

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume VI

Issue 21

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

OUR PAVILION

For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock.

Psalm 27:5

Every generation has had those who think that the behavior of men is so bad that it couldn't possibly get worse. The scripture says that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." (2Tim. 3:13) This leads some to believe that men are becoming more evil but the reality is that the only difference in the level of wickedness which is exhibited by men in any age is the removal of the restraints of conscience and propriety which GOD is pleased to place in men. As they have from the beginning men will act according to the dictates of their evil desires unless GOD sees fit to restrain them from doing so. (see Ps.76:10)

GOD's judgment of sin in nations is not primarily nor necessarily evidenced by terrible calamities on the account of their overt sin but rather the rampant sin of any people is, itself, an evidence of HIS judgment upon them. (see Rom. 1:21-26) The wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah was an evidence of GOD's judgment upon them, the fire and brimstone was merely the culmination of that judgment which began when HE removed their restraints. The United States, (as a nation) has enjoyed many blessings over the years for which it is largely ungrateful. The current state of affairs in this land is but the evidence (in my opinion) that HE is fattening this nation up for its destruction. With abortion, adultery, and homosexuality having become both commonplace and accepted in the mainstream of society, we are already manifesting the judgment to come. (see II Tim.3:1-7)

Many have thought that the law of GOD was given as a means of keeping men in check but the truth is that unless GOD constrains a man to follow HIS law he will disregard it regardless of the extent to which that law is published. That man who is spiritually awakened sees the law of GOD as that which reveals the innate sin of his heart and can grant him no comfort in the thought of thinking that he possesses the ability to keep it.

Paul said, "For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." (Rom 7:9-14) Now what Paul is saying is that whenever the spiritual nature of the law was revealed to him, he was slain by it. He despaired of keeping it and it was the law which revealed his inborn love of sin.

In the Muslim law if a man is caught stealing they chop his hand off. But GOD never taught the Israelites to do such because HE would teach them that the law is spiritual in nature and that the problem with man's sin is not his hand that steals but his heart which

moves him to sin. Paul said, *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;”* (2Co 10:3-5) We are not sent into the world to conduct a moral crusade and try to get men to alter their behavior by declaring to them the law of GOD. Rather that message we are sent with is mighty in power (as it is indited by the HOLY GHOST) to pierce the very hearts of those whom HE sends it to. HE changes men’s hearts and turns them from darkness to light. As a result of this “power” their very thoughts are made captives of CHRIST.

In the midst of the chaos around us, the people of GOD have found a place of refuge in JESUS CHRIST. *‘So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.’* (Heb 13:6) The Psalmist said *“he shall hide me in his pavilion”* .

CHRIST is our PAVILION. We, generally, think of a pavilion as a large tent or building in which many are gathered. The Psalmist spoke of it as a place of safety. He said HE shall “hide” me there or cover me so that I am shielded from that which befalls those outside. Truly HE is our covering and deliverer from the raging tempest. *“He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.”* (Psa 91:4-10)

This PAVILION is not of this world. The LORD did not come to deliver us out of the world but rather to be our DELIVERER in the world. *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”* (John 16:33) We are not hidden from the sorrows and trials which befall all men. We are however kept from the power of those trials to destroy us. *“There hath no temptation (i.e.; trial) taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”* (1Cor. 10:13) Sickness and disease may invade this house of clay, yea even the skin-worms ultimately eat our flesh but we cannot be destroyed because HE has undertaken our cause and will be our PORTION forever for we are hidden in HIM from the foundation of the world.

This PAVILION is the only place of comfort for the sons of GOD. David said, *“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.”* (Psa 27:4) The men of this world seek comfort and safety in a variety of means (see Eccl.7:29) but there is only one place wherein the awakened sons of GOD have sought refuge. Job said, *“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: “* (Job 13:15) Peter said, *“Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”* (John 6:68-69) Many men have sought out help in religion of one type or other, assurances of men, or even acts of “righteousness” which are supposed to salve the conscience, but none of these things can give any aid to that man who is awakened by the SPIRIT of GOD and enabled to see and hear spiritual things.

This man can find no rest to his soul except in the words of CHRIST, he seeks no dwelling-place except that one in which CHRIST is the HEAD and OWNER. He might not always be as “comfortable” as he would desire to be, (see Phil.3:13) but he is always convinced that the only place wherein he might find that peace is to be found rejoicing in the beauty of the LORD, *“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.”* (Psa 17:15)