begun. HIS appearance in the Earth was in order to establish that Kingdom as a witness to the inhabitants thereof. The message of the Gospel is defined by Isaiah as, "Thy GOD reigneth".

This Kingdom cannot be observed except by those who are given the privilege of being its subjects and who greatly delight in their KING, as they hear and believe this glorious gospel. The LORD told Nicodemus of this fact when HE said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) Thus we learn the nature of this Kingdom as being one which cannot be recognized by flesh and blood as the LORD said when Peter confessed that HE is the CHRIST, the SON of the LIVING GOD, "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed (i.e.; highly favored) art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Mat 16:17)

When the Pharisees demanded that HE show them when the Kingdom of GOD should begin, HE answered them with these words: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation (i.e.; you cannot see it): Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within (i.e.; in your midst or among you) you." (Luke 17:20-21) HE went on to explain to HIS disciples (in contrast to what HE told the Pharisees; see v. 22) the fact that HIS Kingdom was one of discrimination, "one shall be taken and the other left" (v.34-36) It is a Kingdom which is hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mat 5:3)

One of the key components in the manifestation of HIS Kingdom unto its subjects is revealed as HE told HIS disciples, "But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation." (Luke 17:25) Thus, we learn that HE came into the world to be a REDEEMER KING, who would set HIS people free and destroy their captors. Yet HE would do so in a fashion that could only be seen with an understanding bestowed from on high. Pilate asked HIM if HE was a KING. Yet HE did not testify to Pilate that HE was a KING, only that HE came to be a WITNESS to the TRUTH of GOD. "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John 18:36-37)

It is therefore impossible to speak of the Kingdom of which HE is the absolute POTENTATE, without speaking of HIS work of redemption, manifested most clearly to them on Mount Calvary where HE poured out HIS life's blood for sinners whom HE loved from the beginning. "And being

found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." (Php 2:8-9) Who but the sons of GOD can rejoice in the majesty and glory which surrounds their REDEEMER KING? It is HIS NAME which they shall gladly exalt and honor in the ages to come as they behold HIM with undimmed eye and unsinning heart.

The reign of CHRIST is now begun. "But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb 9:26-28) The ground upon which all of the sons of GOD stand to survey the triumphs of CHRIST is that complete and perfect work of redemption which HE has procured with HIS own blood. There is no greater place of rejoicing or worship than is found here. There is no place of boasting for men of FAITH except in that work which CHRIST has performed in their behalf. "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." (Gal 6:14)

The reign of CHRIST is complete. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." (Rev 11:15-17) While some place great emphasis upon this world of flesh and blood which can be felt and touched with sinful hands as being the place where CHRIST reigns. It is true that HE is the LORD of Heaven, earth, and hell. Yet the seat of HIS Kingdom is in that place of HIS greatest triumph.

This world is yet to be destroyed with fervent heat which shall melt even the elements thereof and therefore shall not endure forever, but HIS Kingdom is not of the world. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." (Rev 5:9-10) That place wherein the saints shall evermore "reign with CHRIST" (i.e. enjoy the reign of which CHRIST is the KING.) is spoken of by John: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." (Rev 21:1-5)

The reign of CHRIST is Eternal. "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 2:4-7) "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." (Eph 3:21)

"O Christ, He is the fountain, The deep, sweet well of love; The streams on earth I've tasted, More deep I'll drink above; There to an ocean fullness His mercy doth expand, And glory, glory dwelleth In Immanuel's land. The bride eyes not her garments, But her dear Bridegroom's face; I will not gaze at glory But on my King of grace; Not at the crown He giveth, But on His pierced hand; The Lamb is all the glory Of Immanuel's land." (by Anne Cousin, {1824-1906} based on the letters of Samuel Rutherford {1600-1661}) Is CHRIST your GLORY? mam