

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume VII

Issue 25

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

RECONCILIATION

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

Romans 5:10

One of the most common bookkeeping tasks that the average person has to take care of on a regular basis is that of reconciling their checking account. Quite often there are discrepancies between what a person thinks they have as a balance in their account and what the bank statement shows that they have. Therefore it is necessary to do a "reconciliation" in order to have a mutual agreement as to the remaining balance. I have discovered over the years that the bank is seldom the one in error but nonetheless the reconciliation of the account must take place as proof of that fact.

Reconciliation can be defined as a mutual agreement. It literally means to exchange one coin for others of equal value. A reconciliation takes place each time we buy something from the store and we receive the goods we purchased along with the change from the money we gave in exchange for those goods. In order for reconciliation to take place the purchaser and the seller must agree on the value of that which changes hands.

Paul said we were "*reconciled to GOD by the death of HIS SON*" while we were yet enemies. This plainly indicates that GOD was engaged in providing something for us before we were ever aware of it and even while we were in total rebellion against HIM.

The scripture unmistakably says that "*God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.*" (Psa 7:11) HE goes on to say, "*If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy. Rejoice, O ye nations, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto his land, and to his people.*" (Deut 32:41-43)

Now it seems clear to us that those whom GOD is pleased to call HIS enemies are those who HE has fitted for destruction. (see Rom.9:22; Acts 17:26) HE will laugh when their calamity cometh and have them in derision,(see Ps.2:4) HE will not at all acquit the wicked nor by any means clear the guilty. (see Nahum 1:3; Ex.34:7)

Yet we read that there are some who are under "no condemnation", there are some for whom CHRIST shed HIS precious blood to purchase their redemption. We are certain that GOD does not change HIS mind since HE is immutable. So has HE quit being angry at some? Or is it not true that HE has never been angry nor an enemy of those whom HE has loved with an everlasting love, those who are chosen in CHRIST before the foundation of the world.

They have ever been the objects of HIS love even before the creation took place and HE has never needed to be reconciled to them because of this affection. They are the apple of

HIS eye, HIS precious possession. So what does the scripture mean when it says we were enemies and HE has reconciled us to HIMSELF? I think that there is a two fold answer.

The first is that the only reconciliation that HE has required is that which has been brought about by the fact that HE has subjected HIS elect bride to the requirements of HIS holy law. She has hopelessly disobeyed that law and brought herself under its condemnation. HE will not disregard the law under which HE made her subject so in order to be just and her JUSTIFIER, HE has come into the world made in the likeness of sinful flesh and has suffered the curse of the law in her behalf, being made sin for her. HE is fully satisfied with that sin offering made by JESUS CHRIST the RIGHTEOUS and has delivered her forever from the penalty and destruction which the law demanded for all who break it.

The elect of GOD were born into this world with the imputed sin of Adam hanging about their neck, and according to the scriptures were by nature the children of wrath even as others, even though not appointed unto wrath. (see Eph.2:3; I Thes.5:9) The scripture says *"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled "* (Col 1:21) by the body (or death) of JESUS CHRIST. HE is not our enemy but we have been raging against HIS precepts from the moment of our conception and have hated HIS way as well as HIS Kingship. We have declared ourselves to be HIS enemies and it is while we were in such a state as that, that HE has seen fit to provide the means and basis of our reconciliation both as concerns the broken law and as to our recognition of that very justification.

But in order for reconciliation to fully take place there must be a mutual agreement. The account is fully settled as far as GOD is concerned. HE has provided both the ALTAR and the SACRIFICE. HE has paid every last farthing that was owed. No corrections can be made to this account. The balance reads, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."*(Rom 8:1) *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* (Rom 6:23)

This was all true while we were yet in the gall of bitterness and our mouths breathed out threatenings and slaughters. While we fulfilled the lusts of our flesh and mind and lived as the heathen do. We even (from time to time) might have gotten the bank statement in the mail yet we were too rebellious to consider its truth or unconvinced that this balance was correct. We were as yet unreconciled to GOD even though HE put HIS hand in by the door. We were even as Gomer, whom Hosea loved, *"For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal."* (Hos 2:8)

But thanks be unto GOD, that in the fullness of time, when it pleased HIM to reveal HIS SON in us, HE *"brought life and immortality to light through the gospel"* (2Tim 1:10) HE caused us to hear with our ears and see with our eyes the unsearchable riches of that which HE has prepared for all of those who are in CHRIST. The envelope which held the statement fell open in our hands and we read it with weeping eyes, **paid in full, paid in full**. HE gave us faith and we believed it and now every time we pick up this bible or hear some messenger sent from GOD to proclaim this glorious truth to us, we are ever more certain that the BANK is right, we are reconciled to GOD by the death of HIS SON, we have thrown down our arms of rebellion. We have kissed the SON. HE is our MASTER and LORD. We have confessed with Job of old, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:"* (Job 13:15)

Then the evidence of this reconciliation is seen as Paul said *"much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life"*. This is exactly what he meant when he said, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* (Gal 2:20)

HE has now given us this "ministry of reconciliation" that we might publish the glad tidings to sinners far and near, and know that it will be heard by as many as the LORD our GOD shall call.