

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

THE AUTHORITATIVE SAVIOR

Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

Acts 4:10-12

Authority is conveyed by various means in earthly nations. In our Republic, all authority is based (ostensibly) in our Constitution, a document which was written to limit the powers of the very government which it establishes. Yet even this constitution is limited in its authority because it can only stand according to the consent of those governed thereby and can be amended by them. So in reality the authority resides in the people, a simple privilege which the vast majority seem to have abrogated and which those in places of power are reluctant to promote.

In the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, the king wielded a great amount of authority, even over life and death, yet as Darius discovered, even a sitting King could not change the ancient and historic rules of that nation. (see Dan.6:8-16) In like fashion as Nebuchadnezzar ruled over Babylon, the most magnificent of all ancient kingdoms, he discovered that his authority was actually very limited as he grazed in the fields as an ox. GOD who is rich in mercy brought him there that he might learn a most valuable lesson, *"all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan 4:35) "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." (Dan 4:37)*

The LORD JESUS CHRIST made a startling declaration to HIS disciples when HE said, *"All power (i.e.; authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Mat 28:18)* Then HE directed them to go forth teaching in HIS name (i.e.; authority). Heaven and earth itself could perish before that command which HE gave should fail to be carried out in the jot and tittle which HE demanded and designed. The prophet Isaiah foretold this when he said, *"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." (Isa 9:7)*

By this declaration of the LORD, HE made it clear to HIS disciples exactly who HE is. Up until this point HE had always spoken of HIS authority as being that of HIS FATHER. *"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." (John 5:30) "I am come in my Father's name." (John 5:43)* HE said that HE came to do HIS FATHER's will, yet now HE is declaring unto them that they must go forth according to HIS will and in HIS authority.

Now we are certain that no changes took place in HIS position of deity or power but rather in HIS revelation of HIMSELF to those whom HE loved. HE was on the verge of leaving them and ascending

back to the place from whence HE came in order to prepare for them a more permanent dwelling place. Lest they should think that HIS kingdom was of a carnal nature or that its seat of power would be on any particular piece of real estate, HE told them that HE was the very source and basis of all authority and that HIS kingdom was being established in the declaration of HIS truth and the calling of HIS children from the four corners of the earth. *"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."* (John 10:16)

Thus the Kingdom of GOD is manifested in the world as HE is pleased to reveal HIMSELF through the power of the HOLY GHOST in the preaching of the gospel. *"Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."* (2Tim 1:9-10)

Men sometimes confuse "strength" with "power" (i.e.; authority). This was Nebuchadnezzar's error as well as that of the Pharisees who plotted the death of CHRIST. They had the strength in their hands to take HIM captive and deliver HIM up to be crucified. Yet they had no authority to do so but merely acted according to the dictates of HIM who ordained their wicked actions to fulfill HIS own glorious purpose. *"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."* (Acts 2:23) In this they were just like Joseph's brother's who, acting in their own strength (and corruption), sold their brother into captivity, yet HE who had all "authority" ordained it for the good of Israel.

Nothing happens by "chance" in this world as HE who has all "power" ordains all things that come to pass, as HE builds HIS kingdom and establishes HIS Church in this world. The calling of the sheep as well as the feeding of them is directed by HIS mighty hand. *"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."* (John 10:9-11) Every blessing and every trial which enters the life of those whom HE has ordained unto eternal is directed, by HIM, to bring them into conformity with CHRIST. *"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."* (Rom 8:29)

The authority of JESUS CHRIST is demonstrated:

By HIS death on Calvary's cross. This was a grand display of HIS purpose to cancel sin, yet to men, it appeared to be the very antithesis of power. HE was here mocked by the multitude and the expectations of even HIS staunchest followers were quashed. *"But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel."* (Luke 24:21) Little did they know HIS "power". *"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us,---nailing it to his cross."* (Col 2:14)

By HIS resurrection from the dead. *"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."* (Rom 1:4) This was an event which transpired in the plain view of men, yet to only a few was it fully revealed. It is here, at an empty tomb that the doubts of HIS disciples are quelled.

By HIS ascension to the right hand (seat of power) of the FATHER from whence HE shall return to receive that which is HIS and destroy the wicked. *"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."* (2Thes 1:7-9)

By HIS giving gifts to men. *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."* (1Cor 1:18)

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