

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

OUR BUCKLER

*As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the LORD is tried:
he is a buckler to all those that trust in him. Psalm 18:30*

The natural man rebels against the notion of a GOD who is in absolute control of all persons and events and whose will cannot be resisted nor any of HIS purposes overturned. Yet this is exactly how GOD is pleased to reveal HIMSELF. "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." (Deu 32:39) "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 45:6-7) "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)

Men are more comfortable in imagining that GOD is largely limited in HIS ability to accomplish HIS desire and can only determine what HE will do as HE waits to see what men will do. They have devised many schemes and explanations involving HIS ability to see what will happen in the future, which they call "foreknowledge" and they teach that men can cause GOD to bless them according to their will rather than HIS. Thus they picture HIM as looking at man's response in order to determine HIS own purpose. This is totally foolish reasoning and is contrary to what we read in the Psalms, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power" (Psa 110:3) The will of men is shaped by GOD rather than vice versa. "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)

GOD is pictured as hoping men will do the right thing and desiring to bless them if they will let HIM, in the message that we hear being proclaimed from the majority of pulpits across our land. David understood the folly of those (such as these purveyors of darkness) who devise gods of their own imagination. "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them." (Psa 115:4-8) "But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased." (Psa 115:3)

It is this ABSOLUTE GOD which David goes on to describe as true Israel's "HELP and their SHIELD". (see Ps.115:9,10,11) It is impossible that ONE who is to be their PROTECTOR and DELIVERER, is not also the GOD who does "according to HIS will in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and there is none that can stay HIS hand or say unto HIM, what doest THOU." Dan 4:35 One who must wait upon men cannot be their HELP in every situation. David called upon HIM who does all things well. "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah." (Psa 61:2-4)

When the LORD delivered David *“from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul”*, he was moved to write this Psalm, which first appeared in the 23 chapter of II Samuel and is also recorded in the book of Psalms, as Psalm 18. Herein he declares his reliance upon HIM who is the GOD of all gods. *“And he said, I will love thee, O LORD, my strength. The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.”* (Psa 18:1-2)

David did not consider that the LORD was his strength because he trusted in HIM, but rather HE trusted in HIM because HE is his STRENGTH, BUCKLER, and HIGH TOWER. The salvation of the righteous is of the LORD both in its inception and in its fulfillment. They are caused to trust HIM, as HE reveals HIMSELF to them, in spite of the ridicule of those who trust in the gods of this age. *“Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah. But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.”* (Psa 3:2-3)

We see David refer to the LORD as *“a SHIELD”*, sixteen times, in the Psalms. The Hebrew word which is translated (in the KJV), in the Psalms, as *“shield”* is *“magen”*. This word is also translated as *“buckler”* twice and as *“defense”* once. So we can safely conclude that a buckler and a shield are one and the same, which the LORD reveals HIMSELF as, to those HE has caused to put their trust in HIM. HE is indeed the DEFENSE of HIS people in whom they can safely trust without any fear that HE should ever fail or falter in their protection.

Historically we find that a *“buckler”* refers to a *“shield”* which was specifically used to parry the blows from an opposing swordsman in close combat. The LORD JESUS CHRIST is that ONE who shall keep those from harm whom HE has sworn to protect. *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”* (John 10:27-28) HE declared the same in HIS prayer in John chapter 17, *“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.”* (John 17:11-13)

HE was, specifically, referring to the eleven which the FATHER had given HIM to be HIS apostles, but by illustration and extension includes all of those which are hidden in HIM in the covenant of redemption from before the foundation of the world. *“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)

That ONE whom David called his *“BUCKLER”* has a *“perfect way”* (v.30). Everything that HE does is without any mixture of error and each action which HE ordains is set forth to fulfill HIS purpose. How else could salvation be brought to a people who were in total rebellion against HIM and who would not seek HIM, nor pay any heed to HIS overtures of kindness and mercy? If HE was not the DESIGNER and the PROVIDER of faith how would they then believe, or how could they remove themselves from the darkness and death in which they were enveloped?

HE is that ONE who is a SHIELD and exceeding great REWARD to that people whom HE has determined to save. HIS own ARM, which carries their BUCKLER, has brought salvation, while treading the winepress of GOD's wrath and destroying the ability of HIS enemies to harm even one hair of the heads of those whom HE has loved with an everlasting love.

The preachers of confusion would have us to believe that HE is waiting to see who will trust HIM, before HE shields them from the enemy. Yet the truth is that it is because HE is the BUCKLER of HIS people that they are enabled to trust HIM. Indeed HE reveals HIMSELF as the SAVIOR, which by the operation of HIS grace, also causes them to fall upon their faces and confess that HE is their SAVIOR and LORD. HE is therefore a BUCKLER to all that trust HIM. What else can they do?

Paul says that the saints are equipped with the ARMOR of GOD and that the SHIELD of faith shall quench all the fiery darts of Satan. (see Eph.6:10-18) For by HIS mercy is HIS HOLY ARM revealed. It is this ARM which bears that BUCKLER, fending off every assault and parrying every blow which would jeopardize HIS beloved? Do you trust HIM? mam