

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XVI

Issue 9

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

THE GENERATION OF THE RIGHTEOUS

There were they in great fear: for God is in the generation of the righteous. Psalm 14:5

There are multitudes of people that say they believe the Bible. There seem to be few, however, who recognize the glory which is revealed in its pages and who desire to be closely acquainted with its AUTHOR. Man naturally gravitates towards religion and is quite satisfied with the religion of his choice which is in most cases the religion of his parents and/or the culture in which he was brought up. Thus, there are a great many people who are of basically moral principles which they have in great part derived from their religious heritage, both by active choice and habits which have been instilled in them which they might not recognize the Bible as the source of.

These traits are often greatly helpful to the societies in which they live and form the structural integrity upon which these societies rely for future stability even when many (in the present hour) claim not to believe the Bible's teachings. We are fortunate to live in a culture and society which has in the past been largely influenced by the moral principles which are taught throughout the Scriptures. Many of our governmental institutions and framework was established by men who thought it good and proper to follow the moral teachings of the Scriptures. Most of our law's reflect the precepts which are set forth in what are known as the "Ten Commandments".

When a people are turned over to a reprobate mind by the LORD (see Rom. 1:28-32), their restraints are loosened and even removed and the societies in which they live are made the poorer for it. This is a sure sign of GOD's judgment upon a people. "*Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.*" (Psa 76:10) In many cases, cities which have once set upon a hill are brought down to rubble. How quickly, a nation can be turned from a source of light to that of darkness. "*For the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.*" (Psa 74:20)

One must hide his head in the sand, like the proverbial ostrich, in order not to see this scenario being played out in the society in which we live. False preachers and politicians (its hard to tell the difference most of the time) set forth the notion that since our society is "founded upon Biblical principles" that it cannot fail, and that the basic goodness of the people of this nation will cause GOD to bless us indefinitely, especially if we do good deeds and pray.

The basis of GOD's blessing upon any people is strictly according to HIS sovereign will and purpose, and not according to any supposed "goodness" which can be discovered in the inhabitants of their nation. In fact the blessing of GOD upon any nation is what causes them to fear HIM and not vice versa. HE shall indeed manifest the wickedness of all men, by nature, by displaying their corruption and disregard of HIS precepts. "*The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*" (Psa 9:17)

The awakened sons of GOD, in every "generation", are those who fear HIM, delight in HIS law, and meditate therein, not because they are "good people" but because it pleases HIM to work in them both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure. While none of them can take any delight in the judgment of GOD upon their own society, yet they do recognize HIS sovereign right to do with HIS own exactly as HE pleases, and they do acknowledge the wisdom of Solomon, as he said, "*For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*" (Ecc 7:20) So as they see the signs of HIS judgment, they are moved to cry out to HIM for mercy and to desire that HE might grant repentance to those who rush headlong to their own destruction. (see Rom.10:1)

The evidence of GOD's grace at work in HIS children is that they "fear HIM" as the scripture says, "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.*" (Pro 9:10) Yet this "fear", which is spoken of in Psalm 14:5 is a different kind of "fear" than that which is given to the sons of GOD. This is a "fear" that comes upon the men of the world in general as the LORD is pleased to manifest HIS work in HIS people and this "fear" is not coupled with a love of HIS truth and way. (see II Thess.2:10)

The "fear" of GOD which is granted to the sons of GOD is that which causes them to revere HIS name and marvel at HIS wondrous glory in those judgments which HE is pleased to work in the Earth. Even as the Psalmist describes, "*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.*" (Psa 19:7-11) They will testify that HIS way is their delight.

Yet the men of this world "fear" the work of GOD because they delight in their own way and that way, which is of the LORD, they see as contrary to their own. This is demonstrated by the vitriol of the Pharisees against the LORD, as they sought to kill HIM on more than one occasion. Yet they could not touch HIM until the appointed hour. The devils expressed the same "fear", "*And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?*" (Mat 8:29) It is the same "fear" which came upon those nations who heard of the LORD's work in the children of Israel as Rahab testified. "*I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man,*" (Jos 2:9-11)

The Psalmist said, "*GOD is in the generation of the righteous*". The people of GOD are spoken of as "righteous"; not because of some intrinsic holiness found in their character or by any morality, produced by them; but their "righteousness" is that which is bestowed upon them on the basis of their relation to the LORD JESUS CHRIST as HIS seed, or "generation". Thus the LORD saw Noah as righteous as well as HE did, Lot. HE did not weigh their actions against that of others but rather decreed them as righteous because they were of the "generation" of CHRIST. When the LORD spoke to Nicodemus of the necessity of a "new birth" or a "birth from above", HE was speaking of the manifestation of this "generation" which is the product not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of GOD as John ably points out in John 1:13. "*This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.*" (Psa 118:23) Yet it is not so in eyes of those that would rail against HIS sovereign purpose and electing grace. Such railing is quite prevalent wherever religious men gather to pat one another on the back and admire their own faith and good deeds.

The "*generation of the righteous*" does not simply proceed from the LORD but is also the prized possession of HIM as we see by HIS willingness to spare no cost in securing that which is HIS and delivering "HIS generation" from the bondage of sin and the condemnation of the Law. We see HIM speak of this "generation" when HE poured out HIS soul in Gethsemane. "*For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.*" (John 17:8-10) HE had also declared the same earlier, as HE described them in detail, "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*" (John 6:37)

The "generation of the righteous" is the place of HIS habitation. For he does dwell in HIS people. "*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*" (Rom 8:9) "*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*" (1Pet 2:9) mam