

# 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*

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## TOUCHED

*For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* *Hebrews 4:15*

The very first mention of the word "touch(ed)" (in the Bible) is found in Genesis 3:3 as Eve recounts to the Serpent, the LORD's prohibition, against them eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Her entertainment of the Serpent's proposition and then her deception by his beguiling argument, began the fulfillment of the LORD's prophetic decree to Adam, *"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* (Gen 2:17)

The last use of this word (in the scriptures) is found in Hebrews 12:27 where it describes the temporal nature of the mountain (Sinai) upon which the law was given to Moses. As that mountain was not eternal, neither is that law which was spoken there and written in tablets of stone. This mountain *"could be touched"* (i.e.; it could be seen and felt by natural sense, even though such was actually prohibited, see Heb.12:20) in contrast to the mountain of the LORD's house wherein has been given a law written in the fleshy tables of the heart. This mountain cannot be "touched", because flesh and blood cannot inherit this Kingdom.

The word "touch" (or touched) literally means a "tactile experience". Touch is one of the five senses that have been given to men and is the most intimate of all of the senses, since it involves an action. A man can see, hear, taste, or smell something without direct involvement. Yet touch supposes that an activity (involving an object) takes place. Some may say that taste would fall into that category, but only that "taste" which actually "touches" the object can be said to be so.

The scriptures tell us of many times when the LORD "touched" men. The first instance that is recorded for us is when Jacob *"wrestled a man."* We believe that this MAN was none other than the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Jacob understood this in retrospect even though he did not know HIM by NAME. *"And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."* (Gen 32:30) As they wrestled the LORD put forth HIS hand and *"touched the hollow of his thigh."* (Gen 32:25).

The LORD could have easily destroyed Jacob yet we learn the mercy of GOD in HIS dealings with HIS children. HE made Jacob aware of HIS superior power and yet treated Jacob in the tender fashion described for us by the prophet Isaiah, *"A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth."* (Isa 42:3) HE blessed Jacob there as HE revealed HIMSELF to Jacob which caused him to rejoice in worship.

Next we read of the men who were with Saul on the day that he was set apart by Samuel to be the first king of Israel. *"And Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched."* (1Sam 10:26) Now likely this is merely speaking of the LORD's setting them apart in a natural sense (rather than a Spiritual blessing); because later on we see HIS rejection of Saul. By this, we learn that the LORD is pleased to appoint and anoint the leaders of the nations of the earth, and they are like putty in HIS hands, *"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."* (Pro 21:1) Thus is to be our prayer, *"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."* (1Tim 2:1-3)

Then we read of the prophet Elijah who had grown so weary of life and full of despair as he fled from the face of Jezebel. *"And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel*

touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.” (1Kgs 19:5) Though the instrumentality of HIS touch was through an “angel”, the effect was nonetheless ordained by HIM and carried with it the same power and weight. HE ministered to the weary prophet and met his every need. Even “touching” him a second time as HE prepared Elijah for his journey to mount Horeb (the mount of GOD). There HE revealed to him that he was not alone, but that the LORD had reserved 7,000 men who had not bowed unto Baal and were faithful followers of the MOST HIGH GOD. In like fashion does the LORD lead HIS people to gather with the saints of GOD, men of like faith, by whom they are mutually encouraged and built up in the most HOLY FAITH. Even as the LORD gave Adam a “help meet for him”, so too does he provide a “help meet” for the sons of GOD in the assembly of the saints, a glorious provision to be sure.

Job says, “Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me.” (Job 19:21) Though Satan was the instrument which the LORD used to bring trouble upon Job, Job gave all glory to the LORD and never once mentioned Satan. He had an understanding in some measure of the LORD’s declaration in Isaiah, “*I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.*” (Isa 45:7)

Jeremiah said the LORD allayed his fears of going forth with the LORD’s message as he was taught that it is “*Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.*” (Zec 4:6) when the LORD “touched him”. “*Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.*” (Jer 1:9) Every one who thinks himself a “preacher” would do well to remember this. (see I Cor. 2:4)

Daniel mentions being “touched” five times (see Dan.8:18; 9:21; 10:10; 10:18) as the LORD revealed unto him secrets that none other received. This “touch” enabled him to function in spite of the glory which surrounded him. “*Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me.*” (Dan 10:18) Indeed the LORD would teach HIS people that there is no place for men to glory except in the LORD, for HE alone makes us to differ from another and HE alone reveals the secret hid from the foundation of the world. (see Mat.13:35; Rom. 16:25) This is the gospel of the glory of the blessed GOD, which exalts the grace and purpose of GOD as JESUS CHRIST and HIM crucified is preached.

The gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke all give us examples and instances when the LORD touched the needy during HIS sojourn upon the earth. The LORD touched a leper and he was made whole; “*And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.*” (Mat 8:3) Who but the gracious SAVIOR would dare to touch the infected man without regard to HIS own wellbeing. “*But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*” (Rom 5:8) HE did the same with Peter’s mother who lay sick of a fever. “*And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.*” (Mat 8:15) The LORD enables men to serve HIM.

Two blind men sought HIS mercy, “*Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.*” (Mat 9:29) Peter, James, and John were terrified upon the Mount of Transfiguration, “*And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.*” (Mat 17:7) HE comforted the widow of Nain as she was in the process of burying her son, “*And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.*” (Luke 7:14) He that was dead, was brought back to life by HIM who is the LIFE.

Yet one of grandest displays of HIS “touch” was not even one wherein is recorded any activity on HIS part. “*And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any, Came behind him, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanch*ed.” (Luke 8:43-44) Do we not see HIM “touched with the feelings of our infirmities” as HE immediately stopped and inquired “*Who touched me*” (v.45) Peter was incredulous since many in the crowd were jostling about. Yet the LORD who created the heavens and the earth, felt the trembling touch of this woman’s hand.

The LORD “*knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*” (Mat 6:8) HIS “touch” healed this woman, though it was her hand that reached forth. HE was at the exact spot where she was at the exact hour of her need. HE told her that “*thy faith hath made thee whole*”. The “FAITH” which healed her was not her activity, for she had “trusted” in many physicians that never healed her. The ONE upon whom she cast her care was her FAITH. HE shall deliver all who come to HIM. It is not the activity of faith that justifies but rather the ONE who is the JUSTIFIER “*of him which believeth in Jesus.*” (Rom 3:26)