

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

A LIVING STONE

To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

1Peter 2:4-8

When the children of Israel were thirsting after an arduous journey through *“the wilderness of Sin”* (see *Ex. 17:1*) and the memory of Egypt still fresh on their mind, and had pitched their tents in Rephidim, which was in the proximity of Mt. Sinai on its west side, they found themselves in a great thirst. Since it was towards evening and the light of the setting sun was burning upon them, they could find nothing wherewith to slake their thirst, for even this great mountain was no shelter from the light and heat which caused them to thirst before it. They cried out to Moses with much murmurings and complaining and the LORD was pleased to arise and meet their exact need.

Unbeknownst to them the LORD had already prepared a ROCK out of which would flow streams of water right in full sight of that mountain whereon HE would be pleased to deliver the law to Moses. But that water was hidden within IT and by GOD's design would not bring forth ITs lifegiving water until IT was smitten with Moses rod. ***“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”*** (Isa 53:4-5) That ROCK was CHRIST. (see I Cor.10:4) ***“And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he cleaved the rock also, and the waters gushed out.”*** (Isa 48:21)

The LORD instructed Moses to smite it with his rod and in obedience to the LORD he did just that, and the children of Israel drank from that ROCK. Only after the SON of GOD was smitten by the LAW, becoming sin for us, did those rivers of living water flow out of HIS side, for the benefit of those people for whom HE was afflicted, and the healing of the nations,

Another occasion arose when Israel was once again in thirst and complaining unto Moses (this time after the giving of the Law). This time the LORD told Moses to “speak to the ROCK”. Yet, in disobedience and even exhibiting a disdain for what the LORD told him to do, HE smote the ROCK twice. Yet the LORD still caused the waters of that ROCK to flow out for the benefit of the children of Israel.

The LORD will never leave nor forsake HIS people regardless of their disobedience and even unfaithfulness. ***“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat***

*upon him was called Faithful and True.” (Rev 19:11) The LORD would demonstrate to us through the disobedience of Moses that there is no righteousness in the law. **“Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.” (Gal 3:21-22)***

By the same token the Jews and all religious men could never receive the righteousness of CHRIST, **“For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.” (Rom 10:3)** This is that STONE which the builders rejected, that ROCK on which the church of JESUS CHRIST is built.

On account of Moses sin, the LORD did not allow him to lead the children into the land of promise, (see Num.20:12) in order to let us know that death and destruction come by the law which cannot in any wise give a man entrance into the heavenly kingdom.

CHRIST is the LIVING STONE. This seems a contradiction of terms. Who ever heard of a living stone? Stones are noted for their resiliency, strength, and endurance but never as animate objects. But this ONE with whom we have to do is both alive and unmoveable. HE is without compare and is the sole means of deliverance for those HE calls HIS own. The word generally translated ROCK in the OT literally means a fortress and is a place of the greatest safety for those who are hidden in IT.

“He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.” (Deu 32:4)

“There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.” (1Sam 2:2)

“And he said, The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer;” (2Sam 22:2)

“The LORD liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation.” (2Sam 22:47)

“The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.” (Psa 18:2)

“He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings” (Psa 40:2)

“Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” (Isa 32:1-2)

This LIVING STONE is at the same time a great offence unto some, for HE is a **“stone of stumbling”** and **“a rock of offence”** (see Isa.8:14;Rom.9:33), while HE is the **“ROCK of salvation”** to others. **“Unto you therefore which believe he is precious”: (1Pe 2:7)**

HE is the CHIEF CORNER STONE. **“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Act 4:12)**

HE is the ELECT, the ONE appointed by GOD. **“Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” (Isa 42:1)** The redeemed and the REDEEMER are united together in the covenant purpose of GOD and cannot in any wise be separated. Those who are the elect children are chosen in and hidden in CHRIST who is the ELECT SON over HIS own house.

HE is PRECIOUS. It is only fitting that the **“The precious sons of Zion” (Lam 4:2)** should be redeemed with that which is PRECIOUS. **“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.” (1Pe 1:18-20)**

None who have fled to HIM for refuge shall be confounded. **“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:37)**

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