

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume X

Issue 43

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 PRINCE

Then said the LORD unto me; This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut. It is for the prince; the prince, he shall sit in it to eat bread before the LORD; he shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate, and shall go out by the way of the same. Then brought he me the way of the north gate before the house: and I looked, and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD: and I fell upon my face.

Ezekiel 44:2-4

Paul, writing to the Colossians describes the preeminence of the LORD JESUS, saying, “*And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.*” (Col 1:17-19) He goes on to say, “*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*” (Col 2:9) This word “fulness” means complete or filled up. It denotes the fact that nothing else can be added nor is anything lacking.

The clear message which is set forth in the declaration of the Gospel is that JESUS CHRIST is GOD of very GOD. HE is in no wise less than the one true and living GOD. The disciples of CHRIST did not at all understand this until after HE was pleased to leave them as HE ascended back into the heavens from whence HE came. This was first declared by Peter on the day of Pentecost when he preached to the multitudes of Jews from each of the twelve tribes which were in Jerusalem for the feast saying, “*Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*” (Act 2:36)

There was no doubt what he meant by this choice of words, and this very message pricked the hearts of many who heard him. He declared that JESUS of Nazareth, was “Lord” which means “the supreme ruler”, and by implication, “GOD.” Thus Peter began his ministry as a New Testament apostle having been a witness of HIS resurrection and ascension, and the revelation of the identity of CHRIST on the mount of transfiguration. The implication of all of those things which he had been taught culminated in this very concise and powerful declaration.

In order to preach the true gospel, one must be clear about this matter as well. HE is no mere representative of GOD, nor is HE some secondary figure in a hierarchy but HE is the Eternal GOD HIMSELF made manifest in flesh and blood. HE did not just seem to be flesh and blood but HE is in fact true flesh and blood born of the Virgin Mary. Preaching which fails to unequivocally declare these truths is ultimately that which will lead men astray. In fact it was a departure from and denial of this very teaching that gave rise to the Gnosticism and other errors which arose in the very early days of the Church.

This prompted John to write, “*Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*” (1John 2:23) The FATHER and the SON are ONE. It is impossible for a man in any wise to see the FATHER apart from seeing JESUS

CHRIST, the only begotten SON of GOD. *'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, Shew us the Father?' (John 14:9)* Isaiah foretold it when he said, *"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, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."* (Isa 9:6)

It is this same PRINCE of which Ezekiel speaks when he says, *'It is for the prince.'* The edifice which he is given a vision of is none other than the kingdom of GOD. This Kingdom is one whose glory is totally reserved for this PRINCE. As our text states, *"This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it"*. He had plainly said that *"the LORD, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it."* And this PRINCE did indeed enter in by it.

A prince is the son of a king, yet this PRINCE of whom we speak is the KING who sits in royal state in HIS everlasting Kingdom. This particular place of entrance was reserved for this PRINCE who alone *"hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."* (Rev 5:5) HE is the REVELATOR of the Kingdom of GOD, no man can enter in except by HIS decree. HE is not only the ONE who opens and no man can shut but HE is that ONE who shuts and no man can open, even as HE prayed, *"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."* (Mat 11:25)

HE is that PRINCE who sits in royal state in a kingdom of HIS own making and which is revealed not simply by decree but by the demonstration of the redemptive work which only HE could perform. It was heralded by the angels at the time of HIS birth saying, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."* (Luke 2:14) Even as Paul continues his discourse to the Colossians, *"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight:"* (Col 1:20-22)

This PRINCE is the ONE who is the DELIVERER of HIS people from the bondage of sin. HE has not merely been installed as a stately king by reason of inheritance, but HE has trod the winepress of the wrath of GOD and stained HIS garments with HIS own blood and that of HIS enemies as HE openly triumphed over all perceived impediments to HIS own glory and that of HIS elect bride and has owned this kingdom by HIS purchase. *"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."* (Col 2:13-15)

This PRINCE does presently "eat bread" before the LORD. *"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."* (Heb 1:3) HE has indeed finished the work which HE came to do and does sit in royal state in HIS own kingdom and enjoys it. Therefore we are, *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* (Heb 12:2)

This PRINCE is that ONE who lends "glory" to this kingdom. Even as Ezekiel testified, *"I looked, and, behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD: and I fell upon my face."* We find ourselves in the same position as Ezekiel, upon our faces in adoration and worship, as we have been given the privilege to see HIM who is the PRINCE and RULER of Israel. *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. "* (2 Cor 4:6) mam