

# 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*

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## THE KEEPER

*He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand.* *Psalms 121:3-5*

In the Uncle Remus tales, Brer Rabbit pleaded with Brer Bear and Brer Fox, not to throw him in the briar patch. Of course being the brilliant tactician that he was, he was using a bit of reverse psychology on them, and knew that the briar patch would be his best, means of escape from them, since he would be protected by the very thorns that would prevent them from pursuing him. The briar patch was his home, well protected from the intruders being hedged about with many thorns and brambles, and was a place of safety for him.

The Hebrew word which is translated, "keepeth" and "keeper" in these verses in the Psalms, literally means to hedge about with thorns. Such is the PROTECTION that is given to the sons of GOD.

**CHRIST is the faithful KEEPER of HIS sheep**, ONE who will never desert them at any time or for any reason. The LORD JESUS said, *"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is a hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep."* (John 10:11-15) *"But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil."* (2Thes 3:3)

**CHRIST is the powerful KEEPER of HIS sheep.** Time and time again we are reminded in the scriptures of the power of GOD who orders all things according to HIS own purpose. It is also quite clear in the scriptures that it is the purpose of GOD to "keep" those who HE calls HIS own, even as we read in Hannah's prayer; *"The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail."* (1Sam 2:6-9)

**CHRIST is the invincible KEEPER of HIS sheep.** *"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, ----- Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands. The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies." (Isa 42:6,12-13) "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." (Isa 53:11)* None can stand against HIM who has determined to deliver HIS people from the death and destruction that waits for the wicked. *"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be*

*afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.” (Ps 91:4-8)*

**CHRIST is the continual KEEPER of HIS sheep.** The Psalmist said HE *“shall neither slumber nor sleep”*. HIS eyes are always fixed upon those who are the *“apple of HIS eye”*. *“The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.” (Ps 34:15)* This is seen in Paul’s declaration, *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Rom 8:28)*

**CHRIST is the ultimate KEEPER of HIS sheep.** *“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy” (Jude 1:24)* Every one of GOD’s elect children shall be preserved and kept by the hand of HIM who has determined to bring *“many sons unto glory”* (see Heb.2:10). The LORD will keep HIS bride in the present time and forevermore, *“That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (Eph 5:27)*

Some tell us that the LORD’s children must remain faithful or the LORD will cast them away. There would be no hope nor comfort in such a thought for those who are acquainted with the depravity and unfaithfulness of their own sinful flesh. Not only that but it would be futile to build one’s house upon the quicksand of man’s supposed ability or faith. *“Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” (Ps 127:1)* *“Give us help from trouble: for vain is the help of man. Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies. (Ps.108:12-13)*

Unless the LORD should keep that which HE has started, by preserving HIS people in the midst of all of their calamities, they should all despair of ever arriving in HIS presence. Yet Paul clearly was confident that HE not only could but would preserve that purchased possession until the final day. *“I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (II Tim 1:12)* *“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)* *“But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil.” (2Thes 3:3)*

Christ is the Keeper of his saints, He guards them by his power;  
Subdues their numerous complaints, In every gloomy hour.  
What though they fear each dread alarm, Tried, and severely tossed;  
Held by the Saviour’s mighty arm, None, none can e’er be lost.  
He’ll lead them on fair Zion’s road, Though weary, weak, and faint;  
For O! they ne’er shall lose their God, Or God e’er lose a saint.  
How sure his great salvation shines; How full the vast reward;  
How firm the promise e’er remains: How faithful is the Lord!

#772 Gadsby’s Hymns

The LORD has designed each trial that HE is pleased to send to HIS children; both to remind them of their own weakness and to manifest HIS glory and faithfulness in their deliverance in them. The bitterness of each heartache is swept away by the manifestation of HIS tender mercies as HE is pleased to cause HIS sheep to depend upon HIS grace. *“There hath no temptation (or trial) taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” (1Cor 10:13)* *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)* *“I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” (John 17:15)*

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