

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 PERFECT CAPTAIN

For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. Hebrews 2:10

There are actually very few things which men can know about the purpose of GOD. HE has plainly said, *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* (Isa 55:8-9) Paul has captured this very thought when he said, *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?"* (Rom 11:33-34)

HIS ways are indeed *"past finding out"*. This is part of what Paul means when he points out that HE, *"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. Amen."* (1Tim 6:16) It is sheer folly and ignorance of HIS glory that would cause men to think that they have any means or grounds upon which they might describe HIS "limitations" or to express what HE could or could not do and still be just, right, and good. (see Rom.9:20; Dan. 4:35)

While we do not have the means or the right to speculate on the things which GOD might do or has done we can rejoice in HIS purpose which HE has been pleased to reveal unto men. This purpose is singular and shows itself throughout the word of GOD from beginning to end and is set forth here in this passage before us. *"In bringing many sons unto glory, to make the CAPTAIN of their salvation perfect."* Paul describes the result of that purpose in the book of Ephesians, *"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."* (Eph 2:7)

Some of the great philosophers and Bible scholars postulate that GOD created the world as a grand experiment, placing man in a moral utopia and hoping that all would continue in this fashion. But alas they tell us that Adam was given a free will that GOD had no control over and he messed up the whole thing by sinning, thus causing GOD to have to come up with some other plan for a now tainted earth. Thus HE concluded that HE would redeem that fallen creation, (in spite of the failed original experiment) by sending HIS SON into the world in hopes that some folks would agree to be saved by using the same free will that brought about their downfall in the beginning.

This all sounds reasonable enough to the natural man and certainly fits with human reasoning. The only problem is that such a scenario requires a GOD who is at the mercy of men to fulfill HIS will rather than man being at the mercy of GOD. The Psalmist had no such vision but rather marveled at the place of man before GOD saying, *"What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"* (Psa 8:4) *"LORD, what is man, that thou takest knowledge of him! or the son of man, that thou makest account of him!"* (Psa 144:3)

Contrary to modern philosophy, the Psalmist understood that man has no “intrinsic value”, but is rather made and blessed according to the good pleasure of GOD. A man cannot gain or forfeit any blessing which GOD is pleased to withhold from or grant to HIM and all of creation must wait upon HIM who inhabiteth eternity.

The glorious message of the gospel of CHRIST is that GOD who is rich in mercy has indeed created a world to manifest the glory of HIS grace in the giving of HIS SON as a “perfect” SAVIOR for those whom HE has loved with an everlasting love and appointed as the heirs of salvation. HE has purposed to bring these sons, (whom HE has subjected unto vanity as it pleased HIM), into the glory of HIS presence, through the redemptive work of that “perfect” SAVIOR. HE was under no obligation of any type to redeem any but determined to magnify the glory of HIS grace in the manifestation of this “perfect” redemption and the application of this salvation, wherein it might be shown that HE is both just and the JUSTIFIER of those which believe in HIM.

Thus we believe that redemption is not the result of a response on the part of GOD to a dilemma which man found himself in, (after a failed experiment or adventure in paradise), but is rather the purpose for which the world was created. For it is in this redemption that GOD would manifest the glory of HIS grace and exalt HIS only begotten SON as the central figure of this display of mercy. Even as Paul sets forth the purpose of GOD in election; *“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.”* (Eph 1:5-9)

In order to have a “perfect” redemption it must, of necessity, be carried out by a perfect REDEEMER. This word “perfect” carries with it several connotations. Usually when we use the word in the English language (as an adjective) we apply it to mean something which cannot be improved upon. That which is complete in every way is said to be perfect. The Greek word used here is also translated as fulfilled, finished, and perfected.

CHRIST is said to have been *“made perfect through sufferings”*. As the ONLY BEGOTTEN SON of GOD, HE was lacking nothing and could in no wise be improved upon. So the sense of using the word “made perfect” is not that something was added to HIM but rather describes the means by which HE demonstrated HIS perfect redemption, by or through the sufferings which HE undertook as the SUBSTITUTE for HIS people. Just as it is *“appointed” unto men, “once to die”*, so it was appointed unto CHRIST to taste the death which every man does taste. (see v.9)

This is the fashion in which HE accomplished the salvation of those for whom HE cancelled the debt of sin, by standing in their room and place as a perfect OFFERING, (i.e.; a LAMB without spot or blemish). CHRIST was under no necessity to accomplish the salvation of HIS people through suffering for them, yet it pleased HIM to do so that HE might demonstrate the glory of HIS grace and manifest HIS compassion (able to be touched with the feelings of our infirmities). HE would put nothing upon HIS people that HE would not make a way for them to escape. Thus HE bore their sins and carried their sorrows.

We read that HE is the *“CAPTAIN of their salvation”*. A captain is a leader. A good leader does not do so by simply giving orders but rather by example. (see I Pet.5:3). Thus our CAPTAIN has not merely decreed our salvation but has purchased it with HIS own blood. HE has finished the work which HE came to do. This Greek word for “captain” is also translated as *“AUTHOR”* (see Heb. 12:2). Thus HE has written “the book” of salvation and the cast of characters is of HIS own design. The same word is also translated as *“PRINCE”*. (see Acts 3:15; 5:31). Thus we see HIM as the rightful *“HEIR of all things”*, who made HIMSELF a little lower than the angels to destroy him that had the power of death. *“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”* (Heb 2:17) mam