

# 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*

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## THE FOUNTAIN OF LIVING WATERS

*O LORD, the hope of Israel, all that forsake thee shall be ashamed, and they that depart from me shall be written in the earth, because they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living waters.*

*Jeremiah 17:13*

Godly men in every generation have lamented the wickedness of the earthly societies in which they have been placed. The reason for this is that those men (and of course women) who have been awakened by the SPIRIT of GOD to behold the righteousness of CHRIST can find no resting place in this world and they have been given consciences which are tender and offended by the rejection of the standards of GOD. We speak not simply, of those which are in the letter but rather those things which are a matter of the heart and mind.

We sometimes hear men speak of days in the past which they would presume were the epitome of holiness and an adherence to the way of the LORD by those who are now long dead. This is especially true as we hear some recite (with a romanticized view) how that our own nation was founded on the truth of GOD by men of Godly intentions and pure hearts. Such a notion is in reality not founded in fact. We can discover this by simply reading history as it was, rather than as we might like for it to be. But, we can, also, be sure of this because men are men, and sinners every one, regardless of the age or society in which they might dwell..

Those who are content to compare "righteousness" from one age and society, to another, especially to that of the present day, can build a case for a "godly past" in the foundations of our own society. Yet "comparative righteousness" is a poor standard and serves no purpose except to stroke the egos of those who would long for a return to it, and who presume that they would walk in it if given the chance. Many would mistakenly believe that if we could just get back to our "roots", then the ills of society would lessen and maybe even vanish.

This is a foolish notion which rests on a denial of the total depravity of men and fails to recognize that all men will be as wicked as they can be, apart from the restraining grace of GOD. *"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."* (Psa 76:10) Men are by nature self serving and self destructive apart from the mercy of GOD to keep them from this path which ultimately spells their doom. Religious and self-righteous men believe that such is surely not the case as they opine that men can of their own free-will escape from the morass of sin which envelops every society upon the face of the earth.

These men can readily identify the besetting sins of our day, such as abortion, sodomy, drug abuse, and internet porn. Yet they cannot see that, these things are not the "problem", but are rather the symptoms of the true problem which can in no wise be solved by legislation, activism, or any activity which begins with the "free will of men" nor can society be healed if everyone were to avoid these outward manifestations of wickedness.

We sometimes hear men say that judgment is going to fall on our society because of the rise and acceptance of "sodomy". Yet the reality is that rampant sodomy is the manifestation of GOD's judgment upon a people who will not worship HIM, rather than its cause. *"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, ----- Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, ----- For this cause God gave them up unto*

*vile affections: -----.* And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.” (Rom 1:21-28)

Sodomy is, in itself, no worse sin than any other, yet it is singled out as a particular judgment which is visited upon those nations who forget GOD. Who can tell us of a nation where this is not the case?. Where on earth would one find any nation or society that falls upon its collective face in worship of the ONE TRUE and LIVING GOD who rules in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, giving glory to the NAME of JESUS CHRIST as both the SAVIOR of sinners and the ETERNAL GOD? There are none.

I hope to be thankful for being given the privilege to live in the greatest nation upon the earth, but I hope also not to be lulled into thinking that any nation in the earth is walking in godliness. We see Jeremiah lamenting the wickedness of the nation of Israel, even though Israel (and Judah) was given every advantage and favor. *“What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.”* (Rom 3:1-2)

There have been periods of time when there was more outward civility, respect of authority, and general morality in our nation than we can perhaps see in the present age. Yet this was not due to the free choice of men (or some supposed “spark of divinity” in them) but rather the blessing of GOD who has from time to time seen fit to more greatly restrain the inward corruption of men. Then in HIS own time HE is pleased to remove this restraint to some degree and men quickly turn *“like a sow that was washed to its wallowing in the mire.”* It is in these times that we can clearly see what man is by nature and to view his natural rebellion against the way of GOD, which is sometimes hidden to the view of those who suppose man to be basically good.

The LORD identified the error of Israel. While there were many different avenues upon which they embarked in their rebellion against the LORD, (i.e.; burning incense to strange gods, sacrificing infants in the fire, killing the prophets, being disobedient to the law, etc.), yet all of their sin can be attributed to one error which they were absolutely guilty of, yet had no power to correct, since they loved their sinful ways and disobedience and were hell-bent on their chosen course.

The LORD said they had *“forsaken the FOUNTAIN of LIVING WATERS.”* This is true from the very beginning as the LORD forbade Adam to eat of the *“tree of the knowledge of good and evil”*, yet gave no restriction upon eating of the TREE of LIFE. But Adam true to his nature pursued that which was forbidden and forsook that which was not. Due to the inherited proclivity to sin which all of the sons of men are born into, they will not come to this FOUNTAIN which is a WELL springing up into everlasting life.

CHRIST spoke of this FOUNTAIN to the Samaritan woman at the well in Sychar. *“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) This is a FOUNTAIN which is open to all who will drink from it, yet not one will drink even a drop of it unless HE is pleased to give it to them. Thus this is a FOUNTAIN of mercy and not merit, men cannot boast of availing themselves of its supply, but can merely give thanks that HE has caused them to drink. Left to themselves they will walk by its crystal flow, though thirsty and tired, and never drink.

This is a FOUNTAIN which washes away the utmost of stains. No sin is so great that this WATER cannot cleanse it. All have sinned and come short of GOD’s glory, therefore all are in the same condition by nature. That work of CHRIST to take away the sin of HIS people is complete and reaches down to the very dregs of human depravity, even as Paul testified. Zechariah prophesied of it, *“In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”* (Zec 13:1)

This is a FOUNTAIN which is complete, needing no additions, nor waiting upon anyone’s approval. Many pay lip service to drinking from this FOUNTAIN, yet they bring with them various cleansing techniques and potions. CHRIST is ALL. Nothing else is needed to make a sinner clean before GOD. If a man’s feet are washed by the LORD, then HE is every whit clean.

“There is a FOUNTAIN filled with blood, drawn from EMMANUEL’s veins and sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains. The dying thief rejoiced to see that FOUNTAIN in his day, and there may I, though vile as he, wash all my sins away.” (W. Cowper) “O CHRIST HE is the FOUNTAIN the deep sweet WELL of love, the streams on earth I’ve tasted, more deep I’ll drink above. There to an ocean fullness HIS mercy do’t expand, the LAMB is all the GLORY in EMMANUEL’s land. (S. Rutherford.) Are you washed in this FOUNTAIN? mam