

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

NO MORE SEA

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. Revelation 21:1

The events set forth in the book of the Revelation have probably been the subject of more books and sermons (especially in the last 100 years) than those of any other book in the Bible. Yet we can safely say (after the surveying the diversity of information disseminated) that less is really known about this book than any other. Each major prophetic group, whether they be a-, pre-, or post millennialists lay claim to having an understanding of it which supports their viewpoint precisely. One thing is certain and that is that they cannot all be right and most likely they are all wrong to one degree or another. Keep in mind that the Jews (to whom were committed the oracles of GOD) were great students of prophecy and they missed totally the truth of the prophecies which plainly revealed the coming and work of CHRIST.

While we may not be able to precisely interpret each and every passage in this highly figurative book we can be certain about its subject. The apostle John tells us plainly that this is the “*Revelation of JESUS CHRIST*” (*Rev.1:1*). We sometimes hear the book referred to in the plural as “*Revelations*” yet there is no “s” at its end. Some approach it as though it were plural, as though there are many “*revelations*” in the book. They draw charts, go into detailed explanations of the governments of the earth supposedly represented by various symbols, and “uncover” previous heretofore unknown information. Many are adept at what Bro. C.Parker Thomas used to describe as “numbering the hairs on the horses tails”.

Whatever else we may discover in this glorious book it will always be setting forth CHRIST as the LORD and MASTER of this and all other worlds. All of HIS will shall come to pass and all that is necessary for us to know as HIS children will be given to us. This is the “*Revelation*” of CHRIST and not the hiding of HIM. Some of the “great prophets” of our day assure you that you must buy their book in order to grasp the unfolding of the mysteries which have been revealed to them alone. CHRIST said, “*when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*” (*John 16:13*)

We make no claims to be able to unfold any secrets found in the pages of this book, but we are quite certain that the revealing of CHRIST in the gospel forever removes the mysteries which were kept secret from the foundation of the world. (see *I Cor.2:6-16; Eph.3:9; Col.1:26*) We look for no “teachers” or “prophets” to tell us of “hidden” things in types and symbols. That which we need to know has been “revealed” in CHRIST, we look for no other SAVIOR, we bow to no other MASTER. HE is the KING of kings and LORD of lords, neither is there salvation in any other name.

Patmos is a Greek island just off the coast of Turkey. The apostle John received the inspiration to write this book while he was living there. History tells us that John was banished to that island

by the Roman Emperor Domitian around the year 94 AD for the crime of preaching the gospel throughout Turkey and especially around Ephesus. (see Rev.1:9) John was up in years (probably in his late eighties or early nineties) when he wrote this book. No doubt in the loneliness of his exile from the brethren; he would gaze longingly across the narrow passage of the Aegean sea which formed a barrier between himself and those he loved so much. Perhaps, as he saw the vision of the new heavens and the new earth unfold he realized that there would be no separation among the saints of GOD in that heavenly Jerusalem, so he delightedly penned the words of chapter 21, “*and there was no more sea*”.

John said, “*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*” (1 John 3:14) The LORD JESUS said, “*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*” (John 13:35) One of the evidences that a man has been born again can be seen in the fact that he (or she) loves the people of GOD. They, and not the world, are those who he desires to be with in fellowship and service. I am often puzzled by those who profess to know the LORD JESUS CHRIST as master and savior yet seem to be content to live their lives apart from fellowship with those who are walking with the LORD. It is quite common to see some of this persuasion happily pursuing the pleasures of this world with little or no thought to the benefits of meeting with the saints and even less to the benefit they can be to the saints.

I am convinced that the children of GOD cannot be complete nor can they ultimately grow in grace and the knowledge of the LORD without the continual interaction with one another that is nurtured in being part of a local assembly of the saints. When we are taken from this world we shall ultimately be forever with the LORD and HIS saints in that new heaven and earth which John writes about. Our bodies will be changed from corruption to incorruption in a moment, our fleshly nature will pass away, but our desires which are the fruit of that new creature formed in us will not change but will remain as HE has wrought them in us by the new birth. If we do not love the saints and desire to be in their presence now how can we love to be in their presence for eternity? “*He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*” (1 John 4:20)

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