

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

BUT THAT'S NOT FAIR!

Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.

John 21:21-22

Anyone who has raised children has more than once heard the phrase "but that's not fair." I don't believe anyone has ever had to sit down with their children and instruct them on being sure that everything is done with a sense of fairness as far as they are concerned. The natural man seems to have the mindset of seeking his own best interest as soon as he is born. It is far easier to teach a child how to be fair to others than it is to take from them the innate sense of what they deem to be fair as it relates to their own desires. Paul anticipated this mindset when he was discussing the doctrine of GOD's sovereign right to choose some vessels unto honor and some to dishonor. (see Rom.9:19,20)

The natural man has no more hated concept of DEITY than one which presents HIM as an absolute GOD whose purpose is unaffected by the will and activities of men. To consider that GOD can and does do exactly as HE pleases; regardless of the desires or will of the creature is sure to cause the old Adamic nature to rise up and begin to accuse HIM of wrongdoing. Paul said "*they did not like to retain God in their knowledge.*" (Rom 1:28) When they "knew" who GOD was "*they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*" (Rom 1:21) They became wise in their own eyes and were willing to worship a false god of their own imagination and making who was like the creature itself rather than highly exalted above all that they could think or say. (see v.23) Man's religious nature causes him to want a god of some sort and he is willing to worship any GOD but the ONE who determines (i.e.; predestines) everything that shall and does come to pass without any consultation with HIS creation.

By nature, men want a GOD they can influence and persuade. They want rain when it suits them, healing from whatever disease befalls them, and in general whatever they feel like they need. Most of so-called Christendom believes that GOD is basically at the beck and call of men. In fact they picture HIM as hoping someone will "allow" HIM to do what HE wants to do. In essence they see HIM as quite powerless apart from the operation of man's "free will". They speak about HIS power but say that HE has no hands, mouths, or feet but ours. This sort of a "wheelchair god" is exactly how David described the gods of the heathen. (see Ps.115:4-8) He contrasted those gods with the True GOD when he said "*But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.*" (Psa 115:3)

Whether GOD raises us up in HIS mercy or casts us forever from HIS presence to our own destruction is surely HIS prerogative and in keeping with HIS own Holy and Righteous character. HE may not always do exactly what we would desire for HIM to do, HE may

confound our every desire, HE may leave us destitute and hopeless, but HE will always be GOD and worthy of our praise. HE owes no man anything. If HE had created the world and all of its inhabitants for the express purpose of destroying it in the pit of hell; which one of HIS creatures could accuse HIM of wrong doing or impeach HIM in any way? HE will do right, HE may show mercy. It is only when a man has come to a place of understanding that fact that HE can appreciate the grace and mercy of GOD which has been revealed in the gospel of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The doctrine of HIS unconditional election must then be seen as the divine cordial that it is. HIS particular and definite atonement will appear in all of its glory as the cornerstone of HIS redemption. HIS irresistible grace and effectual calling must be a crowning jewel whose splendor shines as HIS children worship at HIS footstool. The glories of HIS preservation of all of those which were given to HIM in the covenant of redemption can be viewed with great gladness.

Yet there will be many who will carp and grow angry at the mention of such truth, and by doing so they will show their disdain for the true GOD, preferring the honor and benefit of men over the glory of HIM who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. We are not concerned with whether or not men think the doctrines of the Bible are "fair" or whether or not they think every man ought to get a square deal and a fair chance. Salvation is not by chance nor is it awarded on the basis of anything which the creature can accomplish. If any man is saved it will be according to the sovereign mercy of GOD who has appointed such a man to receive HIS blessing. If any man has heard the call of the gospel it will be because HE has given him ears to hear and eyes to see. If any man believes the gospel it will be because HE has in sovereign mercy bestowed the gift of faith to that man. If any man perseveres to end, it will be because HE has kept him from falling. Grace is not fair. Nor is mercy. Those who receive what is fair and just shall be destroyed forever in hell and not one can bring a railing accusation against HIM who shall justly punish sin. But oh those who have been made the recipients of HIS mercy must forever praise HIM who alone has made them to differ from another and has granted to them something they did not deserve.

- 1 Grace! 'tis a charming sound,
Harmonious to the ear;
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear.
- 2 Grace first contrived a way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps that grace display
Which drew the wondrous plan.
- 3 Grace first inscribed my name
In God's eternal book;
'Twas grace that gave me to the Lamb,
Who all my sorrows took.
- 4 Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know;
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.
- 5 Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise. (Gadsby's Hymns; #201 by Phillip Doddridge 1702-1751)