

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 CONEY AND THE PYGARG

And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

Acts 10:15

From the very beginning the LORD has been pleased to differentiate between those who are HIS people and those who are not. We see this most clearly demonstrated in the regard which the LORD had to the “offerings” of Cain and Abel. *“And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.”* (Gen 4:3-5)

Cain manifested the natural enmity which exists in men towards the LORD, as he slew his own brother in a fit of jealousy. This “enmity” which was manifested in Cain is of the same sort as that which the LORD said that HE put between the seed of Satan and the SEED of the woman. That SEED of the woman is, of course, JESUS CHRIST the RIGHTEOUS. HE has a people which are HIS from the beginning (*“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.”* (Eph 1:4)) and the vitriol of Satan is unleashed towards them through those who are appointed unto wrath as Cain was. Just like Judas many years later, he could blame no one for his actions and desire but himself, (see Gen. 4:7) yet he could not escape the judgement of GOD upon those same actions which demonstrated his affinity unto his father, the devil. His hatred of the “SEED of the woman” caused him to slay him who was accepted by GOD. (see I John 3:12)

Then the LORD gave to Eve a son whom she called, Seth. We hear no more of Cain even as the scripture says, *“The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot.”* (Pro 10:7) The same ONE who made the memory of Seth to be blessed is HE who caused the name of Cain to perish from the Earth. Seth had a son whom he called Enos and it was in his day that men began to call upon JEHOVAH. (see Gen.4:26) Through him we trace the lineage of Noah who found grace in the eyes of the LORD. The LORD spared him and his wife with their three sons and their wives as HE destroyed all the living in the Earth.

We can be sure that all things occur in the earth directly according to the will of HIM who says that HE alone is *“Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”* (Isa 46:10) Is it not, then, quite clear that HE calls HIS own sheep by name and they hear HIS voice and follow HIM? How then did they become HIS sheep apart from HIS divine appointment? If GOD be for us who can be against us? *“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”* (Luke 12:32) Thus, we know that HE will differentiate between those to whom the Kingdom is given and those to whom it is not.

In order to illustrate this truth to those generations to come, the LORD chose a nation (Israel) in the earth to demonstrate HIS everlasting love to that Remnant which HE has made HIS own from every kindred, tribe, and tongue. This truth was hidden in a mystery which was not revealed until the LORD JESUS came into the world and was manifested as the REDEEMER of the true house of Israel. *“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching*

of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever.” (Rom 16:25-27)

HE gave to the Jews many laws which were specifically for them, and which, to the carnal mind seem quite arbitrary in many cases. Yet the reason for these laws and restrictions was to demonstrate that HE had set them apart from the rest of the world. *“For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth. Thou shalt not eat any abominable thing.” (Deut 14:2-3)* Thus, HE gave them many dietary laws which they were commanded to follow. They did not become “holy” by adhering to these laws but rather they were to adhere to these laws because the LORD had made them a “holy people” or a people who were set apart. It is very important that we have a clear understanding of this truth, for a lack of understanding of that causes men to go about to establish their own righteousness by the keeping of HIS law.

The LORD calls HIS sheep from the world, because they are HIS sheep and HE has sanctified them, making them holy in HIS sight. This is that “holiness” without which no man shall see the LORD. Peter speaks of it when he says, *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” (1Pet 2:9-12)*

The LORD gave Peter a vision wherein he saw a sheet come down from heaven with all manner of “abominable” (as the Jews would consider) animals in it, and was commanded to eat them. Peter being a “good Jew” recoiled at the idea and expressed his disdain for that which he considered “unclean”. The LORD told him that whatever HE makes clean is clean every whit and should not be called common (or unfit). Of course, the LORD was not instructing Peter about what foods to eat, but rather the fact that those whom the LORD makes holy are forever and completely holy. Thus, his objections to declaring the Gospel to the Gentiles was overcome since the LORD has a people from every kindred and tribe whom HE has made holy in CHRIST.

Those who believe do not become holy by their act of believing nor by any pursuit of obedience nor abstinence of any substance or activity on their part. Rather they are called and given faith to believe because they are made holy in CHRIST and completely accepted in the courts of heaven, by the blood and righteousness of HIM. That which GOD has cleansed should not be called common (i.e.; unholy) or unclean, for it is HE who sets HIS people apart.

For this reason, HE sent Peter to Cornelius’ house to declare the unsearchable riches of CHRIST to him whose heart the LORD had prepared to receive it. The LORD demonstrated HIS acceptance of Cornelius and those in his house by giving them ears to hear the gospel which Peter proclaimed, pouring out HIS SPIRIT upon them. They demonstrated the efficacy of HIS work in them by believing the word which Peter preached, being baptized and having a desire to hear more of CHRIST. *“And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.” (Act 10:48)* *“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2Tim 2:19)*

The man who walks in “holiness” is not observed in eating the “pygarg” nor in abstaining from the “coney”. Rather that man is given a desire to be found in obedience to HIM who has called him out of darkness and into the LIGHT. He will hear the exhortations of the scriptures and seek to be found walking in a fashion which brings no reproach upon the NAME of CHRIST. *“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)* Though he finds that in his flesh dwells no good thing, yet he is given the EARNEST of the SPIRIT, crying ABBA FATHER as the SPIRIT wrestles against that flesh bringing him into conformity with CHRIST. Are you set apart in CHRIST by HIS SPIRIT? mam