

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume VI

Issue 32

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

HE WIST NOT

And she said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times before, and shake myself. And he wist not that the LORD was departed from him.

Judges 16:20

All things that transpire in the earth are designed by GOD to occur for HIS glory alone. HE plainly told Moses, *"For thou shalt worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God."* (Exo 34:14) Nothing can thwart HIS will or go contrary to HIS purpose. HE is an absolute GOD. HE knows the end from the beginning not simply because HE is able to see into the future but because the end and the beginning and all things in between are drawn and ordered by HIS mighty Omnipotent hand. HE has left nothing to chance nor has HE drawn up any "contingency plans" in case things don't go as HE desires. David said it well, *"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."* (Psa 115:3)

GOD will have as much glory in the raising up of a mighty nation to power and prosperity as HE will in the destruction of that nation, and vice versa. Paul said, *"For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."* (Rom 9:17) Egypt enjoyed many years of prosperity and power and the LORD blessed them abundantly with great inventions and knowledge but HE merely fattened them up for their own destruction according to HIS purpose that men might know there is a GOD who reigns and will deliver HIS people from all oppression.

Did HE not do the same with Babylon and yet bring the very King Nebuchadnezzar, who HE blessed with untold riches and power down to his knees to eat grass as an ox and to confess; *"And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? At the same time my reason returned unto me; and for the glory of my kingdom, mine honor and brightness returned unto me; and my counselors and my lords sought unto me; and I was established in my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added unto me. Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."* (Dan 4:34-37)

Well meaning "moralists" (some would call them conditionalists) see all of the "what ifs" in the various accounts of GOD's dealing with HIS people in the scripture but usually fail to see the glory of the "what was". Those who would only see the immorality of David with Bathsheba and the resultant heartache and sin brought on by that union often miss the fact that GOD directed this whole incident to occur to fulfill prophecy and to demonstrate to

David the depravity of his own heart and in it to remind every sinner HE has called after David that unless the LORD restrains us we shall all fall into the same thing if not worse. Who among the saints of GOD has not read Psalm 51 and identified themselves with the lament of David or been comforted by the hope which he expressed.

Likewise when these "moralists" look at the book of Job they see wisdom in the words of Bildad, Eliphaz, and Zophar. They see all of Job's failings but they cannot see the sovereign hand of GOD dealing with Job according to HIS purpose and not according to some conditionalist concept wherein Job could earn the blessings of GOD or have them withheld simply because of disobedience. They cannot see that any obedience which might occur in the sons of GOD is the product of HIS work in them. When they look at Samson they see a sad tale of the wasted potential of Samson's life. Now indeed who can fail to see the demonstration of man's stupid headlong rush to his own doom but the account of Samson is given to teach us a much greater lesson than any of that.

GOD would demonstrate that the power of HIS might is that which enables HIS children to triumph. It seems quite apparent that Samson was not built like the Incredible Hulk or it would have been obvious to his enemies wherein his strength lay. He was just an ordinary man who was indwelt with the extraordinary power of GOD. GOD would have all of the glory in Samson's triumphs, his seeming defeat, and his ultimate triumph in the destruction of the Philistines. The LORD's people need the continual exhortations of the scripture which remind us "*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.*" (Zec 4:6)

The steps of Samson which led him to Delilah's house were as much ordered of the LORD as those which he took in slaying a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass. (see Prov.16:9) GOD would raise up Samson to make HIS power known in the earth and HE would bring Samson down to demonstrate the same. He would especially manifest the latter to Samson himself that he might know wherein his power lay. (see Jonah 2:1-10)

Some have surmised that Samson's strength was in his hair, but it was not his hair that he was unaware had been taken from him when Delilah bid him rise, but the very presence of GOD. His hair was but a symbol and not the substance of his strength. The LORD brought Samson to a place wherein he would ask the LORD for strength when he said, "*O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God.*" (Jdg 16:28)

In the life of Samson we see the fact that the power of GOD alone is that which would enable HIS children to accomplish anything of value. We see that when that power is removed they can do nothing. (see John 15:5) Because of the dullness of our hearts and the weakness of our minds we are often not even aware when HE departs. This is why man is so in love with his own religious ways. It is easier to rely on the arm of the flesh but ultimately that can bring no satisfaction to the sons of GOD. The greater lesson taught in the life of Samson is the depiction of redemption in type and foreshadow.

Samson was not apparently different looking from other men. The LORD JESUS CHRIST took upon HIMSELF the likeness of sinful flesh and only stood out from other men because of the power that HE possessed. (see Isa.52:2-4; 42:2; John 3:34)

Samson was brought low, even to the valley of the shadow of death because of sin. The LORD JESUS CHRIST was delivered up to HIS tormentors for the same. Whereas Samson suffered for his own sin, the LORD JESUS CHRIST had no sin of HIS own but gladly took upon HIMSELF the guilt of those whom HE came into the world to redeem. (see II Cor.5:21)

Samson's greatest triumph came before a mocking crowd and he destroyed his and his peoples enemies in his death. So too the LORD JESUS CHRIST was brought as a "*lamb before its shearers*" but in that ignominious death on Calvary's cross, HE accomplished exactly what HE intended. "*Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*" (Col 2:14-15) HE is our CHAMPION in death and life.