

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XVI

Issue 18

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

ETERNAL LIFE

For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. John 5:26-27

All of the benefits and blessings that are given to the created sons of GOD come to them through the LIFE which naturally occurs in CHRIST JESUS who possesses LIFE by virtue of being eternally ONE with the FATHER. HIS LIFE has no beginning and no end simply because HE is GOD whom Isaiah describes as *"the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy."* (Isa 57:15) Nothing can be added to HIM nor can anything be taken away. All things and creatures (both those things and creatures which are known to us and perhaps others which we have been given no knowledge of) of any sort are the product of HIS creation and none can share in that essential glory which is HIS as the ETERNAL GOD. Even as HE told Isaiah, *"I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another."* (Isa 42:8) Or as Paul says, *"Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen."* (1Tim 6:16)

All creatures and things occupy that realm which we know as "time" and HE alone occupies that realm, which we can only partly comprehend, which the scripture calls "eternity." This is essentially that which forms the separation between HIMSELF and all that HE has created. Many are the schemes and theories of men that have clouded that separation and subsequently caused confusion and often division among the sons of GOD.

All that we are given to know about the LORD's interaction with any of HIS creation is in the realm of time even when the scripture clearly says *"from before the foundation of the world."* This statement does not specifically describe "eternity" but merely that these activities, actions, or considerations took place before the world as we are given to see it existed. The words before or after do not exist in "eternity" which has no before or after, but are rather measures of time given by comparison to those things which we presently see.

Now in great measure that is probably an explanation of things which the average person would never contemplate, nor might I add that they probably would never need to. But it is necessary to state such things in order that men might not confuse the complete origin of the creature's benefits, (specifically the sons of GOD) as arising from any condition or existence which does not fully derive from the creating power of GOD who has done all things well and would fulfill HIS purpose in such a manner as to give all glory to CHRIST as the REDEEMER of sinners as well as that ONE from whom every benefit flows to the children of GOD.

GOD is never under any sort of obligation and always does things according to HIS will, completely unfettered by any other moving force. We rejoice when we read that HE has loved HIS people with an "everlasting love" for it describes to us an enduring love which cannot possibly end. We also are blessed in consideration of it, for we cannot see with human eyes when such love had its beginning, though we are quite certain that its beginning (as are all things) is in CHRIST and according to HIS eternal purpose.

The true blessings of the sons of GOD flows to them as their understanding is fully opened to behold the beauty of that truth which Paul expressed saying, *"but Christ is all, and in all."* (Col 3:11) It is seen in the words of Simon Peter, *"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of*

eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” (John 6:68-69) “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” (1John 5:11-12)

As much as we may rejoice in the glorious truth of the LORD’s unconditional election of a people, in CHRIST, from before the foundation of the world, our joy cannot be full apart from HIS application of the truth of CHRIST’s sufficiency in all things to our mind and heart. This is that which Paul describes to the Corinthians when he said, *“The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Rom 10:8-10)* Is this not the manifestation of being made a new creature in CHRIST? Is this not the fruit of “having the SON” and “having LIFE”?

Many are those who have built their hopes on doctrinal schemes and “sound theology” only to miss the “root of the matter.” I am reminded of a hymn by John Berridge,:

- 1 Some wise men of opinions boast, And sleep on doctrines sound;
But, Lord, let not my soul be lost On such enchanted ground.
- 2 Good doctrines can do me no good, While floating in the brain;
Unless they yield my heart some food, They bring no real gain.
- 3 O may my single aim be now To live on him that died;

And nought on earth desire to know, But Jesus crucified! (#169 Gadsby’s Hymnal)

Eternal LIFE is in CHRIST. John plainly said *“this LIFE is in HIS SON”*. Where else would one be able to find such LIFE? Man, by nature is not only dying constantly as he moves towards the day when the grave shall swallow him up, (like the great fish that swallowed Jonah); but he is already dead in trespasses and sins. Thus he is, essentially, “twice dead” and is totally helpless to extricate himself, either, from the carnal grave which shall be a repository of his bones or that state wherein he abides in darkness without the knowledge of THE HOLY ONE.

How can he find this LIFE when he has neither the desire or the ability to discover its SOURCE? The LORD spoke of this dire condition of man in his natural state and the emptiness of mans religious efforts, when HE said to the Pharisees, *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” (John 5:39-40)*

Eternal LIFE is of CHRIST. Like a FOUNTAIN which gushes forth, so the LORD does bring this LIFE to those whom HE loves. Even as HE said to the Samaritan woman, *“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” (John 4:14)* Paul speaks of having discovered this WELLSPRING (or in reality had it revealed unto him) in his letter to the Galatians, *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Gal 2:20)* There is no difference in the life of FAITH and that of ETERNAL LIFE for they both spring from the same FOUNTAIN and each is the SOURCE of the other. We live because HE lives and we believe because HE has granted to us this LIFE.

Thus we see that Eternal LIFE is by or through CHRIST. HE is that blessed CONDUIT through which LIFE comes to us and by which we are enabled to come to the FATHER. Even as HE told HIS disciples, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” (John 14:6)* Zacharias prophesied, at his son’s (John the Baptizer) birth, that he would be a herald of that SALVATION which was to be manifested in the earth, which was to be the fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham (see Gen.22), saying: *“To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” (Luke 1:77-79)*

CHRIST JESUS is the manifestation of the *“tender mercy of our GOD”*. All blessings which are given to the children of GOD, both in this world and that which is to come, flow through, HIM who is the POSSESSOR of eternal LIFE. In HIM we live and move and have our being as the sons of GOD. *“And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” (John 20:30-31)*

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