

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

HE MUST INCREASE

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:6-7

John the Immerser (i.e.; Baptizer or Baptist) plainly declared that he was not the ONE who was sent from heaven. He testified that he was not worthy to even undo the straps of the LORD's sandals. In the second chapter of John's epistle, he spoke of both the origin of HIS message (see v. 32) and the degree of HIS authority. *"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand."* (John 3:34-35)

Some have opined that CHRIST will someday rule upon the earth but they are actually two thousand years too late. It is clear that CHRIST was sent into the earth with all power in HIS hands and declared to be the KING without rival. HE came for the purpose of establishing and manifesting HIS kingdom in the earth and HE has in no wise failed even as John went on to say *"He must increase"* (John 3:30) This was in direct contrast to the ministry of John as he said *"I must decrease"*. The message and ministry of John the Baptist is past and shall never be repeated, but that of CHRIST has no end nor diminishing, but rather unfolds in all of its glory as GOD is pleased to reveal it to those HE gives the privilege of being HIS sons.

The kingdom of CHRIST is not one of flesh and blood, does not occupy real estate, nor can it be observed by men (apart from divine revelation). John the Baptist, clearly said as much when he said, *"And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony."* (John 3:32) This was repeated by John the Apostle when he said, *"He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not."* (John 1:10-11)

Yet in the midst of HIS rejection, sorrow, and seeming defeat as multitudes of those, who at one time followed HIM, turned away and walked no more with HIM, HIS kingdom increased. When HE agonized in Gethsemane and sweat great drops of blood (see Heb.12:4) HIS kingdom increased. When HE was spat upon, mocked, beaten, and ultimately crucified, HIS kingdom increased. When HE was buried, HIS kingdom increased. When HE arose from the dead on the third day, HIS kingdom increased. When HE ascended to the right hand of the FATHER, where HE ever lives to make intercession HIS kingdom increases.

Since GOD is complete and perfect in HIMSELF HE cannot either diminish or gain stature, so it is impossible that the increase of CHRIST's kingdom should be related to an actual accrual of glory or status, since HE is already higher than the heavens and dwelling in the light to which no man can approach. Yet there is a constant unfolding of that glory to the

minds of those HE is pleased to give eyes to see. This shall have no end, for HIS people shall rejoice in that (which HE has accomplished in their behalf) throughout the ages to come. *"But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." (Pro 4:18) "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:" (2 Pet. 1:19)*

The kingdom of CHRIST is a mediatorial kingdom and its dominion stretches as far as the eye can see and encompasses men from every tribe, nation, and tongue upon the earth. None of those who are the subjects of this kingdom can ever perish nor be plucked out the hand of HIM who gives them eternal life. This is that kingdom against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

The number of those for whom CHRIST shed HIS precious blood in obtaining eternal redemption; can neither be increased or diminished but the manifest mercies and blessings which have been purchased for them as a result shall ever increase as GOD is pleased to give them the kingdom, revealing them heirs and joint heirs with CHRIST.. They have been appointed heirs of this kingdom and predestined to be conformed to the image of CHRIST.

It has pleased the LORD to send the proclamation of HIS kingdom to the four corners of the earth as HE sends men to preach the Gospel of this Kingdom. *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.." (1Cor 1:21)* Even as Paul declared, *"And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation."* (2 Cor 5:18-19)

In the present hour the LORD has ordained men to lift up the name of CHRIST, and has sent them into the earth to declare the *"appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."* (2 Tim 1:10) Is this not what Paul means when he says, *"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?"* (Rom 10:14-15) *"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"* (Isa 52:7)

What a glorious privilege it is to the saints of GOD to hear the blessed good news that CHRIST has set the captives free, that HE presently reigns, having destroyed all powers and principalities triumphing openly over them all, and is mighty to save. That man who is convinced of his own depravity and helplessness to escape the wrath to come can do nothing but rejoice at the sweet sound which foretells his deliverance. The only salvation that is fitted for sinners is one which is fully accomplished by the reigning KING, JESUS CHRIST.

Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched, Weak and wounded, sick, and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you, Full of pity, joined with power;
He is able, He is willing; doubt no more.
Let not conscience make you linger, Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness he requireth, Is to feel your need of him,
This he gives you, 'T is the Spirit's rising beam.
Come, ye weary, heavy laden, Lost and ruined by the fall;
If you tarry till you're better, You will never come at all.
Not the righteous, Sinners Jesus came to call. #723 Gadsby's by J. Hart

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