

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XV

Issue 38

Published occasionally for Zion's mourners

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

ALL POWER

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Matthew 28:18

One of the most common questions that was asked in the course of conversation, over the last few days after Hurricane Irma hit this area, was "Is your power back on?" or "do you have power?" Of course as a society we have become so completely dependent on electricity that we are nearly brought to a standstill when something disrupts that source of power. Few areas of our lives are not totally dependent on electricity in one fashion or another.

There are two Greek words which are primarily translated as "power" in the New Testament. The one which we would most closely associate with "electricity" or the force, strength, and ability which it represents would be "dunamis". This word is where we get our English word "dynamo" (i.e.; a generator) and also "dynamite" (i.e.; an explosive). This Greek word appears in the New Testament, 120 times and is translated as "power" 77 times. It is also translated as "mighty work"; "strength", "miracle", "might", and "virtue".

This is not, however, the Greek word which is used, here, in the LORD's declaration to HIS disciples, which precedes what is often referred to as "the Great Commission". If one is interested in dwelling upon the works of men, then it is easy to see this verse as a mere adjunct to an instruction to action, rather than the whole basis upon which such a declaration stands. To do so, however, without regard to the "power" of the ONE who is making this declaration, is make this a mere exercise in human endeavor with an uncertain outcome.

Sadly, a majority of those who profess to be the followers of CHRIST view the triumph of the gospel, in this exact light. They are convinced that its success or failure depends upon the endeavors of men, either to believe it, or to preach it to the world. All manner of human exertion is encouraged, to bring "power" to this message and thereby to work alongside the LORD in order to bring about results which will not materialize apart from these efforts. To collect money for these endeavors has become the single most important element in their prosecution.

The Greek word which is used when the LORD said "All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth," is not "dunamis" but rather "exousia". Whereas "dunamis" regards power from a standpoint of strength and might, "exousia" regards power as that of a supreme magistrate or that which arises from absolute authority.

Now we are certain that the LORD JESUS CHRIST does indeed have power (dunamis) to perform whatever HE purposes to bring to pass since HE is the fullness of the GODHEAD bodily. "*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power,* (dunamis) *when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*" (Heb 1:1-3) HE who made the worlds does not lack in this "power".

In the LORD's declaration of HIS "power" here in Matthew 28:18, HE is speaking of the fact that all "authority" has been manifested in HIM in HIS office as the REDEEMER KING of HIS chosen people. Thus HE declared in John's gospel, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of

all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”(John 6:37-39) There are no options spoken of here nor is there any mention of man’s free will.

The drawing of the sons of GOD to HIMSELF, is not due to the efforts or ability of those who are sent to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD in the earth. All such “preachers” are merely mouthpieces through which the LORD is pleased to magnify the glory of HIS grace to the ears of those whom HE is pleased to give understanding and receptive hearts. HIS word cannot return unto HIM void (i.e.; without the desired result) because all of this is done according to HIM who has all authority in heaven, earth, and hell. *“No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” (John 6:44)*

The LORD used the Centurion as an example of what true faith consists of as HE enabled him to recognize HIS supreme authority.. *“The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.” (Mat 8:8-10)*

He was granted an understanding that the LORD was indeed the LORD of all; quite in contrast to those Jews who despised HIS “authority” since HIS teaching was with “power”, *“For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” (Mat 7:29)* which astonished the multitudes and angered those whose hearts the LORD hardened. This is a demonstration of HIS power to hide things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes. (see Matt.21:27) Who can bring a railing accusation or reply against HIM who has all “power” in heaven and earth. *“Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?” (Rom 9:20)*

The Jews, (like all of those who pride themselves as lawkeepers) were content to accuse HIM of violations of the Sabbath while the LORD would demonstrate that HE who made man could forgive his sins as easily as heal him from palsy. *“And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.” (Mat 9:3-6)*

HIS “authority” is that which moves the hearts of GOD’s people to fear HIM, for they realize that their destiny rests solely in HIS hands. *“And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power (i.e.; authority) to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.” (Luke 12:4-5)*

Pilate assumed (like most men) that he possessed power of one sort or another. In his case he felt sure that the strength and might of the Roman Empire, was absolute. Yet he was brought face to face with ONE who does indeed possess all authority. *“Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.” (John 19:10-11)* Pilate found out that he didn’t even have power to set CHRIST free, though he wanted to. For HE who had “power to lay HIS life down” determined to do so before the Roman empire was ever founded. In fact it was according to HIS authority that this empire ever rose to preeminence in order to set the stage for that redemptive work which HE had determined to perform in the behalf of HIS own.

Paul speaks of the LORD’s “authority” to the Colossians as HE reminds them of the basis upon which all of their hopes rest. *“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.” (Col 1:16)* Nothing can possibly occur in the heavens or the earth that could in anywise overturn or cancel the redemptive work of CHRIST. HE laid down HIS life, not in weakness (though HE became weak for us) but in power (though HE was as a LAMB before HIS shearers and opened not HIS mouth in protest). Because HE is a MAN in authority, *“He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” (Isa 53:11)* mam