

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume III

Issue 22

Published occasionally for Zion's mourners

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

REVELATION

And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. 2 Kings 6:17

Elisha, the prophet, could obviously see something that his young assistant could not. He was a man upon whom a double portion of Elijah's spirit (i.e.; power) was bestowed (see II Kings 2:9-15), but even he did not have the power to enable this young man to see the glory of GOD which surrounded them. Therefore, he prayed that GOD would open the young man's eyes to reveal to him what was obvious to the prophet.

The natural man can see everything about JESUS CHRIST that the born again believer can see except one thing. He cannot see the glory which surrounds HIM. Religion can teach men the facts concerning the person and work of CHRIST. It can even instill in them a reverence and respect for the moral truths that HE set forth as HE preached among men. They can learn the "ways of religion" like they can learn anything else. They can be taught to read the scriptures regularly, attend meetings, pray, speak in tongues, get along with their spouses, be "successful" in business or life in general, tithe, and do all sorts of noble deeds and perform needful services. The emotions of men can be played upon which can cause them to make emotional commitments to follow prescribed paths and seek out "experiences" which have no rational explanation. A natural fear of death can be used to cause them to seek out some means to escape its clutches. The fear of judgment can cause men to cry out for a remedy for their certain doom, when they are convinced of such by preachers of fire and brimstone. But when the smoke of hell's destruction clears and fractured emotions are brought under control, such convictions seem to fade away as easily as they appeared.

Church rolls across this land are filled with the names of people who at one time or another responded to these emotional pleas, perhaps sincerely agreeing with everything they were told. They walked down the aisle, joined up, maybe even had an ecstatic "experience", and for a season (perhaps even a lengthy one) they continued in this newfound way. But the day came when the luster of their commitment wore off and they found themselves involved in something for which they had no heart, so like the sow that was washed they returned to their wallowing in the mire. From time to time they even clean themselves up and return for another dose of religion. Or there are others who for one reason or another are loathe to completely abandon their commitments who continue on going through the motions of being "faithful" while their heart is cold and indifferent to the things of GOD. The ways of religion become so ingrained in them that they continue on without a clue as to who the Almighty GOD of glory really is. They often endure the "brow beating" of (often well meaning) legalistic and conditionalist preachers who implore them to act a certain way and perform religious deeds, expecting that one day they will "learn" how to be good "Christians".

When man fell in the garden of Eden, he lost any sense of the glory of GOD which he may have possessed. Adam thought to hide himself from the LORD, (see Gen.3:6-10) a thought which had never entered his mind before sin crippled and robbed him, filling his heart with fear. The LORD told Nicodemus that a man would have to be transformed in his mind and heart (born again) in order to see the kingdom of heaven. (see John 3:3) This kingdom is not one of flesh and blood, though countless numbers of Judaizers and their followers have tried to make it so. This kingdom which CHRIST has established in the earth and the heavens is one which cannot be "seen" by the natural eyes of men. They need a "revelation" in order to comprehend it. Peter testified that JESUS was the "CHRIST, the SON of the living GOD". The LORD said, *"Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."* (Matt 16:17-19)

Many bible scholars say that this rock upon which the church is built is faith. Roman Catholics are convinced that the LORD was literally talking about the man, Peter, hence they build their convoluted idea of apostolic succession and popery. But I believe the context of the passage would lead us to conclude that HE was saying the same thing to Peter that HE said to Nicodemus. The very basis upon which HIS church is built is the personal, individual revelation of JESUS CHRIST as LORD and SAVIOR. Now this is totally different than someone simply being taught some facts, or even admitting that these facts are true.

The revelation that sin benighted men need is an unveiling of the absolute glory which surrounds the ONE who is both LORD and CHRIST. A man can learn the facts of HIS death, burial, and resurrection and forget them tomorrow. But when the LORD opens that man's eyes to behold who JESUS CHRIST really is HE burns an indelible impression upon the man which changes not only his perspective of himself but makes him a lover of the way of CHRIST.

Let those of us who see, pray for those who see not, perhaps the LORD of grace and glory will show them, even as HE has been gracious to reveal HIMSELF to us. *"And the hand of the LORD was there upon me; and he said unto me, Arise, go forth into the plain, and I will there talk with thee. Then I arose, and went forth into the plain: and, behold, the glory of the LORD stood there, as the glory which I saw by the river of Chebar: and I fell on my face."* (Ezek 3:22-23)

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