

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

SUPPER'S READY

Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine . (John 21:12)

One of my favorite passages in all of the scriptures is found here. The disciples had spent all night fishing (which was to them their normal course of life), but had failed by their own efforts to catch anything. Now the criteria by which a man is judged an able fisherman is always the amount of fish he can catch compared to those of less skill. So these men were no doubt depressed by the dearth of their catch and disgusted at the time they had wasted. This was not the first time they had so labored and been unsuccessful. (see Luke 5:5) But just as then, the LORD of the seas, knew exactly where the net needed to be cast to fill it to overflowing. HE who made the fish and fashioned the sea in which they swam has never failed to give HIS children the blessings that they need at the time their need is greatest. Had they filled their nets with fish by their own prowess, they would not have appreciated the bounty which the LORD supplied. It is a true thing that men are often filled with their own importance and are convinced of their own ability to provide for themselves. (see Luke 12:16-21) The self sufficient will have the rewards of their labors, but no more. (see Mat. 6:1-15; II Cor. 3:5). How often in the course of our lives have we toiled in seeming futility or faced the emptiness of defeat only to have the LORD show HIS hand and bless us with an abundance which we could not produce.(see Eph.3:20) Those who know themselves to be without fish are the very ones who shall receive a net full. HE is our provider whose watchcare over us is more diligent than our own.

Just as surely as the LORD provides for HIS own who call upon HIS NAME, HE also made provision for them before they ever knew HIM. We can see this clearly pictured in this account (John 21:1-14) which is before us.

He watched over HIS children before they were aware of HIS presence. Verse 4 says, "*But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.*" (John 21:4) The implication is that HE was standing there while it was still dark, watching over every move they made and they did not know HE was there. The scriptures indicate that HE chose HIS people and set HIS love on them before they were ever born. (see Rom.8:29-30; Eph.1:4,11; II Thess.2:13; II Tim 1:9) "*We love HIM because HE first loved us.*" (I John 4:19) Oh the riches of HIS grace and mercy who cared for me when I was in darkness and walking contrary to HIS way. Oh love that would not let me go but held me in the palm of HIS hand and the cradle of HIS love. But just as the sunrise revealed HIS presence so HIS presence reveals the dawning of a new day for those who sat in darkness, for we have seen a great light.

HE called out to them in such a way that they were reminded of their barrenness. Verse 5 says, "*Then JESUS saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered HIM, no.*" (John 21:5) Until a man is convinced of his sin he will not seek a remedy for it. HE is faithful to awaken HIS children to their lost condition (see Eph.2:1-6). Paul could testify to this fact after he traveled down the Damascus road. "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the SON of GOD: and they that hear shall live.*" (John 5:25)

HE told them the solution to their empty and pitiful situation. Verse 6 says, *"And HE said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes."* (John 21:6) Those whom the LORD awakens, HE leads into the light of the gospel. He will not abandon HIS own but will bring them to HIMSELF. (John 6:37;10:27-29) *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the LORD shall be saved."* (Romans 10:13)

HE provided and prepared them food which they neither labored for nor had any hand in procuring. Though they had a net full of fishes the meal was already complete when they got to the shore. *"As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread."* (John 21:9) We are bought with a price, we are a purchased possession, we have been fed with manna from above. Have we not been given meat to eat that we knew not of?

He invites HIS children to eat of that meal which HE provided; "JESUS saith unto them, Come and dine ." (John 21:12) ; **and then serves the meal HIMSELF.** *"JESUS then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise."* (John 21:13) Some say the LORD gives all men a chance to be saved. Brethren, there is nothing about the salvation of the LORD that has anything to do with chance. The LORD JESUS CHRIST intended to save HIS people when HE came into the world, HE accomplished all that was necessary to purchase their redemption, and HE will present us faultless before HIS FATHER. Come home, come home its supper time the shadows lengthen fast, come home come home its suppertime, we're going home at last.

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