

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XI

Issue 41

*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*

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## PRAYING

*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.* *Ephesians 6:18*

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul wrote, *"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."* (2 Cor 5:1-5)

Here, he is specifically describing the desire of the sons of GOD, to be done with the struggles with sin which are a result of our present state of abiding in this mortal body. He is referring to the hope of the resurrection which they have been given in CHRIST and the expectation that they have of putting on the immortality to which they have been appointed.

This specific hope has its precursor and evidence in the fact that they are those whom the LORD describes in HIS "sermon on the mount" saying, *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."* (Mat 5:6) This is the *"earnest of the SPIRIT"*.

Those whom the LORD quickens and brings to life (i.e.; being born again) are *"his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* (Eph 2:10) It is to them that Paul writes this exhortation, *"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."* (Eph 6:11)

These are the garments which the LORD has specifically fitted to each one of those who are called by HIS grace and HE is the ONE who clothes them so that they *"shall not be found naked."* Thus we find that they are both exhorted and prompted to the activity of prayer. *"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."* (Jude 1:20-21)

Now some have surmised that Jude is here describing a formula that a man can adopt wherein he might gain or keep a standing in the love of GOD. Yet a close examination clearly reveals that Jude is describing the particular standing of the sons of GOD who have been given a "most holy faith", (i.e.; specifically the applied gospel, see II Tim.1:10) for it is impossible that any man should pray *"in the HOLY GHOST"* who has not been given that SPIRIT. *"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."* (John 14:16)

He is describing the method by which HE is pleased to keep and preserve those sons in whom HE has given this "EARNEST". He goes on to say, *"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."* (Jude 1:24-25)

Prayer is as “natural” to the spiritual man as sin is to the flesh. It is impossible to exhort men to pray who have no inclination towards it just as it is to exhort men to put on the armor of GOD who have never been “fitted” for it. David could not go forth to battle in Saul’s armor as fine as it was nor might I add could Saul have fit himself to David’s “armor” regardless of his effort.

The “praying” of which Paul speaks, in Eph.6:18, is not “natural praying”, but rather that which is “*in the SPIRIT*”. Natural praying is that which arises out of the common religious nature of men which would move them to seek some help in situations from which they find no easy solutions. As when a child is sick, a storm is approaching, or the electric bill is due and there is no money in the bank. Now indeed such “prayers” may often be uttered by “spiritual men” but such “praying” is no indication, in itself, of the SPIRIT’s indwelling presence.

The commonality of natural praying which can be found in all men is seen in those ten lepers who “*lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.*” (Luke 17:13) Yet the reality and rarity of true prayer is manifested in only one of them, “*And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.*” (Luke 17:15-16)

The exhortation of Paul is to “spiritual men”, or those in whom the HOLY GHOST dwells by the gift which only HE can bestow. “*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” (John 3:3) Thus true “praying” is that which must be prompted by the SPIRIT and carried out in the sons of GOD by HIS power and presence.

That “praying” of which Paul speaks is first and foremost an act of worship, recognizing the glory which surrounds HIM to whom it is addressed. The LORD said, “*But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:.*” (John 15:26) The SPIRIT bears witness to the sons of GOD of the preeminence of CHRIST JESUS in whom the fullness of the GODHEAD dwells. HE is worthy to be praised and the SPIRIT will cause the sons of GOD to know that. “*He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.*” (1John 5:10)

That “praying” of which Paul speaks employs “all prayer”. This is not a “half hearted” attempt nor something that the sons of GOD are forced to do when all other efforts have failed. This is no stop gap method, rather it is an assault on the gates of heaven by those who are convinced that they have no other HELP. (i.e; “*watching and perseverance*”) Even as David said, “My help cometh from the LORD” and as those disciples cried out in their sinking ship, “*And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.*” (Mat 8:25)

This forms the very basis of the “supplication” of which Paul speaks, it is a resolve borne into the very hearts of GOD’s people which would move them to confess with Peter, “*Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.*” (John 6:68) Supplication is “making a request”. Prayer is not specifically supplication, since one can simply worship the LORD in praying and praying can also be simply giving thanks for our manifold blessings. However true praying does sometimes include supplication and is the result of faith in the ONE to whom the sons of GOD pray unto, therefore Paul gives the exhortation unto “*supplication in the SPIRIT.*”

Paul says, “*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*” (Php 4:6) The children of GOD are not to fret and worry over the cares of this world but rather in a SPIRIT of worship and thanks to bring their needs unto the LORD. This is not because HE does not know our needs but rather, that the faith which HE has given to us might be exercised by prayer and supplication. “*But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*” (Mat 6:7-8)

Then he says “*supplication for all saints*”. “*Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*” (Gal 6:2) Ought we not to follow in HIS steps who said, “*I pray for them.*” (John 17:9) “*Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.*” (1John 4:11)

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