

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

AS THE WATERS COVER THE SEA

For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. Habakkuk 2:14

There is no other book written by men which can exceed the poetic beauty of the Bible. Its pages are full of wondrous verses which just by their sheer splendor of wording, capture the imaginations of men and testify of its true AUTHORSHIP. Due to man's innate rebellion against the spiritual truth, found therein, its natural beauty often goes unrecognized and its value as literature is frequently diminished. All of the religious books, of the world, combined, cannot match it for magnificence of expression, and are even laughable by comparison.

While there is a grandeur and beauty in its pages which can be recognized by the natural man, yet none can behold the true glory thereof apart from being born again (i.e.; from above) by the SPIRIT of GOD. Ultimately it is a book which is given for one purpose, which is to testify of the glory of HIM who has created all things according to the good pleasure of HIS will and does direct all events, times, and actions to occur in keeping with HIS purpose to magnify the glory of HIS grace in the redemption of sinners by the blood and righteousness of JESUS CHRIST. In keeping with this purpose we read that, "*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, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" (2Tim 3:16-17)

This very truth is set forth by Paul's description of the reason and function of the FATHER's election of a people in CHRIST from before the foundation of the world. "*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*" (Eph 2:10) "*That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*" (Eph 2:7)

It is very apparent that those who are the objects of HIS redemptive work are also the subjects of HIS SPIRIT's work, as HE calls them from darkness to light. "*Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*" (Rom 8:9) "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*" (2Cor 5:17) One of the evidences of this work is a love and regard for the WORD of GOD. The SUBJECT of the scriptures becomes precious to them. "*Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.*" (1Pet 2:7)

We find a description of the manifestation of the gospel in its fullness in the prophecies of Isaiah and Habakkuk, where we see them both refer to it with these words of promise, "*For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*" (Isa 11:9) Many have tried to make these prophecies to have reference to a time which is yet future to the present age in which we live. Yet it seems clear that they are both referring to the time when CHRIST would come into the world (see Isa. 11:1,2) and make known HIS redemptive purpose as HE was born of a woman and "*increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man*". (Luke 2:52) This was necessary in order to fulfill all righteousness before the FATHER, as HE learned obedience by the things which HE suffered, even becoming sin for us as HE took upon HIMSELF our nature and became obedient even to the death of the cross. In preparation for that momentous event HE went about doing good, healing the sick, raising the dead, and declaring the nature of the Kingdom which HE calls HIS own.

When it pleased HIM, HE laid down HIS life as a SACRIFICE for sin and according to HIS own time rose again from the tomb where HE was laid three days earlier. After forty days, during which time HE appeared to HIS disciples, HE then ascended back to the RIGHT HAND of the

FATHER from whence HE shall return at the last trump when HE shall gather HIS purchased possession which have been scattered in the earth.

No man could have known all of these details nor encompassed this knowledge prior to HIS carrying all of it out in the order and time which seemed good to HIM. Yet now HE has clearly ordained that every detail of that work which HE has finished might be known *“And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Eph 3:9-11)

Thus HE has ordained that the Gospel of HIS Kingdom be preached to every creature and HE has promised to call HIS own from out of every kindred tribe and tongue upon the face of the earth. Now even as the waters cover the sea, so too, does the Gospel of the Glory of the Blessed GOD, cover the earth and cannot be stymied or overturned by any power or principality. *“Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”* (Mat 16:18)

Even as HE has surrounded the seas, having *“placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it: and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it?”* (Jer 5:22) So too has HE placed a bound upon HIS word which cannot be “heard” but by those to whom it is given. Even as HE spoke in Parables, *“And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.”* (Mar 4:11-12)

This is a glorious wonder which a man is not sufficient to fully grasp, yet is declared over and again throughout the scriptures. Thus no man can glory in having obtained an understanding of the truth of GOD by his own power or will, but must simply fall upon his face and thank HIM who bestows understanding to men according to HIS purpose. *“For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”* (1Cor 4:7)

Archaeologists dig in the earth to discover relics and fossils which no man could see apart from their efforts. They gain valuable knowledge (often times quite debatable) through these endeavors. Explorers in every age have boldly gone where no man has been in order to gain knowledge which they could not discover in any other fashion. These are hidden things which they can discover. Yet the glory of GOD is displayed in plain sight (as the waters cover the sea) but not one man in the earth can discover it by his own power.

In order for a man to sail upon the natural sea, he must have a proper vessel fitted for his journey. So too for a man to sail upon this “sea of the knowledge of the glory of GOD” he must be given a vessel with which to traverse its bounding main. This vessel is not designed by men and not one piece of its construction is carried out by those who are given the privilege of navigating this body of life sustaining water. *“For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”* (2Cor 4:6-7)

Habakkuk adds a phrase which is not present in Isaiah’s prophecy, which sums up the difference between hearing the gospel with the natural ear and hearing it with *“an ear to hear.”* He says that *“the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”* Any man who is not deaf can hear the gospel preached and can even acknowledge that the facts which he hears presented are true. Yet apart from an operation of GOD’s sovereign grace, giving him a “new birth”, he will never see the “glory” of the ONE who is the SAVIOR of sinners and the reigning KING.

The man who thus “hears” will not only rejoice in sins forgiven but shall find great delight in HIM and HIS word. He is not satisfied to simply have a ticket punched for heaven but desires to know the TRUTH in his inward parts even as Paul said, *“I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: --that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death”* (Phil 3:8-10) mam