

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume VII

Issue 20

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

THE GLORY OF THE LORD'S HOUSE

And the priests could not enter into the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD had filled the LORD'S house.

II Chronicles 7:2

GOD has been pleased to meet with men and manifest HIS presence to them in various ways since HE created Adam and placed him in the Garden of Eden. If it were not so then it would have been impossible that men should have ever had any knowledge of HIM. Even the very natural creation testifies of HIM to men. *"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."* (Rom 1:20) Yet men cannot comprehend even these basic truths. *"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."* (John 1:5)

So in the unfolding of HIS purpose in the earth HE has spoken through floods, flames, and a plethora of amazing phenomena, miracles, and deliverances of one sort or another. Yet always HIS glory shines forth and it is not in man to see the utter magnitude of it nor to reform his way because of it. Only for fleeting instances does the manifestation of HIS glory have any effect at all on men according to HIS design. How quickly after witnessing the parting of the Red Sea did the children of Israel begin to complain and murmur and doubt HIS provision for them. How quickly did they turn to wickedness while yet in the shadow of the clouds which surrounded Mt. Sinai. Even as the lightnings flashed and the thunder rolled, they persuaded Aaron to build a golden calf that they might fall down before it and commit all manner of abominations before HIS face.

We see here in the account of the temple dedication, FIRE from heaven coming down to consume the offerings upon the altar. Just as there was not the sound of a hammer heard in the construction of that temple, so, no man was able to kindle such a FIRE as fell that day. This was not the first time GOD revealed HIMSELF in a heaven sent inferno. When the Tabernacle was first set up, HE consumed the offerings from off the altar, (see Lev. 9:24) nor would it be the last time. Who could forget the showdown between Elijah and the priests of Baal. Elijah issued this challenge to them, *"And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God."* (1 Kgs 18:24) Then after many hours GOD was pleased to manifest HIS glory by the very fire that Elijah described, *"Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."* (1 Kgs 18:38) This was indeed an unquenchable fire because it was not kindled by men.

Yet because of the innate depravity of men, it was not many years before many turned back to the worship of Baal and sought out many inventions, preferring to worship and serve the creature more than the CREATOR.

In this visitation of GOD to HIS temple, we see several things that testify to us of CHRIST and we are reminded that *"God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."* (Heb 1:1-2)

CHRIST is that FIRE sent from heaven which not only consumes the offerings which were placed upon the altar by HIS own hand, but was HIMSELF both the OFFERING and the SLAYER of the sacrifice. It shall ever remain a mystery to our wondering minds that HE would subject HIMSELF to the same law whose condemnation it pleased HIM to place HIS elect bride under. HE who thought it not robbery to be equal with GOD made HIMSELF of no reputation and humbled HIMSELF under the debt of sin which HIS people owed. Yet HE being a HIGH PRIEST forever over the house of GOD, HE entered in once into the holy place and obtained eternal redemption for HIS bride, who is the object of HIS everlasting love. Will this not be the subject of the praises and worship of the saints throughout the ages to come? *"And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."* (Rev 5:9)

Having redeemed HIS people by HIS own blood, HE is currently engaged in manifesting the glory of HIS kingdom by the gathering of them from the four winds. *"If he cut off, and shut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?"* (Job 11:10) *"Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save."* (Isa 59:1) *"And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."* (Act 13:48)

The priests (II Chron.7:2) who were appointed to minister in the temple could not even so much as enter it, when the glory of GOD filled the house. Men love the orderly ways of their religious services and delight in their rituals. Yet when the LORD is pleased to visit HIS possession, all of those things become as dung and nothing but that worship which is of the hidden man of the heart will suffice. This is because this worship is that which is kindled by HIS SPIRIT and can be neither extinguished nor aided by the works of the flesh. Even as the LORD told the Samaritan woman. (see John 4:23,24)

When the LORD visits HIS temple, (see 1 Cor.6:19) HE is pleased to perform a complete work. Religion nor the works of the flesh are of any value. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* (2Cor 5:17) There is no reformation nor renovation of the flesh spoken of but this is a totally new creation which heretofore did not exist in any form known to men. This is that which the LORD spoke to Nicodemus about, *"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."* (John3:6,7)

When the LORD performs a work HE will carry it through to completion. *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."* (Phil 1:6) There is no shadow of turning with HIM, HE knows those who belong to HIM and HE shall neither slumber nor sleep until HIS wheat is safely garnered.

Unless a man had been there on the day when the FIRE of GOD fell in Solomon's temple, it would be difficult to comprehend it and even those who were there could hardly recount it without being overwhelmed by the majesty of it rather than the intricate details of exactly how it took place. So it is when GOD visits HIS temple and brings HIS own from darkness to light they may not be able to recount or explain every detail of HIS dealing with them but they can confess, *"One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."* (John 9:25)

While all our hearts and all our songs, Join to admire the feast,

Each of us cry, with thankful tongues, "Lord, why was I a guest?"

"Why was I made to hear thy voice, And enter while there's room;

When thousands make a wretched choice, And rather starve than come?"

'Twas the same love that spread the feast That sweetly forced us in;

Else we had still refused to taste, And perished in our sin. #440 Gadsby's, by I. Watts