

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 LAUGHTER OF GOD

He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Psalm 2:4

If we were to select one chief ingredient which is missing from the current cultural phenomenon which is commonly called Christianity, it would be the “fear of GOD”. *“There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (Rom 3:18)* The average person who would call himself a “Christian” in today’s society, has little if any regard to the concept of GOD as an absolute terror in judgment and power. He would find these words in Hebrews to be a complete aberration to his notion of the kingdom of GOD and the ONE who is the revealed RULER thereof.. *“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.” (Heb 12:28-29)*

For the last century and a half there has been a concerted effort from the kingdom of darkness to further blind men (see II Cor 4:4) to the true nature of GOD by picturing HIM as some doting old grandfatherly type who doddles about hoping that someone will aid HIM in HIS honorable quest to rescue men from their problems and anxieties. HE is pictured as ONE who is trying HIS best to get men to listen to HIM and HE is yet wringing HIS hands in despair as they turn a deaf ear to HIS overtures. This is the culture of “Smile, God loves you”.

Most “preachers” emphasize the “love of GOD” without properly declaring the “GOD who loves”. In doing so they present a caricature of HIM and leave men with the impression that HE loves everyone in the same fashion and is basically powerless to make this love known unto them without human aid and their willingness to receive it.

Now to be sure, HE is indeed a GOD whose love is from everlasting. HIS love is pure and steadfast. HIS love exceeds the human capacity to understand. But HIS love is particular in nature and HE is pleased to declare HIS particular love and mercy to HIS elect against the backdrop of HIS absolute Sovereignty and Holiness. We behold this when Moses asked to see HIS glory. *“And he said, 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.” (Exo 33:19-20)*

The Glory of GOD is discovered in HIS complete separation from men in their natural state. This is why the LORD told Moses, *“Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.” (Exo 3:5)*, and why John wrote, *“No man hath seen God at any time.” (John 1:18)*, and Paul said, *“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 6:16)*

HE is HOLY and set apart from men and will not even look upon sin, which all men are found enslaved to by nature. *“God is angry with the wicked every day.” (Psa 7:11)* HE *“will not at all acquit the wicked” (Nah 1:3)* HE *“will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the*

fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.” (Exo 34:7) This understanding of who the True and Living GOD is, is in stark contrast to the maudlin familiarity that is manifested in the conversation of most who claim to be the followers of CHRIST, who think nothing of addressing HIM as if he was their buddy.

The “goodness of GOD” is displayed as we are brought to understand HIS holiness and hatred of every evil way. The Psalmist said, *“If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.” (Psa 130:3-4)* If the modern “soothsayers” are correct this passage of scripture would make no sense.

On the other hand, that man who has been brought to know “*the terror of the LORD*” (see II Cor.5:11) is made to tremble in HIS presence knowing what a great mercy is displayed to those who deserve destruction. Rather than the expectation of HIS favor dispensed in a general way, that man who is convinced of his own sin and the absolute justice of GOD in condemning HIM forever, is made to marvel in fear and reverence before HIM when HIS kindness and mercy appears in the revelation of the Gospel. While no man has seen GOD at any time, yet “*the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*” (John 1:18)

We often hear some of the modern “mud daubers” (see Ezek.13:9-19) say that GOD has a sense of humor and then they go on to regale us with entertaining stories and anecdotes, purporting that the LORD is ready to yuk it up with men. Or at the very least to be a good sport about allowing them to engage in all sorts of foolishness which they might call “worship”.

The scripture does mention the “laughing” of the LORD as we see here in our text (Ps.2:4) and in three other passages, “*The wicked plotteth against the just, and gnasheth upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.*” (Psa 37:12-13) “*Behold, they belch out with their mouth: swords are in their lips: for who, say they, doth hear? But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.*” (Psa 59:7-8) “*But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh.*” (Prov 1:25-26)

This “laughter” which is spoken of has nothing at all to do with any light hearted merriment but rather is an expression of derision or contempt which is visited upon the stiff necked rebel as well as the proud religionists who go about to establish their own righteousness. The Hebrew word that is translated as “derision” in Ps.59:8 is also translated as “mock” in Prov.1:26, and as “laugh” in Job 9:23. The LORD of Glory is not a jokester nor can we discover anywhere in the scriptures that HE would set forth HIMSELF in this light.

When the LORD JESUS CHRIST walked upon this earth, HE did so with a heavy heart. “*He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*” (Isa 53:3-5)

HE was grieved by the unbelief of HIS own disciples. “*Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.*” (Mat 17:17) “*And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?*” (Luke 18:7-8)

HE was grieved by the sin which was laid upon HIM, even unto death. “*And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*” (Luke 22:44)

HE was grieved by the rejection of that nation into which HE was born. “*He came unto his own, and his own received him not.*” (John 1:11) (see Mat.23:37)

HE has trod the winepress alone and now declares that HIS “*own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.*” (Isa 63:5) HE is now enthroned as a CONQUEROR who shall laugh at the calamity that befalls those who do not worship HIM in SPIRIT and TRUTH. mam