

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 GLORY OF THE KINGDOM

But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Micah 4:1-2

Quite often, when men discuss doctrines related to the study of end times (eschatology) they find it difficult to be kind and tolerant of those who see these things differently than they do. Some become so dogmatic in their assertions of what they understand about these things that they will have no fellowship with those who disagree with them. Though we may have strong views about these matters we must remind ourselves constantly that, at best, "we see through a glass darkly". Now if any man does not have firm convictions about what he understands the scriptures to teach concerning eschatology, then that man should not speak or write about them at all, rather than parroting some line of doctrine he has heard others set forth. But if he chooses to set forth those things that he believes have been revealed to him, let him do so with a full understanding of his own human frailty and proneness to error. (see Phil.3:12,13; John 13:7)

It is not necessary for all of GOD's children to understand or totally agree on all points of doctrine in order for them to walk together as brethren in the LORD. Diversity is the backbone of CHRIST's church, unlike the structured uniformity of manmade religion. One of the many errors of modern "missionaryism" was (and to some extent still is) the belief that men must adopt certain cultural practices in order for them to be true believers. It is often difficult to discern between the desire for this uniformity and the desire for men to bow before the risen SAVIOR. It is not difficult to love someone who thinks and acts exactly like we do. The true test of love comes as we are forced to love men for CHRIST's sake. If we are going to have tests of fellowship (and we must) let them be about whether or not a man desires to worship and exalt the LORD JESUS CHRIST as the only begotten SON of GOD and not about whether or not he thinks there is going to be a future, literal "millennium" or what tradition he embraces. (see Eph.4:16; I Cor.12:12)

The glory of the kingdom of GOD is the KING of that kingdom. The LORD JESUS CHRIST is that KING who shares HIS glory with none. We believe that the kingdom of GOD is a present entity and not one which we are waiting to see come to power. The scripture speaks of CHRIST as that KING whose kingdom is everlasting. HE was born a KING and presently rules HIS kingdom without rival. There are many enemies of this kingdom but they are all defeated foes though they are not yet all completely destroyed. HIS kingdom has come in the fullest sense yet there is to be a more glorious enjoyment of it for the people of GOD when the last enemy is destroyed. (see I Cor. 15:26; Rev.21:4;)

This present time is the "last days" spoken of here in Micah's (and Isaiah's see Isa.2:2,3) prophecy. We believe the mountain of the LORD's house to be a reference to HIS church here on earth. HE said to Peter, *"upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* (Matt 16:18) Many who seek to establish their own kingdoms in the earth try to define this church as the one they belong to. One that adheres to their traditions, principles, practices, and doctrines. But this church cannot be surrounded by walls, rules of decorum, or confessions of faith. This is the *"church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven"*. (Heb 12:23) This is a kingdom, much greater than the imaginations of men, whose boundaries exceeds their wildest dreams. This is a church which is in no way dependent on the abilities, money, nor talents of men for its increase. This is a church which will not disappear with the passing of time. This is a church which does not trace its lineage through an unbroken line of apostolic succession but is directly linked to the KING himself. This is a church which has no need of human priests, earthly mediators, prophets, nor clergymen because all of its revelation and mediation is wrapped up in the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

This church is not confined to any nationality, but all nations shall flow into it. It does not embrace any culture except a culture of the worship and imitation of CHRIST. It has no need for the establishment of rules of order or codes of conduct for the LORD has written HIS laws upon the very hearts of HIS people. The only law which is practiced here is the law of love.

Religious men will never embrace this church because there is no hierarchy, only a KING. All of its members occupy the same status and stature before HIM. There is no place to be had for those who love places of preeminence and honor. No room for those who desire to be lords over GOD's heritage. Religious men will never embrace this church because the only uniform conduct of its devotees is love and devotion to JESUS CHRIST. Religious men will never embrace this church because there is no source of gain except in the adoration of the LORD. Religious men will never embrace this church because there are no mysteries to be unfolded nor mystic experiences to explain. They cannot hold sway over the multitudes like the witch doctors of paganism. All is made clear in the revelation of JESUS CHRIST as LORD of all. *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end,"* (Isaiah 9:6-7)

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