

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

POOR, MAIMED, LAME, AND BLIND

Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

Luke 14:21

Every principle which governs the Kingdom of GOD is diametrically opposed to the thinking and desire of the natural man who shows the work of the law written on his heart.. We see this vividly illustrated as Nicodemus came to the LORD under cover of night in order to get some of his "religious concerns" clarified. He assumed that he had within himself the ability and wherewithal to gain the knowledge of spiritual things.

I believe it was his intention to ask the LORD what steps he might take to enhance his own understanding of that which the LORD was teaching, since he was impressed with the miracles which he saw HIM performing. "*Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.*" (John 3:2)

He made the deduction (in HIS fleshly mind) that CHRIST was sent from GOD because he saw the unexplainable healings which the LORD brought to pass. Many by their natural deductions, attribute the ability to work "miracles" to some connection with godliness and spiritual acumen. Medicine men and shamans in all cultures have used this propensity of the natural mind, to gain power over the minds of men since the beginning of time.

This is played out on a very grand scale today as we see "healers" and "demon flingers", of all shapes and sizes, crisscrossing the globe claiming to be the representatives of CHRIST, all the while lining their pockets and darkening the minds of those who are already wandering in darkness while seeking some fulfillment of their natural quest for the mysterious.

It is a true thing that the LORD has often used the working of miracles in order to attract the attention of men. Yet it is also certainly true that the performance of miracles is often a snare to those who desire to see them, as Paul described the workings of the deceiver of men, "*Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*" (2Thess 2:9-12)

Many, while speaking of miracles and signs, run to and fro hoping to catch a glimpse of another one, all the while convinced in their minds that such is the pursuit of "spiritual things" when in reality, it is nothing but the darkness of the natural religious mind in its quest for self fulfillment. The LORD described this bent, "*Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*" (Mat 12:38-40)

While man is impressed with “*signs and wonders*”, he is nonetheless unable to grasp those things which are truly “mysterious”, (see I Cor 2:6-8) which he has neither the will nor the power to receive. This is demonstrated in the LORD’s response to Nicodemus. HE answered Nicodemus before he was able to ask a question, pointing out to him that before a man can even “see” the things of the Kingdom of GOD, he must first be acted upon by the power of GOD.

The moral teachings of CHRIST are quite often received by the religious multitude just as they would receive the wisdom of any other philosopher or teacher. Some call themselves HIS followers simply because they agree that HIS philosophy is helpful to them and beneficial for mankind. In this they are no different than the purveyors of the multitude of the false religions of the world who pay homage to the earthly wisdom which this man JESUS of Nazareth declared, all the while missing the TRUTH which HE keeps hidden from the wise and prudent.

The LORD declared the great contrast between the natural thinking of men and the principles of HIS Kingdom when HE taught the Jews the parable of the man who made a great supper (i.e.; feast) and bid many to come to it. Prior to this parable, HE had just instructed them on who should be invited to their own feasts saying, “*When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind:*” (Luke 14:12-13) What an odd list of invitees.

By nature, men calculate the benefit to themselves in making life’s decisions. The LORD would demonstrate that such is not the principle upon which HIS Kingdom operates. Rather than inviting guests which could be of reciprocal benefit, HE told them they should invite those who had nothing to give and in all reality were a great liability and burden.

Thus HE demonstrated the types of people that make up HIS own Kingdom as HE taught these Jews of HIS own rejection of them as a “nation”. Those who were bidden to the feast and each making excuse as to why they could not or would not come, are illustrative of the nation of Israel who preferred their own “*righteousness*” (see Rom. 10;1-3) to that of CHRIST. Those who are compelled to come to the “feast”, have no redeeming virtue, no ability to gain HIS favor, nor do they have anything to offer unto HIM of value.

Those who are privileged to eat of the dainties of the FEAST which is spread by the LORD are called the “*poor, the maimed, the halt* (i.e.; the lame), and the “*blind*”.

HE said, “*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” (Mat 5:3) Those who are enabled to come into the presence of the LORD do so without even so much as one shred of ability to purchase HIS favor. They are bankrupt souls who feel their abject poverty and possess not one thread of their own righteousness. They are mere vagabonds who are reduced to begging for the very sustenance of their life.

They are “*maimed*” (i.e.; intensely crippled) by their own forays into sin, which has ruined them and made them unfit to be seen in good company. They are broken and disfigured, castaways who should remain hidden from view, were it not for the mercy of HIM who has found them, where they are, ruined and broken, and has poured “*oil and wine*” upon their wounds, bound them up and put them in the care of a tender COMFORTER until HE returns for them. (see Luke 10:30-35)

They are the “halt, or lame” who cannot arise and come to the LORD by their own power. They are like Mephibosheth who was “*lame on both his feet*”. They are not simply hindered but are powerless to remedy their situation. They cannot make themselves whole nor even partake of that which could solve their problems by an act of their will, for even their will is impotent and enslaved to sin. They hear the religious men of the world tell them to be obedient but they find no power in themselves to do so and thus despair except for the mercy of their BENEFACTOR and HEALER who will plunge them into HIS healing waters.

They are “*the blind*” who cannot even “*see the Kingdom of GOD*” unless HE is pleased to show mercy upon them as HE did to Bartimaeus who cried out “*JESUS, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.*” (Mar 10:47) HE does indeed hear the plaintive cries of those who have nothing and are nothing. HE is the SAVIOR of sinners, whom HE has come to seek and to save. mam