

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XXI

Issue 27

Published occasionally for mourners in Zion

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

TRY THE SPIRITS

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 1 Corinthians 2:12

Solomon penned these words which were given to HIM by the LORD: *“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” (Prov 14:12)* The natural man is convinced that he is able to make right judgements about spiritual matters. He has his own ideas about who GOD is and what HE is able to do. He is confident that he can plead his case with GOD and that HE should both listen to his pleas and grant his desires. He feels that he is justified in being angry with GOD when things don't go according to his plans or when he views some atrocious event in the Earth which he feels GOD should have “prevented”. He is vehemently opposed to the notion that GOD is an absolute Sovereign who has the right to create one man unto salvation and appoint another to destruction. He feels certain that his “free will” is sacrosanct and that he is able to do whatever he pleases and if he so desires; to seek after GOD as easily as he might choose which shirt to wear. *“There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.” (Rom 3:11)*

The same natural man is convinced that GOD cannot hold him accountable for his actions unless he has a completely self-determining free will. He bases most of his consideration of GOD's interaction with men upon this principle which he believes limits GOD in some fashion or at least empowers men to go contrary to the will of GOD. Men do not have to be taught these concepts as they come forth from the womb of their mothers with this mindset. *“The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.” (Psa 58:3)* Apart from the grace of GOD to deliver them from this thought process they will remain in darkness and perish in their ignorance. *“I tell you,--- except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” (Luke 13:5)*

Men think that they can repent at a time of their own choosing whenever they get ready. Yet true repentance is the gift of GOD just like faith. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” (Eph 2:8)* Even as CHRIST is the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our FAITH, so too is HE the ONE ordained to bestow the gift of repentance upon those whom HE loves with an everlasting love. *“Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.” (Acts 5:31)* The LORD JESUS alluded to this fact when HE said, *“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:44)*

The LORD is able to teach men exactly what it is that HE wants them to know. Their knowledge cannot exceed that teaching nor can it be lacking thereof. Neither can any man understand HIS WAY apart from HIS revelation of JESUS CHRIST to them as the KING of kings and LORD of lords. According to HIS mercy HE is pleased to send HIS WORD into the Earth by the messengers which HE appoints and HE shall not be disappointed in the outcome. *“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)* *“According to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by*

the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2Tim 1:8-10)

So, it seems quite evident that there is a work begun in the children of GOD by HIS gracious HAND and according to HIS eternal purpose which cannot be thwarted or even delayed. This is that work which HE promised to perform before HE departed from HIS disciples. *"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* (John 14:25-27)

This is a work which is applied to their "understanding", that they might know those things which are given to them by HIS HAND of mercy. They are enabled to rest in HIM whom they would confess is all of their HOPE. They can see the folly of clinging to any supposed righteousness of their own. They can clearly see the innate corruption which is in them by nature even as Paul said, *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."* (Rom 7:18-19) They find no "improvement" in their flesh and daily lament their cold hearts, yet at the same time they rejoice in HIM who is their HOLINESS and WISDOM.

This is a work which causes them to be satisfied with the redemptive work which CHRIST has performed in their behalf and they rejoice that HE has accomplished a complete salvation for HIS people, solely by HIS effort and not their own. *"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." (Heb 9:11-12) "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.(i.e. set apart)" (Heb 10:14) "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (Rom 5:8-9)*

This is a work which causes them to know that they have an ADVOCATE with the FATHER. *"But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." (Heb 7:24-26) HE makes "intercession" for HIS people, not with words and groanings but, simply by HIS presence at the RIGHT HAND of GOD as that acceptable SACRIFICE, forever making the sons of GOD to appear there as those who have no sin.*

This is a work which causes them to desire to walk according to HIS precepts even as David confessed, *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes." (Psa 119:11-12) They can never be satisfied with the motions of religion but desire TRUTH in the "inward parts." (see Psa.51:6) "For the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." (1Sam 16:7) As the sons of GOD are given understanding, this knowledge causes them to tremble in the presence of HIM, before whom the wicked shall not stand. "Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts? or who hath given understanding to the heart?" (Job 38:36)*

This is a work which causes them to desire a more intimate knowledge of HIM who is their SAVIOR and LORD. As Paul confessed, *"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: --- that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death." (Php 3:8-10) This is not the spirit of the world wherein, in times past, even the sons of GOD, "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." (Eph 2:2) "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) "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2Cor 13:5)*

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