

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 TIME IS AT HAND

Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. *Revelation 1:3*

To say that the Book of "The Revelation" has received a great deal of attention down through the ages, by readers of the scripture and those that comment thereon, would be quite an understatement. It has become a cottage industry for modern day "prophets" of every stripe, to churn out much speculative commentary upon its contents. These tellers of secrets, involving the moon and the stars and this beast and that, expend much energy in weaving their complex theories for the rank and file of those eager to hear and tell some new thing. (see Acts 17:21) We are supposed to wait with baited breath for the next installment of their series which will continue to unfold mysteries which were heretofore unknown but which they have uncovered for us, especially if we'll send in a little cash.

We claim to have no special insights into this Book's many cryptic illustrations and allegorical descriptions of various events which have occurred and perhaps shall yet take place as the LORD is pleased to tarry HIS coming and unfold HIS purpose before men. Yet we are quite certain that the purpose of the book is not to titillate the imaginations of men nor to give them an opportunity to engage in flights of fantasy in order to tickle the ears of those willing to hear their ruminations upon it.

As all things which are set forth in the Scriptures are, so too does this Book have one SUBJECT and serves one PURPOSE: To magnify the glory of GOD's grace in the unveiling of JESUS CHRIST as the KING of Kings, LORD of Lords, and the REDEEMER of that people which HE has loved from the beginning, out of every tribe and tongue in the Earth.

We often cringe when we hear men refer to the title of this Book as "Revelations" rather than as it is a singular "Revelation". Many look at this Book as plural "revelations" of mysterious events. Yet even the very title of the Book shows that not to be true. The first five words of its text defines what the Book consists of, "The Revelation of JESUS CHRIST" (Rev.1:1) If a person gets very far from that theme, then they have missed the purpose of this Book regardless of how many horses' hooves and tails they can count. JESUS CHRIST will be magnified in all things and at all times, in every event which has occurred in the Earth and Heaven, and shall yet occur as HE sees fit.

There do seem to be some events described in its pages which are yet to take place upon the Earth and in the Heavens. Yet, regardless of whether the descriptions therein are of things which have already occurred, are presently occurring, or shall yet take place, all of them are depictions of the unfolding of the purpose of the FATHER to magnify the glory of HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST as the REDEEMER KING. Thus, we read of HIS triumphs and the destruction of HIS enemies. We read of a great gathering (too numerous to count) which takes great delight in magnifying HIS NAME alone as the SAVIOR of sinners. "*After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*" (Rev 7:9-10) I can think of no more fitting song to be sung by the sons of GOD in this age or that which is to come than this. "*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. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.” (Rev 5:9-12) Oh let us praise HIS NAME forever.

There is great blessing in the reading and studying of this great Book (“*Blessed is he that readeth*”) for those whom the LORD is pleased to give ears to hear and eyes to see. (“*they that hear the words of this prophecy.*”) This is a Book which reveals CHRIST; not one in which either HE nor HIS purpose is hidden. “*But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*” (2Cor 4:3-4) The Gospel can be summed up in Paul’s declaration, “*For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*” (1Cor 2:2) Those that would turn this book into some sort of hodge-podge of coming world events have “swerved” (see I Tim 1:6) from that path which has the sole purpose of declaring the finished work of CHRIST and the glory which surrounds HIM as the REDEEMER KING.

As we look at the first verse of the Epistle to the Hebrews we can see a clear definition of the “*time*” in which we now dwell and I believe the “*time*” which John says is “*at hand*”. “*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) It pleased the LORD to keep the full unfolding of HIS purpose in a “mystery” in “time past”. This is, now, that “time” which is described by Haggai as he contrasts the “former times” with that glory which now surrounds the “*latter house*”. Is not this “house” that which is built by the hand of the LORD and not men even as HE declared, “*I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*” (Mat 16:18) “*And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Hag 2:7-9)*

The unfolding of this “mystery” is spoken of by Paul on more than one occasion. “*Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith.*” (Rom 16:25-26) He speaks of this unfolding to the Ephesians, “*Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.* (Eph 1:9-10) and also to the Colossians, “*Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” (Col 1:26-27)*

The “time” which is “at hand” is described by John, in his first letter. “*Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.*” (1John 2:18) CHRIST has come, and HIS many enemies have unleashed their intent to destroy HIM, HIS Gospel, and those that would bow their knees unto HIM. Paul wrote of this “time” when he said, “*behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*” (2Cor 6:2) Peter declared it on the Day of Pentecost; “*Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*” (Acts 2:36) “*For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*” (Acts 2:39)

There is heard in Zion, this very day, a call unto those who are in need of a SAVIOR. Isaiah prophesied of this “time”, “*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.*” (Isa 55:1) and now our LORD has ushered it in saying, “*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*” (Mat 11:28) “*To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.*” (Heb 3:15) The “time is at hand”. Do you hear HIM? mam