

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

REDEMPTION: DECREED, SECURED, AND ACCOMPLISHED

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

Ephesians 1:7

GOD alone inhabits eternity and possesses immortality and there is no such thing as the passing of time in HIS consideration of things. *"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."* (2Pet. 3:8) HE sees all things exactly as HE has designed them to be. HE is without beginning and without end, so are all of HIS decrees. *"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world."* (Act 15:18)

The only things that man can ever know are those things which GOD is pleased to reveal to him. *"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us."* (Deut 29:29) I have often heard men say that one day we'll know all things but such can never be the case because there are some things which can only ever be known by GOD HIMSELF who is the source of all knowledge and the epitome of truth. HE is the revealer of secrets and the ONE who keeps all things hidden except those things which it pleases HIM to show to men. This is proven by the fact that there were some things which were not even known by the LORD JESUS CHRIST when HE walked among men as a man (see Mark 13:32), even though HE thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD.

While GOD inhabits eternity all of HIS creation is subject to the passing of time. All of our comprehension is measured in terms of time. GOD is pleased to reveal HIMSELF to men in terms of time. HIS thoughts are above our thoughts, HE is before all things and by HIM all things consist. The scripture says *"In the beginning GOD created the heavens and the earth."*, yet in HIM is no beginning or ending for HE is the ALPHA and OMEGA. It is impossible for man to comprehend that which has no beginning or end, therefore GOD has been pleased to describe HIMSELF and the unfolding of events according to a "chronology" or time keeping.

For GOD to decree an event to occur is identical to its occurrence since HE is eternal and not limited by the passing of time in any fashion. HE is the ONE who *"quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were."* (Rom 4:17) So we say that all things begin with the decree of GOD and are certain to occur or unfold in time.

GOD has seen fit to make known unto men HIS purpose to redeem a people which HE chose in CHRIST before the foundation of the world. This is an era, before which, man has been given no revelation nor can he know anything about. We are certain that all of GOD's revelations to men are the result of HIS willingness to make HIS decrees known unto men and we are certain that HIS decrees are as ancient as HIMSELF. Yet being finite creatures we can only begin to comprehend HIS purpose as we see it unfold in a time frame of which we are a part presently and shall always be.

The LORD has described the central subject of and reason for HIS creation of the world, being HIS purpose or decree to manifest the glory of HIS grace in the salvation of those people which HE chose in CHRIST before the foundation of the world. There was nothing foreseen in them that moved HIM to make that choice except HIS own free and sovereign grace. *"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth."* (Rom 9:11) They were HIS children because HE made them so and loved them with an everlasting love, which is impossible for men to describe except to say HE has always loved them.

In order to set the stage for the unfolding of redemption HE formed Adam from the dust of the ground. All of those who were the objects of HIS love and placed in covenant union with CHRIST (though as yet they had no existence in time) along with the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction were in Adam plunged into the darkness of sin's Stygian night. This was so that HIS great grace in redeeming HIS people might be contrasted with the reprobation of those HE destined for destruction. *"For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?"* (1Cor 4:7)

The LORD has revealed that the pivotal event in the salvation of HIS people is the redemptive work of JESUS CHRIST. Redemption is the theme and substance of all that is set forth in the gospel. Without CHRIST's redemption there would be no gospel. Redemption is the buying back of something that belonged to you in the first place. The scripture says that the elect were given to CHRIST (see John 17:2), and yet in HIS purpose, they were lost for a season, until such time as HE purchased their redemption. (see Luke 19:10)

HIS redemption of HIS people is DECREED. *"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."* (Isa 53:10-11)

HIS redemption of HIS people is SECURED. *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."* (Rom 5:6-9) This is no abstract concept but the revelation that HE who knew no sin became sin for HIS people and absolutely satisfied the claims of HIS own holy law under which HE was pleased to subject HIS people and which had condemned them. HE actually paid their debt with HIS own life's blood, becoming their surety as their KINSMAN redeemer. It is here that all of the boasting of the sons of GOD is found even as Paul said, *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world."* (Gal 6:14) *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."* (Rom 3:24) HE has obtained eternal redemption for HIS elect by the shedding of HIS blood.

HIS redemption of HIS people is ACCOMPLISHED. In the time realm we speak of something as being accomplished when all that one has undertaken to be done is complete. We are certain that the redemption of GOD's people has been decreed and secured by CHRIST, but as of yet it is not complete. Paul said, *"Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."* (Rom 13:11) Though CHRIST has paid the complete and full price for the redemption of HIS people, HE has (as of yet) not come to claim that *"purchased possession."* But HE does presently give them faith. *"In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."* (Eph 1:13-14) This SPIRIT which causes them to cry Abba FATHER is the evidence that they shall indeed receive the adoption of sons. *"ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. -- even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body"* (Rom 8:15-23) We shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye.