

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

A JEALOUS GOD

So the angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy. *Zechariah 1:14*

The folly of man is demonstrated in numerous ways, but there is probably no greater manifestation of this foolishness than when he would presume to be able to define GOD's habitation or place limits upon HIM, who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Any man who is acquainted at all with the glory which surrounds HIM, will place his hand upon his mouth and confess that HE dwells in the LIGHT to which no man can approach.

Job was brought to this place as the LORD answered him from the whirlwind. Daniel fell upon his face in HIS presence saying, *"There remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground."* (Dan 10:8-9) John said, *"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead."* (Rev 1:17)

Apart from Divine revelation, every man is totally ignorant of GOD and knows nothing as he ought to know. We see this in the confession of Agur who understood his own limitations in commenting upon the HIGH and LOFTY ONE who inhabiteth eternity. *"I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy."* (Pro 30:3) Yet the average person has many assumptions about what they believe GOD can, should, must or must not do. Many religious experts develop great theories and philosophies to explain how that GOD is limited in many ways by the very creation which sprang from HIS hand. They portray GOD as the purveyor of what they call "good" and the vigilant warrior against all that they would define as evil.

We would not presume to be able to explain anything about this ONE who declares of HIMSELF, *"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things."* (Isa 45:5-7)

HIS own words speak volumes as to who HE is and what HE will do and needs no commentary from us. *"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."* (Isa 46:9-11)

We ever stand amazed at the volumes written by religious men who desire to tell us that HE didn't really mean what HE said, and that we have to take man's free will into account and recognize that even GOD is stymied by it. Yet we are certain that man's end as well as his beginning and all that lies in between is ordered by HIM who does all things according to the good pleasure of HIS will. *"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."* (Jer 10:23)

We cannot debate the great learned philosophers for we are indeed brutish in our knowledge of the MOST HIGH, yet we have been shown enough that we must bow before HIM in adoring wonder, while the wise and prudent “explain” to us HIS limitations and the boundaries which HE cannot cross. These wise men will seek to paint the SOVEREIGN CREATOR into a box of their own design and tell us that GOD can’t hold men accountable if HE predestines their actions.

How foolish it is for potsherd of the earth to presume to tell other potsherd of the earth what GOD can and cannot do. According to what we read in the scripture, HE quite readily directs the wills of men to perform HIS purpose and then, sometimes, destroys them for doing so. Did HE not say that HE raised up Pharaoh and hardened his heart to fulfill HIS own purpose? Did HE not ordain Judas to be the one who would betray the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and could he have in anywise avoided his fate? Were not those who crucified the LORD JESUS acting according to the “determinate counsel” of the LORD? (see Acts 2:23) Most assuredly Pharaoh hardened his own heart in keeping with the purpose of GOD even as Judas gladly took the thirty pieces of silver, and it was wicked hands which wounded the LORD. HE created men to be accountable just as surely as HE ordains every step they take either unto LIFE or to well deserved death. Who is sufficient to argue against the MOST HIGH, or who would presume to correct HIM?

One of the first revelations which GOD was pleased to make about HIMSELF in the law which HE gave to Moses, is set forth when HE declared, *“I the LORD thy God am a jealous God.”* (Exo 20:5) HE forbade them to have other gods before HIS face, to make graven images of HIM, or to take HIS name in vain. (i.e.; without due respect). HE declared the same thing to Isaiah when HE said, *“I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.”* (Isa 42:8)

HE is “jealous” about HIS glory which is set forth before men as HIS NAME is proclaimed as HE told Moses, when he asked to see HIS glory, *“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)

HIS NAME is HIS glory. One particular Hebrew word which is translated into English, as jealous, only appears six times in the Old Testament. Each time it is used it has direct reference to HIS NAME. (see Ex.34:14) Thus we find that HE is pleased to reveal HIS NAME, in this latter day, which was kept hidden from the foundation of the world. *“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”* (Php 2:9-11)

HE is not just jealous for HIS NAME but for that people which HE is pleased to call by HIS name to take away their reproach. (see Isa.4:1) Thus HE declares by the pen of Zechariah, *“I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.”* Just as surely as HE demands and receives respect for HIS NAME, HE loves HIS people with an ardent and faithful love. This love has no bounds nor does it wax or wane according to the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of those who are the objects of it.

We see this love for HIS elect bride displayed in the declaration which Moses gave to the Israelites. *“For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.”* (Deut 7:6-8) The love of GOD for HIS people is manifested by HIS redemption of them from bondage. *“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”* (Rom 5:8-9)