

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

THE PROMISE OF LIFE

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus. II Timothy 1:1

Everyone that you meet on any given day would confess that they are alive, if asked. Most of them would actually think that you were somewhat of an idiot for even asking that question. Adam was fashioned from the dust of the Earth by the HAND of the Eternal CREATOR and given life by the breath of HIS mouth. *“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.”* (Gen 2:7) HE created man from finite matter and bestowed upon him natural life. HE also planted a TREE of LIFE in that Garden which HE fashioned for Adam to dwell in and to sustain his natural life by eating the FRUIT of that TREE. All that transpired in that Garden was determined to occur just as it did by the same ONE who planted the Garden, formed the man, and placed the TREE. This was no “experiment” gone awry nor a disappointment to HIM who made all things according to the good pleasure of HIS will. HE does all things for HIS glory and the sad outcome (as we would view it) of Adam’s disobedience, is given to illustrate the corruptible nature of mankind, and the HOLINESS of HIM who, alone, is ETERNAL.

Redemption is the backstory of creation and all that the LORD has revealed to men, which HE has performed in the Heavens and the Earth are unto this end, that HE might be glorified therein. In many ways the unfolding of Adam and Eve’s disobedience reveals the weakness of the Law to give or sustain life. *“For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”* (Gal 3:21-22) *“For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”* (Rom 8:3)

This is the very principle which the LORD set forth in Eden’s garden and by it we are reminded of the innate corruption of men and the determination of GOD to deliver HIS people through the work of HIM who HE promised would bruise the head of that serpent who, as a lion, daily goes about seeking whom he may devour.

JESUS CHRIST is the SOURCE of all LIFE as well as its sustainer. No creature has life within themselves but receive it from HIM who kills and makes alive. *“In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”* (John 1:4) *“For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.”* (John 5:26) *“For in him we live, and move, and have our being.”* (Acts 17:28) Every breath that we take, every beat of our heart, is that which is determined and wrought in us according to the good pleasure of HIS will. *“Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.”* (Job 12:9-10)

Adam was in a state of carnal innocence (though not perfection), and had no knowledge of death, sin, or destruction before he disobeyed the clear and simple command of GOD. Yet when he acted according to his nature, (as the LORD had told him he would) he brought all of that upon

his own head as well as his posterity. *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* (Gen 2:17)

Now we are quite certain that Adam did not physically die *"in that day"* when he ate of that which was forbidden. In fact he lived to be 930 years old. Yet he did indeed die in that day, because the sentence of death and condemnation came upon him, and every day in which his body drew breath, he came closer to the ultimate outcome of his disregard of the LORD's command. *"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."* (Heb 9:27) He was (as are all men by nature, born of his seed and made sinners like himself) like a man on death row awaiting his final day with no reprieve in sight.

There is no power which men have to stave off this appointed end, though they expend all manner of money and effort to avoid it. Their life must cease according to the ordained purpose of HIM who gives them life in the first place. In their rebellion against this ONE who appoints a man's bounds that he cannot pass, men have devised all sorts of religions and philosophies which they believe help them cope with this certain end. They are certain that their "beliefs" will uphold them in that day which is rapidly approaching.

Most men believe that they have a "soul", yet the scriptures indicate that they are a "soul". The same scriptures speak of the "spirit of a man". It is impossible, however, for men to discern the exact difference between the "soul" and the "spirit", or even how they can be differentiated from the body, since the only visible evidence of a man is seen by his body. Yet we do know that the WORD of GOD which is sharper than any two-edged sword, can divide between the soul and spirit, and even the *"joints and marrow"* (i.e.; the body). So, we are left here upon the earth, with no knowledge of the existence of men apart from seeing their body, alive and well.

Thus, in light of our weakness, we are given the great and precious promise of the LORD, that HE will raise these corruptible bodies from the grave in the day of the Resurrection. This is the HOPE which is implanted in those who are given FAITH to lay hold upon JESUS CHRIST. This is in part that *"promise of LIFE which is in CHRIST JESUS."* Yet it is a most vital part even as Paul said, *"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept."* (1Cor 15:19-20)

It is because CHRIST arose from the dead that we are assured of this great and precious promise. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."* (1Pet. 1:3-5)

This *"promise of LIFE which is in CHRIST JESUS"* can only be enjoyed by those whom the LORD has called from darkness to LIGHT. Those who are the sons of GOD, *"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* (John 1:13) Herein do they rejoice, *"having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."* (1Tim 4:8) As Adam died in the day in which he ate of that forbidden tree, and was all his lifetime subject unto bondage, awaiting his demise. So too (in contrast) are those who are born from above, made alive in the present time by the GIFT of LIFE from the hand of HIM who is LIFE ETERNAL, and live their lifetime free from bondage for *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* (Rom 8:1-3)

It is the *"promise of LIFE in CHRIST JESUS"*, which prompted Paul to write, *"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)

"Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father." (Rom 8:12-15) This is the *"promise of LIFE in CHRIST JESUS."* mam