

# 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*

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## THROUGH

*Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

*II Peter 1:1-3*

If we say that we have come through a door, we mean something quite different than if we say we have just come through some stormy weather. Coming through a door denotes a fixed point or position that we have entered a room by, therefore this statement relates to an object or place. Yet when we speak of passing through stormy weather we are describing an experience or an activity which unfolds over time. One expression relates to position while the other relates to practice or experience.

The salvation of the LORD's people is described in the scripture as involving both. This is illustrated quite well in this passage from Peter's second epistle. He says the children of GOD have "obtained" (literally by lot or gift according to the Greek) "*precious faith through the righteousness of GOD, and our SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.*"

That "faith" which they are said to have obtained (through no effort or ability of their own) is the gift of GOD, and is completely based on that which CHRIST JESUS the LORD has performed in their behalf. HE is the OBJECT of that faith. Even as HE said "*I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.*" (John 10:9) HE is a fixed point and it is in HIM that those, who are called, have believed.

The "faith" which they are given arises out of the same SOURCE and purpose that their election to life does. We see this illustrated in the book of Acts when the LORD opened the ears of the Gentiles to hear the message of Paul and Barnabas. "*And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*" (Act 13:48) Predestination (i.e., ordained) to life resulted in faith. This was not a process but rather the fulfillment of the purpose of GOD in calling those whom HE had chosen before the foundation of the world.

The LORD reveals those who are HIS by the manifestation of faith. The salvation of the sons of GOD is positionally fixed, even as the LORD declared. "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*" (John 6:37) Their number cannot be increased or diminished by any effort or failure of men. "*But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD:*" (Psa 37:39)

This is a source of great comfort to those who have no expectation of being able to gain the favor of GOD by their own activity. The man who is convinced that he is a helpless sinner who is worthy of nothing but to be cast into the pit of destruction will find solace in knowing that his HOPE of salvation rests alone in the hands of HIM who says, "*Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.*" (Isa 41:14) Yea,

that ONE who has not simply decreed the salvation of HIS people but who has trod the winepress of GOD's wrath in their behalf and has obtained eternal redemption for them by the shedding of HIS blood. This people are those whom HE *"hath purchased with his own blood."* (Acts 20:28) They stand forever complete in HIM.

So the faith which is brought to the sons of GOD according to HIS purpose is given to them as a means of comfort. *"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?"* (Rom 10:14) The hearing and believing is the work of HIM who gives HIS people all things richly to enjoy. Even as Peter says; *"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord"* This grace and peace which are multiplied come to them on the basis of what HE has done for them. HE is the PORTAL "through" which these blessings come to the sons of GOD.

They are not comforted "through" any contemplation of what they are able to perform for HIM, but rather, their manifold blessings, multiplied by the thousands, arise to them as they "know" what HE has provided for them. It is in the preaching of the gospel of the REDEEMER that they find rest to their weary souls ever *"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)

Then we notice a different "through" which Peter uses when he says, *"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:"* The first two "throughs" were translated from the Greek word "en" which literally means "a fixed position" such as the DOOR to which we referred. This third time the "through" is translated from the Greek word, "dia" which literally means, "the channel of an act." This is analogous to our illustration of passing through the storm.

The scripture speaks of the salvation of GOD's children being by decree from the foundation of the world as HE, who calls those things that be not as though they were, determined to redeem HIS elect bride. It was in this same decree that HE subjected HIS bride to vanity that HE might display the glory of HIS grace in the purchase of her from the sin which she gladly embraced, loving darkness rather than light. This redemption was accomplished by the offering up of the body and blood of JESUS CHRIST once and for all. Thus HE has forever fixed and supplied the everlasting salvation of all of those whom HE hid in the bosom of CHRIST. If that was all there was to their "salvation" it would be most glorious, yet it did please HIM to make this salvation known to them in the midst of this vanity and to dwell in the very midst of HIS people by giving them HIS HOLY SPIRIT to guide them into all truth.

This is indeed a glorious salvation which is fixed in eternity and manifested in time "through" the unfolding of the riches of HIS grace by the continual operation of the HOLY GHOST in the sons of GOD, causing them both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure. All of the works of the children of men are tainted with sin and unfit for any consideration of righteousness. Even as Isaiah said, *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."* (Isa 64:6)

Yet HE who works in the sons of GOD does sanctify them by giving to them all things pertaining to life and godliness as HE leads them into all truth by causing them to desire "truth and holiness" in the inward parts. Paul declared this in the book of Romans, saying *"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:"* (Rom 7:22) Though they are still beset by their sinful flesh, (that which is subjected to vanity) yet HE does cause a warfare to develop within them wherein HE makes manifest their righteousness through their knowledge of HIM who has called them to *"follow in HIS steps."*

This is a battle which often leaves them bloody and nigh unto death, yet because of HIS constant and faithful supply, they cannot be overcome. *"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."* (1Th 5:23-24)