

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XVI

Issue 7

*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*

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## THE LORD'S GARDEN

*Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish  
in the courts of our God.*

*Psalms 92:13*

To say that the Bible is a "spiritual book" is to state the obvious. Yet to contend that natural men cannot read it with some profit is to deny that it was recorded by men for the benefit of men. We are sure that every word of these Holy Scriptures was dictated by the GOD of heaven and earth and nothing in its pages is derived from the creative abilities of those who penned its words. But we are quite sure that every word of it was recorded by the hands of sinful men of like passions as we are (see Acts 14:15; James 5:7) with a purpose (in their minds) to record these things for posterity and for the profit of those who would read them.

In many cases these men recorded prophecies which they had no understanding of when they wrote them, yet the AUTHOR of them gave them the ability to transcribe them in perfect detail so that not one jot or tittle of what was written should ever fail to come to pass exactly as the prophecy is given. They often wrote them with current events in mind and saw those events transpire in the kingdoms and governments of the time. Yet in most cases the greater application of the prophecy was to occur long after they were dead, and was hidden from them. *"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into."* (1Pet 1:10-12)

It takes no spiritual understanding to read the scriptures and take them at face value and there are many very profitable, practical lessons which are taught in its pages. These things are useful to men but a man can never arrive at the true meaning and purpose of the scriptures apart from DIVINE revelation to behold the unsearchable riches that are within their pages, where they are hidden from the wise and prudent. The reason the LORD taught in parables was in order to establish this fact. *"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."* (Mat 13:13-17)

So it is a true thing that men do not arrive at an understanding of SPIRITUAL TRUTH through their own efforts and cannot grasp the true import of the scriptures by their diligent study, apart from the pleasure of the LORD to open their blind eyes. This privilege is given to those whom the LORD is pleased to visit with the "new birth". Even then, HE gives to them but a measure of understanding (i.e.; *"we see through a glass darkly"*) and applies the truth to each one according to the measure of faith which HE is pleased to grant. The LORD gives HIS children the measure

of understanding which is in keeping with HIS purpose for each one and all of HIS children do not possess the same level of comprehension of those things; yet each one is thoroughly equipped for their calling according to HIS purpose. Even as we have the example of the Israelites gathering the manna. *"He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating."* (Exo 16:18) *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."*(2 Tim 3:16-17)

So we often see in the Bible, a practical lesson for the sons of GOD, which is the framework for the greater lesson which is applied to the heart as well as the head and profit is to be had in each case. One of these instances which stands out to us is the LORD's teaching on the Sabbath day. If all that a man sees in the scriptures when he reads of the "Sabbath day" is simply one day out of the week, then he can see no more than the Pharisees did, whom the LORD said were of their father, the devil.

The "keeping of the Sabbath" is not primarily given so that men might observe one day above another in some religious ritual. In fact the LORD plainly taught that HE made the Sabbath for man and not man for the Sabbath. This is directly speaking of CHRIST, who is the SABBATH for HIS people. In HIM alone do they find rest and HE is the complete fulfillment of the requirements of the Law which says, *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy"*. So there is no legal reason wherein the people of GOD who are found in CHRIST have any obligation to a particular day.

Yet there is clearly a benefit for the sons of Adam in the institution of the Sabbath as a day of rest in the week. A man who works seven days a week without taking a day of rest will soon burn himself out for the LORD did not design men to work at such a pace saying *"six days shalt thou labor."* There is also a great benefit in this concept for the sons of GOD, as they set aside a day of the week in order to gather together in an assembly or "ecclesia". There are no "set times" given in the scriptures wherein the sons of GOD are required to meet but they are exhorted to *"Consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."* (Heb 10:24-25)

We see the example of the very earliest days of the disciples of CHRIST, following HIS ascension and the outpouring of HIS SPIRIT at Pentecost, wherein they met daily. It appears that soon this was changed to a weekly meeting. *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread."* (Act 20:7) The particular day upon which they met is not in itself of great significance as some have sought to legalize it and make it so. Rather the important matter before us is that they thought it of great benefit to meet together regularly and they set aside the time in order to do so, rather than some haphazard and irregular happenstance.

The Psalmist here speaks of those who are planted in the house of the LORD who flourish there. Now we are certain that he is not primarily speaking of an edifice of man's making nor some organized assembly of the saints, but rather the fact that the LORD brings HIS people into fellowship with HIM and they profit thereby. HE does this completely without human intervention or interaction as a purely spiritual matter. Yet it is quite clear from the scriptures that the physical gathering of the saints is of great vital use to the sons of GOD. HE has promised to meet with HIS people in such assemblies. *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* (Mat 18:20)

How foolish it is then for those who consider themselves to be the followers of CHRIST to neglect the regular meeting of the saints. We are indeed our brother's keepers. It is in these gatherings that we bear one another's burdens as we pray and seek the face of the LORD together. HIS house (i.e. dwelling, see Mat.18:20) is a house of prayer. It is here that we build one another up in the faith as every joint of the body supplies that which the body lacks. If we love the brethren, can we neglect them? If we esteem them better than ourselves can we place more value on other pursuits and activities which have greater appeal to our flesh? How can we provoke the brethren to love and good works if we do not regularly assemble with them? Do we expect that we shall grow in grace and the knowledge of the LORD, while having disregard to the very gifts which HE has given to the brethren for our edification? *"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."* (Acts 20:32)

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