

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 JOY OF THE LORD

Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.

Psalms 30:11

The most glorious aspect of the incarnation of our LORD is that *"in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren"* (Heb 2:17) HE took upon HIMSELF a perfect body and underwent the exact same trials, emotions, fears, and concerns that those who were espoused to HIM from before the foundation of the world have ever experienced. As Paul says, HE *"was in all points tempted (i.e.; tested or tried) like as we are, yet without sin."* (Heb 4:15)

There is no heartache which HE has not felt. (see Luke 7:13) No sadness which has not gripped HIS heart. (see John 11:35) No fear which HE has not grappled with (see Heb. 5:7-8) Nor is there any sorrow which HE has not undertaken for those whom HE calls HIS own. *"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."* (Isa 53:3) *"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken."* (Isa 53:4-8)

Apart from such HUMANITY it would have been impossible that HE could have been the REDEEMER of HIS children, according to the standard of HIS law which HE was determined to keep in order that HE, *"might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."* (Rom 3:26) As Ezekiel declared *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."* (Eze 18:20)

No one can bear the sin of a man except that one whose sin it is. CHRIST became sin for HIS elect bride by virtue of HIS everlasting union with her. Even as Eve was taken from the side of Adam, being flesh of his flesh, so too was the elect bride taken from the side of CHRIST from before the foundation of the world. *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* (2Cor 5:21) In this union HE is willingly judged as a sinner, undergoing the exact penalty which the law demands of a sinner (see Rom. 6:23) while HE imputes HIS righteousness to her. Apart from an everlasting union this could not legally occur but by virtue of this union she cannot be denied that which HE has provided. She is made HIS joint heir in all things: in HIS suffering, HIS satisfaction of the law, and HIS righteousness. HE has assumed her debt, she has been given HIS inheritance and eternal life.

Thus we see HIM being born, growing up as a lad, *"in favor with GOD and man"* and toiling under the curse of the law, (see Gen.3:19) just like all of the sons of Adam around HIM. Yet not one time did HE do so in order to satisfy HIMSELF. Rather HE did all these things for the elect's sake. *"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich."* (2Cor 8:9)

Truly, only a MAN who is also DIVINE, could so selflessly undertake such hardships for those whom HE loves. There is a limit on all natural human love, but that which HE displayed is totally without boundaries or restrictions, "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." (John 13:1) "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."(John 15:13) "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom 5:8) Thus is manifested the love of the GOD-MAN.

The clearest of prophetic pictures of HIS humanity united with HIS DIVINITY are found in the Psalms. Quite often we see CHRIST in the actions and prayers of the Psalmist and HIM putting HIMSELF in the place of those who cry out day and night for deliverance and help in the day of trouble. Surely the words of the children are first spoken by CHRIST, as HE learned obedience by the things which HE suffered and as HE sought refuge in HIS heavenly FATHER whose will HE came to perform, leaving no stone unturned, nor any jot or tittle of HIS FATHER's purpose left undone. Especially the prayers of the Psalmist have indeed originated with CHRIST.

Thus we see here, in Psalm 30, the LORD, (in the words of David,) extolling the glories of HIS FATHER for HIS triumphs over HIS enemies and those foes that did set themselves in array against HIM. HIS own arm gained HIM the victory (see Isa 63:5) yet as an obedient SON HE gladly gave glory to the ONE who sent HIM.(v.1) HE rejoices in the HOLINESS of GOD which preceded HIS triumph over the grave, giving glory to HIM who raised HIM from that tomb. (v.2-4) HE would remind the saints of the temporary nature of all of the troubles of this life and the certain prospect of an end to all sorrow and tears. (v.5-6) This hope was as much HIS, as a MAN facing great sorrow, as any of HIS saints who have known such brokenness. HE excelleth them all.

Though HIS children often feel themselves forsaken and alone when HE is pleased to hide the light of HIS face, (v.7-10) none of them have ever endured the great depths of barrenness which HE did when HE cried "My GOD, my GOD, why hast THOU forsaken me". So here HE is quite acquainted with the feelings of our infirmities, having experienced them, firsthand, even as we.

Yet HIS sorrowing does indeed turn to joy at the prospect of redemption which is set before HIM (v.11,12). The saints do rejoice in that redemption which HE has obtained for them to enjoy, yet HE does rejoice in that redemption which HE has provided for them by HIS own hand. It is for this very purpose that HE came into the world and it is here that we see HIS greatest delight.

We are exhorted to cast our eyes and our hope upon HIM. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb 12:2) HE would fulfill that purpose for which HE came even as the angel announced to Joseph, "Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Mat 1:21) This is indeed a place of rejoicing for the Psalmist, but an even greater one for HIM who delighted to perform HIS FATHER's will.

Once again David speaks the very soul's desire of the LORD JESUS CHRIST when he says; "The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice! Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips."(Psa 21:1-2) The FATHER declared to HIS only begotten SON, "the KING upon Zion"; "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psa 2:8) HE has asked and HE has received. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10); from every tribe, kindred, and tongue.

"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." (Isa 53:10-12)

Nehemiah said, "The joy of the LORD is your strength." (Neh 8:10) This is most clearly true for the saints of GOD who rejoice in the salvation which is secured and applied by the work of their REDEEMER KING. Yet it is even more clearly demonstrated by HIM who came to do HIS FATHER's will and who "is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it" (Psa 19:5-6) HE delights in the salvation of sinners. Do you rejoice with HIM? mam