

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume IX

Issue 33

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

THE HOUSE OF OBED-EDOM

And the ark of the LORD continued in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months: and the LORD blessed Obed-edom, and all his household.

II Samuel 6:11

One does not have to read much of the scriptures to know that David was a man who was highly favored by the LORD. Yet in reading those same scriptures one can discover the fact that David was a man who had many flaws which manifested themselves in the multitude of his sins. While the scriptures say that he was a man after GOD's own heart, those same scriptures also reveal the utter depravity of David in the flesh. He was an adulterer, a murderer, a deceiver, and an overly indulgent father to his children just to name a few of his indiscretions. He was a man who was sometimes angry with GOD, disobedient to the LORD's direct commands and lifted up with pride on more than one occasion.

Yet we see the manifestation of the grace of GOD displayed in his life over and over again as the LORD was pleased to break his heart and bring him down to the dust of the earth in abject repentance. The LORD never cast him off because he was as a precious jewel in the eye of the LORD. He was a child of GOD through no effort or merit of his own but put on display as a trophy of GOD's amazing and sovereign grace. In this he is an example of all of those elect children whom the LORD has been pleased to love from before the foundation of the world.

The LORD has determined to bless HIS children in spite of their many transgressions and is not deterred in that determination by anything which may occur, since HE has decreed the end and the beginning of all things. Some would tell us that David was disobedient to the LORD when he looked upon Bathsheba with lust and brought her to his home. They would be absolutely correct for David's sin came up unto the LORD as a stench in HIS nostrils. Yet many of those who would be quick to point out David's sin would also balk and stumble when we declare that every action of David was ordained by the LORD for the purpose of ultimately revealing to David the depths of the hardness and wickedness of his own heart. This was the blessing of GOD.

David delighted himself in his own wickedness for a season but it was this very delight which the LORD caused to sour in David's mouth like a bitter herb, when HE sent the prophet, Nathan, to say, "Thou art the man." Oh did ever any words cut more like a knife or can there ever be a better illustration given to us of Heb.4:12, "*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*" than this.

The moralists, conditionalists, and the teachers of progressive sanctification would have us believe that morality and obedience is that which causes the blessings of GOD to be given to a man. They see man's obedience as a necessary part of his receiving the blessings of GOD and cannot comprehend the fact that obedience to GOD's precepts is that which is wrought in the heart by the operation of the SPIRIT of GOD and is itself the blessing of GOD. The work of the LORD in HIS people is not simply bringing them to an outwardly demonstrated morality but rather is a much deeper work wherein HE is pleased to acquaint them with the depths of their wickedness and causes them to cry out to be delivered from their daily pollutions. Rather than seeing

themselves as becoming increasingly righteous they see themselves ever more wicked and convinced of their worthiness of destruction apart from HIS mercy. This is exactly what David experienced as he prayed, *"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me."* (Psa 51:10-11)

The moralists would tell us that the LORD blessed David as a result of this prayer, but the fact is that the LORD blessed David to be able to pray such a prayer. It is an evident token of the LORD's grace for a man to be brought to repentance and the LORD does design the many manifold trials with which HE is pleased to exercise HIS people unto that very end. Those who are the LORD's can take great comfort in Paul's declaration to the Corinthians, *"There hath no temptation 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) The blessings of the LORD did not ever depart from the house of David (even in the most dark hour) anymore than they ever shall from those upon whom HIS everlasting love is set and for whom CHRIST did come into the world to deliver and secure the very gifts of GOD for them, by the shedding of HIS precious blood. (see Eph.4:7,8)

There is another man in the scriptures who is not quite as well known as David but who illustrates for us the wideness of GOD's mercy and the certainty that wherever the LORD is there is great blessing to those so favored. After David's debacle of bringing the Ark of GOD from the house of Aminidab (see II Sam. 6:1-8) according to his own design, he learned (very painfully) that there is but one proper way to worship the true and living GOD. (see John 4:23-24) During his period of this contemplation (three months) the Ark was left in the house of Obededom, the Gittite.

This Obededom appears to be a descendant of Levi who had so long dwelt among the Philistines in Gath, (the same region Goliath was from) that he is called a Gittite. Probably because he was indistinguishable from the heathen among whom he dwelt. Yet it is to this man's house that the Ark of GOD is brought. Is this not exactly what Paul means when he says, *"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by (grace ye are saved;)"* (Eph 2:2-5)

Obededom did nothing to deserve this great blessing but it was brought to him on the account of the death (Uzzah) of another man. In like fashion so do all of the sons of GOD receive the manifold mercies of GOD because another MAN died in their place and purchased their redemption. In fact it is this MAN's death that is the greatest display of that mercy. The sin of David which precipitated Uzzah's death was the catalyst of this great blessing coming to the house of Obededom, and though David's disobedience precipitated that course of events yet the LORD intended it for good to the house of Obededom. Is this not a demonstration of Romans 8:28, *"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)

I can think of no greater crime committed against humanity by humans than the betrayal and ultimate crucifixion of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, yet the LORD intended even this for good to those upon whom HIS love was set before the foundation of the world. *"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"* (Acts 2:23-24) *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."* (Rom 8:32-34)

mam