

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

AS LIGHTNING

And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

Luke 10:18

There is no greater display of GOD's mighty power in the natural realm in which men dwell than the lightning which streaks across the sky with unbridled intensity and uncontrollable majesty. Who or what can stand before its awesome power? It creates awe in young and old alike.

Is it any wonder then that the LORD OF GLORY should describe the casting down of Satan by using this illustration? The LORD's disciples; (upon returning from the mission HE had sent them on) were rejoicing that even the devils were made subject unto HIS word spoken by them. "*And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.*" (Luke 10:17)

Now indeed they had witnessed HIS power over the demons which HE had cast out prior to this; yet they now marveled that even that same power was demonstrated when they spoke in HIS authority. The LORD then tempered their amazement by reminding them that Satan had no power at all except that which was given to him by the LORD, as HE likened his demise to the lightning which strikes and is no more. We see this fact demonstrated quite clearly in the book of Job as the LORD challenged Satan concerning HIS righteous servant Job.

By nature men believe in competing forces of good and evil. Most religions attribute the good to GOD and the evil they attribute to Satan. To varying degrees nearly all of them see this "competition" as not having a certain result. Many teach that unless man exercises faith or the power of his thinking, through some psychological exercise (such as prayers, prayer circles, chain letters, or claiming victories either real or imagined) then GOD's hands are tied to prevent evil from occurring and Satan will have a field day.

The scripture teaches no such ridiculous idea and sets forth in no uncertain terms that the Devil is GOD's devil. He has no power of any kind except that which is given to him for a season that he might fulfill the purpose of GOD in what ever activity he is assigned to perform. Just as swiftly as the lightning flashes and is no more so the power of Satan is but temporary and passing away according to the wisdom of GOD. While Satan is, personally, "opposed" to all that GOD wills to do, he has no power to thwart it and therefore is no worthy "foe" but rather a pawn in the purpose of GOD and a creature made to fulfill HIS exact design.

Rather than being fearful of Satan's devices or activities, spending time contemplating his next move, or even as the disciples, rejoicing over our bestowed power over his impotency; our rejoicing is to be centered upon the redemptive work of CHRIST for HIS elect; whose names are written, in the LAMB's book of LIFE, from before the foundation of the world. "*Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*" (Luke 10:19-20)

No power that we have been given, nor any mastery we may have over anything in this world in which we presently dwell, no gifts or callings, no station or benefit, can compare with the blessing that is ours in hearing the gospel of JESUS CHRIST and being given faith to believe in HIM. "*But*

we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.” (1Co 2:7-10)

It is interesting that in the book of Job we are directly told that Satan is the instrument in the hand of GOD to bring trials of body and mind upon Job yet nowhere in the book does Job ever attribute those troubles to Satan but rather gives glory to GOD as he declares to his wife when she would tempt him to blaspheme, *“But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.” (Job 2:10)*

Though Job was far from perfect in his understanding of the ALMIGHTY (as we see in the last chapter); he did recognize that HE was indeed an Absolute SOVEREIGN who held sway over both good and evil according to HIS will. And he did confess that HIS hope of the resurrection was in his REDEEMER and not in HIS own perfections. *“For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.” (Job 19:25-27)*

As the scriptures use the illustration of *“lightning”* to depict the destruction of Satan; so too do they use the illustration of lightning to depict the manifestation of the glory of the Kingdom of CHRIST. *“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. “ (Mat 24:27)*

The Greek word that is translated into English as *“lightning”* is *“astrape”* and literally means, “a glare or bright shining”. As such it can mean “lightning” (i.e.; the discharge of static electricity in the heavens) or it can mean “the bright shining of light”, such as the rising of the sun. The context in which it is used determines the intended meaning.

When the LORD referred to the demise of Satan HE is likening it to the sharp and momentary discharge which we would commonly refer to as “lightning” as one would see in a thunderstorm. Yet when the same word is used in Matthew 24:7, it has reference to the light which is brought to bear as the sun rises in the east and goes to the west. The “lightning” which is seen in a storm goes as quickly as it comes. Yet the “light-ening” of the rising sun brings light and warmth and dispels the darkness as it arises.

This reminds us of Malachi’s prophecy in which he said, *“But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.” (Mal 4:2)* Destruction and judgment were demonstrated in the “lightning” which describes Satan’s fall, but that which is ascribed unto CHRIST is for the healing of the nations and brings comfort and light to them that had heretofore been in darkness. *“The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.” (Mat 4:16)*

This was the exultation of Simeon when he held the infant CHRIST in his arms, saying; *“Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” (Luke 2:29-32)*

CHRIST has come into the world as a SAVIOR of sinners. HE does dispel the darkness as HE is pleased to cause the light of the gospel to be shed abroad. This is a LIGHT which cannot be ignored as HE sends it with the power of the HOLY GHOST to quicken the dead, causing the deaf to hear and the blind to see. For HE is that GREAT and SHINING LIGHT. *“And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.” (Isa 42:16)*