

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XIX

Issue 10

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

THE FOUNTAIN OF THE WILD ASS

He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. Psalm 104:10-11

While it is common in this area of the country, in which we live, to find multitudes of folks who claim to believe that the Bible is true, it is equally common to find many of those same folks disregarding the things taught in the Bible in favor of societal mores and philosophies. This area of the country is often called the "Bible Belt", yet you find very little difference in the teaching of history and "science" (falsely so called) in our schools, with the same teachings found among those who consider the Bible to be mythical at best, if not a complete man-made prevarication. The common attitudes of many (who claim to be the followers of CHRIST and Bible believers) towards free-will, divorce, fornication, adultery, and cohabitation without marriage belies any true belief in the Bible's teachings. Not to even mention the common acceptance of the pagan practice of burning the bodies of the dead or the use of the LORD's name as a common expletive.

The logical conclusion we draw from this is that most consider the Bible to be true enough as it relates to their "religion", but not completely reliable for every facet of life. When it is inconvenient to follow its precepts, it is often ignored. We do not propose that every question which might arise in the minds of men can be answered in the Bible, nor do we think that every dilemma which a man may find himself in has a solution which can be found by reading its pages. Yet it is most certainly not a religious talisman, nor is there any benefit derived from claiming to believe it to be true. It is often but an idol which men hold onto much like crosses, baptisms, and religious affiliations.

The Bible is a book which is primarily about the redemptive work which CHRIST has come into the world to perform. All of the history which is unfolded in its pages, is recorded for the purpose of testifying of HIS great love for HIS people and the unfailing faithfulness which HE has demonstrated to those HE calls HIS children. The giving of HIS law to the nation of Israel, through the prophet Moses, was not an end in itself. Rather, it has been displayed in all of its glory, that the sons of GOD might see themselves in a true light as sinners without the ability to bring themselves into the presence of a HOLY GOD. This is exactly what Paul meant when he wrote to the Galatians; *"Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: 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. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." (Gal 3:21-25)*

There are many momentous events which transpired in the Old Testament. None is any more startling and notable than the LORD's deliverance of Noah and his family, from the flood which destroyed the inhabitants of the Earth. HE *"spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly."* (2Pet 2:5) Yet there is probably no single event recorded in the historical record found in the Bible which is anymore doubted and ridiculed than this. Yet if one disregards this event as not being true, then one must doubt the redemptive work of CHRIST which is illustrated in that flood. *"The longsuffering*

of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him. (1Pet 3:20-22)

The LORD would surely teach us of HIS hatred of sin as HE poured out rain from the heavens and water from the fountains of the deep to completely cover the Earth and in HIS judgment, destroy all living creatures which dwelt upon the land. Yet HE would demonstrate the wonders of HIS grace in this same cataclysm as HE shut Noah and his family and that animal creation, which he would preserve, in the ARK which was CHRIST. The Earth was changed by that deluge and what men see as destruction; GOD meant for good to those who are the called according to HIS purpose.

The LORD would demonstrate throughout the pages of the Bible, HIS determined purpose to make a differentiation between that which HE would make acceptable to HIMSELF, and that which HE would cast away. All of this is according to HIS sovereign will and purpose and all of creation is at HIS mercy. But oh, how great that mercy is, as we see HIM subject the whole creation unto vanity that HE might show the wonders of HIS grace and mercy to those who are vessels of mercy which deserve obliteration as much as those vessels of wrath which HE has appointed unto destruction. *“Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.” (Rom 9:20-23)* Who is sufficient for such things?

The Psalmist speaks of changes in the Earth wrought by that flood, which he describes, *“Thou coveredst it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains.” (Psa 104:6)* Just as surely as these waters arose, according to HIS command, they did quickly subside according to, the same. *“At thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away.” (Psa 104:7)* Yet HE would reveal that HE had a merciful use for even those flood waters which HE brought upon the creation. *“They go up by the mountains; they go down by the valleys unto the place which thou hast founded for them. Thou hast set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth. He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst.” (Psa 104:8-11)*

HE gave Noah a promise, that HE would not again destroy the Earth and its inhabitants with water. Yet to remind men that the flood belongs unto HIM, HE appointed a place for these waters to abide, setting their bounds that they cannot pass over. We hear much from the wise men of the world that rising sea levels are going to ruin the Earth as we know it. I don't know exactly where the bounds of this water are, that HE has set, but I am sure that this water can go no farther than HE has appointed, and I am equally sure that nothing that men shall do can prevent it from occupying those “bounds” which HE has ordained.

These waters which the LORD brought forth from the deeps and the clouds have now been “repurposed” for the benefit of the beasts of the field, including even the “wild asses”. We learn in the gospel that it pleases the LORD to reveal HIS truth to babes while hiding it from the wise and prudent. He upbraided the Pharisees as they strutted about in their supposed righteousness, pointing out that the *“publicans and harlots”* go into the Kingdom before them. (see Matt.21:31,32).

How could the beasts and wild asses find water if it was not that the LORD caused it to flow down from the mountains into the valleys below? So too it is true that men by nature cannot find out the place of HIS dwelling nor enter therein by their own power and thought. *“He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.” (Psa 104:13)*

In like fashion HE has sent HIS WORD into the earth and prepared a people to hear and rejoice in that WORD according to HIS purpose. None who hear it shall go lacking. *“These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season.” (Psa 104:27)* *“That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.” (1Cor 1:29-31)* Is your thirst quenched by this LIVING WATER? mam