

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume VIII

Issue 40

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

ANTICHRIST

For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. *II John 1:7*

Just as Cain slew Abel, Ishmael despised Isaac, and as Esau envied Jacob, so the children of the bondwoman must always persecute those who are the freeborn sons of GOD. It is necessary that there should be divisions (i.e.; heresies, see I Cor.11:19) among those who profess faith in CHRIST so that those who are approved might be made known. So we see two great errors concerning the LORD JESUS CHRIST arise quite soon after HIS ascension among those who professed to be HIS followers.

While there are many doctrines of the Christian faith that a true believer may be confused about, a man must not be confused about the doctrine of CHRIST or he has no basis upon which his faith can stand. John clearly recognized those two errors and wrote concerning them to those churches under his care. He even identified those who held and promulgated these errors as deceivers and antichrists and cautioned the children of GOD to shun them.

The first of these errors arose when some said that Jesus of Nazareth was just a man who went about doing good but was not truly GOD. During CHRIST's earthly ministry HE spent much of HIS effort in showing HIS disciples HIS deity. Every miracle which HE performed, whether turning water into wine, healing the sick and giving sight to the blind, or raising the dead to life., served to testify that HE was indeed the fullness of the GODHEAD bodily. Yet because of their "slowness of heart", they were not able to fully grasp who HE was all at once, "*Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*" (John 14:8-9)

Ultimately HIS absolute DEITY was revealed unto them as we see Peter declare "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" (Mat 16:16) and later Thomas confessing, "*My Lord and my God.*" (John 20:28) Yet the time came when once again some supposed teachers of truth, embraced the notion that HE might not actually be the true and living GOD.

I recently heard of a survey that was done in which it was concluded that Atheists and agnostics had more general knowledge of the Bible and Christianity than those who profess to be Christians. I am not surprised at these results for two reasons: One, many of those who profess to be believers are such in name only and comprise that multitude which the LORD describes in Matthew 7:14-23. Profession of faith and possession of faith are not always synonymous. Two, those who are "religious" are often well versed in the letter of religion. The Pharisees are a good example of men who could quote the bible freely yet the LORD said they were of their father the devil. Atheism and agnosticism are the highest forms of "man's religion". Their system of "belief" is at the very core of man's innate rebellion against the MOST HIGH GOD who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of

the Earth and whose hand cannot be staid. They claim to be “irreligious” but in reality are the very epitome of “religion”. *“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God (i.e. for me) They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.” (Psa 14:1)*

The other error which John identified was that of those who say that the LORD JESUS CHRIST was not truly man or that HE did not come in the flesh. Very few of the world’s religions deny that there was a man, Jesus of Nazareth, who lived in the flesh. In fact most of them (the Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Mormons, Jehovah Witnesses, Campbellites etc) revere him as a great prophet and a magnanimous performer of good works who was ultimately slain. Yet they all deny that “JESUS CHRIST is come in the flesh” as do all others who deny that HE absolutely purchased the salvation of HIS elect at Calvary’s cross.

There is but ONE GOD, YAHWEH (or JEHOVAH) is HIS name, HE is the great I AM, HE cannot be seen, dwelling in the light to which no man can approach. HE has revealed HIMSELF to men in the person of the LORD JESUS CHRIST (JESUS literally means “JEHOVAH is SALVATION”) who is eternally ONE with the eternal FATHER and the eternal SPIRIT. JESUS CHRIST is the SAVIOR of HIS people who has come into the earth in the likeness of sinful flesh and has been made sin for HIS people.

Upon the fact that HE is truly GOD and truly man rests all of the hope of those who are HIS children. Were HE not GOD then HE could not have had the ability to carry out the redemption of HIS people in triumphing over sin and death according to HIS own design. Were HE not truly man, with flesh and blood like all other men, then HE could not have been a proper SUBSTITUTE to bear the curse of the law, which demands the death of all sinners.

HE is not a man who became GOD. HIS humanity has in no wise enhanced HIS deity. Rather HE is the eternal GOD who made the worlds according to HIS pleasure and did in HIS own time according to HIS own purpose took upon HIMSELF the likeness of sinful flesh in order to fulfill HIS purpose of manifesting HIS grace in the redemption of sinners.

HE has never attempted to save some and failed nor has HE in any wise made the salvation of any for which HE bled and died, dependent on any action or agreement of their own. HE has obtained eternal redemption for all of those which were given to HIM before the foundation of the world and for whom HE specifically came into the world to redeem, HE is the CHRIST, the REDEEMER, who has suffered once and for all as a payment of the sin debt of HIS elect bride.

Those who deny that CHRIST has purchased the redemption of HIS own and actually procured their temporal and eternal salvation, solely by the work which HE has performed must of necessity deny that *“JESUS CHRIST is come in the flesh.”* Those who say that CHRIST died to make salvation possible for any and all, who will just agree with his precepts and receive what HE has done as their salvation, deny that HE came to *“save HIS people from their sin”* as the LORD told Joseph.

Faith (which is the gift of GOD) is neither a bargaining chip nor a type of specie by which a man may secure an interest in that which CHRIST has done. Rather; that true faith which proceeds from the SPIRIT is the seal which GOD is pleased to bestow upon those who were hidden in CHRIST from before the foundation of the world. They are one and the same as those for whom CHRIST shed HIS precious blood and forever justified, being predestined to be called according to HIS divine purpose and grace.

To preach any other message is to deny the true gospel and declare a “Jesus” which is not the CHRIST. John called them deceivers and Antichrist. From such turn away. *“There be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” (Gal 1:7-8)*

mam