

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 MAN WITH AUTHORITY

For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Matthew 7:28-29

After HIS resurrection The LORD JESUS CHRIST said to HIS disciples, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (Mat 28:18-20) Then just before HIS ascension HE said to these same eleven, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Act 1:8)

The word "power" which the LORD used here in describing that which HE would confer upon HIS apostles is the Greek word, "dunamis", which literally means "a violent force, or miraculous strength". It is the root word from which we get our English words "dynamo" and "dynamite." However the word which HE used to describe the "power" which HE possesses is, "exousia", which literally means "the privilege of force, or mastery and jurisdiction."

While any power which is given to HIS disciples is conferred to them and is manifested by the outworking of HIS HOLY SPIRIT in them, HIS power is in no wise a derived power nor a conferred power but that which HE possesses as a part of HIS person and character. HE needs no one's approval nor can HIS power or authority be in any wise diminished by any action or lack thereof on the part of any of HIS creation or be subject thereto.

HE demonstrated that fact time and again as HE shut the mouths of the gainsayers who sought to overturn HIS words and proved HIMSELF to be invincible and untouchable until such time as it pleased HIM to lay down HIS life through the instrumentality of human hands which HE ordained to fulfill HIS own purpose. Even as HE told HIS disciples, "*Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.*" (John 10:17-18) "*Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*" (Act 2:23-24)

It was impossible that HE should in anywise be "holden" (i.e., seized or retained) by death because death is as much at HIS beck and call as is any other part of HIS creation, both animate and inanimate. Yet in order to fulfill the righteousness of HIS own purpose HE did subject HIMSELF to it, as a mortal man. As a mortal man HE did indeed triumph over death, forever destroying its power to keep or retain those for whom HE came into the world to deliver. "*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime*

subject to bondage.” (Heb 2:14-15) This is that which the apostle rejoices in as he embraces the hope of the resurrection saying, “So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1Cor 15:54-57)

One of the most glorious revelations in all of the scriptures is the fact that the GOD who inhabits eternity, without beginning or end, did take upon HIMSELF the likeness of sinful flesh and dwelt among finite men in a finite world. In so doing HE manifested HIMSELF as EMMANUEL, (GOD with us). This was no afterthought, nor remedy for an unforeseen problem but rather a fulfillment of HIS own purpose to manifest HIS glory in the redemption of sinners. Before ever the foundation of the world was laid, HE was already the LAMB slain.

The elect of GOD stood in no need of redemption or justification except insofar as it pleased HIM to subject them unto the law and its subsequent penalty of death. Yet HE stood as their COVENANT HEAD before the foundation of the world, in order that HE might be their REDEEMER and JUSTIFIER as mortals created by HIS hand to be the objects of HIS love, mercy, and grace in this world and that which is to come. This is too glorious for men to contemplate in all of its sublime details but we have merely been given a glimpse of it in order to declare the glory of HIM who is worthy of all praise in the complete deliverance of those objects of HIS mercy.

Who can plumb the depths of HIS love or scale the mountainous heights of the grandeur of HIS grace. HE who had need of no one and is subject unto no power or authority but HIS own, did take upon HIMSELF the sins of HIS elect bride, *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” (Rom 3:23-26)*

From time to time we hear some talk of “justification by faith” as if to say that men cause their justification to occur by believing the gospel. This is a total juxtaposition of the truth and a usurpation of the authority of JESUS CHRIST to justify HIS elect, totally apart from any activity of their own. The justification of the sons of GOD rests completely upon the finished work of JESUS CHRIST who is made their justification by the imputation of HIS righteousness to them solely based on that which HE has performed in their behalf.

They are given faith to believe it by that same POWER and thus are manifested as those whom HE has forever justified even as Abraham believed GOD. GOD was not waiting for Abraham to believe but was rather the moving cause of Abraham’s faith and the very OBJECT of it even as GOD’s children believe the gospel in the day of HIS power.

Jesus, thy blood and righteousness My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed, With joy shall I lift up my head.
When from the dust of death I rise, To take my mansion in the skies,
E’en then shall this be all my plea: “Jesus has lived and died for me.”
Bold shall I stand in that great day, For who aught to my charge shall lay,
While through thy blood absolved I am, From sin’s tremendous curse and shame?
This spotless robe the same appears, When ruined nature sinks in years;
No age can change its glorious hue; The robe of Christ is ever new.
O let the dead now hear thy voice; Bid, Lord, thy banished ones rejoice;
Their beauty this, their glorious dress, Jesus, the Lord our righteousness. *mam*