

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

CALLED AND CALLED UNTO

For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

1Thessalonians 4:7.

When a man receives a “summons” to appear in a court of Law, he is not free to dispute it, to disregard it, or to reject it. For such a “summons” is not a request for him to appear nor even a strong recommendation or suggestion. Rather it is a letter of demand which he must obey. He has no alternative. If he is an enemy of that court, he may go in a perfunctory manner, but if he is a friend of that court he will look favorably upon that “summons” and will hasten to attend unto it in the fashion prescribed in the document.

The man’s response to that “summons” is entirely influenced by his regard to the authority of the one who issues the summons. His regard to the “summons”, however, does not in any way affect the propriety or power of it, since the power of it resides with the one who issues the “summons.” The entity which issues the “summons” has the authority to enforce it according to the power which it holds. We see this demonstrated time after time in the natural world, in the court system of the various governments in the world.

There is an AUTHORITY which is above every authority and wields unwavering control over all other governments which may exist in the world. This AUTHORITY even has power over that supposed bastion of strength and freedom which men call their “free-will.” What folly exists in the minds of those who presume that this “free-will” is any sort of impediment or enabling force in the exercise of the POWER of ALMIGHTY GOD. The “free-will” of men is designed by HIM who directs the same according to the good pleasure of HIS will. “*The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.*” (Prov 21:1) If the will of kings, who exercise dominion in the Earth, is in the hands of the LORD, how much more those who are the subjects of these earthly potentates. “*Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?*” (Prov 20:24) “*O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*” (Jer 10:23) “*The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.*” (Pro 16:1)

Having such an understanding of who it is that wields true power and authority, must of necessity humble the pride of man. At the same time the mercy and grace of GOD is displayed as we are given eyes to see that it is HIS DIVINE prerogative to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor as HE sees fit. “*Who maketh thee to differ from another.*” In this LIGHT, the great privilege of the sons of GOD is seen. Were not they all “*by nature the children of wrath, even as others?*” Can any one of them point out any reason that GOD should show mercy to them and deliver them from the just condemnation which is due to all who have transgressed the law of GOD?

Can a wicked king like Nebuchadnezzar lay any claim to deserving the blessing of GOD? Can the thief who mocked the LORD upon the cross, have any reason to expect that a sudden change of mind should occur, causing him to behold the glory of the KING in HIS beauty? Can Saul of Tarsus, who menacingly trod the road to Damascus with murderous intentions, anticipate that he should behold a great LIGHT shining brighter than the noonday sun, and fall down before HIM, crying out, “*who art THOU LORD?*” What made such changes of heart occur? Are these not clear

manifestations that *“Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” (Psa 110:3)? “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Php 2:13)*

The LORD has made it plain that HE is the ONE who shows mercy according to HIS sovereign pleasure and that those who are brought to call upon HIM do so because HE is pleased to show this mercy unto them. *“For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” (Rom 9:15-16)* This mercy is demonstrated in the Earth as HE is pleased to “call” HIS sheep unto HIMSELF. Quite often we hear men speak of this “call” as if it is a general “invitation” which can be accepted or rejected according to the whims of men. Yet it is quite clear from the scriptures that this “call” is a “summons” to appear which shall achieve exactly what HE determines for it to accomplish. *“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isa 55:10-11)*

Peter declared as much on the day of Pentecost when he said, *“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)* He clearly defined the particular number of those to whom the promise of GOD is given, as those whom *“the LORD our GOD shall call.”* Not one more and not one less. How glorious to consider the absolute nature of HIS promise to give the HOLY SPIRIT to that number. As we read the scriptures, we see this “number” referred to as HIS “remnant”, HIS “bride”, HIS “elect”, HIS “chosen”, and those who are *“ordained unto eternal life”*, just to name a few. The LORD JESUS often referred to them in a loving fashion as HIS “sheep”. HE said HE would “call” them by name (which denies the notion of a general call) and they would “hear” HIS voice. *“But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.” (John 10:2-5)*

To listen to modern “evangelism” is to come away with the concept that CHRIST died in order to rescue all men from a burning hell, if they will just listen and follow a few simple steps designed to give them entrance into the realms of heaven and eternal bliss. Along the way those that take advantage of this offer of salvation from the LORD, can expect to reap a bountiful harvest of pleasures and earthly blessings which will surely make them happy and fulfilled.

However, when we are given eyes to behold the glorious redemption wrought by CHRIST in the behalf of HIS elect, we are caused to see that this redemption is brought about completely according to the LORD’s design and it is HIS purpose, in it, to present HIS bride to the FATHER, as a chaste virgin, without spot or blemish. She is but a blessed recipient of all of HIS blessings which HE has determined to bestow upon her, having purchased such blessings with HIS own blood and given them to her without any effort on her part. (see Eph.4:7,8)

Thus, HE gives to HIS “chosen” a “summons”; (i.e.; a call) which they must answer. *“And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.” (Mark 10:49-50)* HIS calling is for a particular purpose, and HE will see to it that this purpose is fulfilled. The sons of GOD are not delivered from bondage, only to remain therein. Thus, Paul reminds the Thessalonians that the sons of GOD are not set free from “*uncleanness*” only to embrace the same. The calling of the sons of GOD is unto “*holiness*” (i.e.; to be set apart unto CHRIST.) We are not called to be fornicators, idolators, whoremongers, adulterers, thieves, or drunkards. *“And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” (1Cor 6:11)* While we at one time gladly embraced such things, we have now renounced them in the NAME of CHRIST our LORD. *“And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal 5:24-25)* Have you received HIS “summons”? mam