

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XII

Issue 6

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

CONDEMNED SIN

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. *Romans 8:3*

When the LORD spoke to Moses from the burning bush, HE told him, *"Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."* (Exo 3:5) HE did not have reference specifically to the particular spot where the bush was located, but rather to the fact that the ONE who spoke to Moses from this bush, was inapproachable by sinful flesh and completely separate from sinners.

The LORD again demonstrated this very same principle when Moses asked to see the LORD's glory, and HE replied thusly, *"I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live. And the LORD said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."* (Exo 33:19-23)

This is the exact ONE of whom Paul speaks when he described HIM to Timothy, *"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever."* (1Tim 1:17) *"Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting."* (1Tim 6:15-16) It is impossible for a man, in his own power and will, to approach unto HIM who is high, holy, and hidden from the gaze of the potsherd of the earth.

Many modern day "preachers" indicate that GOD has changed HIS "personality" from the days of the "Old Testament". They tell us that HE has been transformed from a GOD of wrath and judgment, and is now a cuddly friend who so desires the fellowship of men that HE can be summoned whenever a man takes the notion to call upon HIM and that HE will come running just like a faithful hound whose ears perk up at his master's whistle. Yet we read HIS own declaration, *"For I am the LORD, I change not."* (Mal 3:6) The Psalmist says, *"But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end."* (Psa 102:27) The writer of Hebrews reiterates this same fact when he describes the LORD in this fashion, *"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."* (Heb 13:8)

Thus we are convinced that the same GOD who created Adam and walked with him in Eden and then drove him from that garden, destroyed the inhabitants of the world in the flood, called Abraham, and gave the law to Moses from the burning of Mt Sinai, is the same ONE who is seated on the throne of HIS majesty in the heavens in the present time and throughout the ages to come. This understanding is that which causes us to fall upon our faces in adoring wonder

when we consider that HE has taken on HIMSELF the likeness of sinful flesh and did suffer and die to redeem HIS own possession which is an active part of a race of unthankful and disobedient men. Is there any wonder greater than this?

It is indeed marvelous to consider HIS conception in the womb of the Virgin, and the circumstances surrounding HIS subsequent birth, childhood, and growth into a young MAN approved by GOD. Yet our most profound amazement is manifested as we ponder the fact that HE who is "*separate from sinners*", actually "*became sin*", and suffered under the guilt and consequences of that sin. HE bore that sin in the exact measure of wrath which was due to those guilty of the very crimes which HE came to expiate and cancel.

The LORD declared that HE would "*by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children.*" (Exo 34:7) nor would HE "*at all acquit the wicked.*" (Nah 1:3) "*The soul that sinneth, it shall die----the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.*" (Eze 18:20) If one should ever doubt the determination and purpose of GOD to pour out HIS wrath upon those who have transgressed HIS commandments, he need look no further than that Judean hillside called Mt. Calvary to see its absolute proof.

Just about every religious "carnival barker" will declare that "Jesus died on the cross," but it is relatively rare to hear a faithful declaration of the extent and purpose of what this MAN JESUS accomplished as the sin bearing SUBSTITUTE of HIS elect people. HIS intercession, suffering, and ultimate death was not some generic sin offering which was done in order to try and persuade the world in general to permit the LORD to save them by believing it. Rather HE entered into that Holy Place having "obtained" eternal redemption for that people HE came to save.

HE accomplished that redemption, when HE "*condemned sin in the flesh*". "*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*" (1Pet 2:24) Those who would apply this passage to the physical healing of the body, do not understand the true disease which would kill and destroy everyone afflicted with it. CHRIST came to remove that disease and eradicate its power to destroy those for whom HE died.

HE did this, not by decree, nor by example, but by taking the actual sin of HIS people upon HIMSELF and bearing it before HIS FATHER's face as a condemned sinner. Thus was the wrath of GOD poured out on HIM, who having no sin at all in HIS flesh, made the sin of HIS elect bride HIS own and drank every dreg from the cup of GOD's judgment which was due to them. When HE sweat, as it were, great drops of blood, HE was both condemned and condemning sin. When the lashes of a Roman whip cut and mutilated HIS flesh, HE bore it as a man suffering under the lash of a broken law. When the crown of thorns was pressed into HIS bleeding brow HE was in the very anteroom of hell because of sin.

When those nails were driven through HIS outstretched hands and feet, HE was being bound to that instrument of death upon which condemned sinners must pay for their own crimes. When HE was mocked and derided in HIS suffering, HE was under the gaze of HIM of whom the Psalmist speaks, "*He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.*" (Psa 2:4-5) When HE cried out in the bitterness of HIS anguish "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*" (Mat 27:46) HE was under the wrath of HIM who said, "*I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.*" (Pro 1:26-28)

Indeed HE "*condemned sin in the flesh*" by becoming the OBJECT of condemnation for those which were given to HIM before the foundation of the world. HE became an outcast, that those for whom HE stood as a SUBSTITUTE might be given an entrance into the presence of GOD as those who are completely sanctified and fit for the MASTER's use. HE being condemned, condemned sin itself and stripped it of all power to harm those who were precious in HIS sight. "*I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.*" (Isa 43:1) mam