

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

OUR STRENGTH

And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.

Daniel 10:19

The prevailing wisdom (?) of the world would constantly keep us informed of how strong we really are if we can just somehow gather up the courage to believe in ourselves. Thereby we can put to flight all negative thoughts and then we can triumph in all things. If we can get enough people together with this positive energy there is no telling what we can do. This same philosophy has crept in among those who profess to be followers of CHRIST to the extent that nowadays it is hard to distinguish between the average church service and a motivational rally or convention.

The subtleties of Satan's advances have allowed him to gain a foothold even among many who would use the bible as the basis for a pep talk for 'Christians' to motivate them to do great things, win souls, engage in political and moral struggles, and who knows what else. These high paid cheerleaders use their rah rah tactics to supposedly remind the "LORD's people" how strong they are as long as they put their trust in the LORD. But oh my if they don't exercise their free will to let the LORD help them they will surely fail, unless they happen upon a self help book (perhaps even written by a "christian") that tells them the same thing the TV philosophers are spouting off about.

One of the first and foremost lessons that the SPIRIT of GOD is pleased to teach HIS people is that they have no strength of their own. Daniel relates in the very passage that we are looking at how that he was brought to a place of devastation and despair in his own power. *"Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength."* (Dan 10:8) Isaiah experienced the same thing when he was given a glimpse of GOD's holiness, *"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."* (Isa 6:5) Job testifies in a similar fashion when the LORD appeared to him in the whirlwind. *"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."* (Job 42:5-6) So it was also with John on the isle of Patmos when the LORD revealed HIMSELF to him, *"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead."* (Rev 1:17) The blessed Apostle Paul when he was known as Saul of Tarsus yet breathing out threatenings and slaughters against the people of GOD, fell to the earth as the LORD appeared to him and he was struck blind and made to cry out in his weakness and anguish, *"Who art thou, Lord?"* (Acts 9:5)

The work of GOD in this revelation is totally unaided nor is it precipitated by man. It is GOD alone who can convince a man of his utter inability to help himself. This concept is absolutely hated by the religious do gooders of the world who rely on men to do their fair share in the work of GOD and especially in letting GOD save them. Men will continue on their merry way, attempting and doing great things for GOD until such time as HE is pleased to show up on the scene and leave them speechless and clamoring for breath at the

revelation of the depths of their own depravity and the vast divide that is between them and the true and living GOD. Many are convinced that they can believe in HIM whenever they wish but those whom HE has taught to believe must acknowledge their own inability to even do that as the father of the demon possessed child confessed. *"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." (Mar 9:23-24)*

So we address ourselves to all of those little children who mourn for their sin, who see themselves as unworthy of the least of the LORD's mercies, who know themselves to be worthy of being cast away forever. Those who tremble at the mention of the LORD's name and fear to even approach HIS throne, to them we come with the sweet message of the gospel wherein HE says *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* (Mat 11:28) Are you weighed down under the heavy load of your sin and find not one shred of worth within yourself? Have you heard men say "just believe" but you sadly confess "I can't". The gospel reveals SOMEONE who is exactly suited to a sinner's need. JESUS CHRIST the RIGHTEOUS has everything and more for those who cannot help themselves, for those who are without strength, HE is yet strong.

Salvation! O the joyful sound!

'Tis pleasure to our ears,

A sovereign balm for every wound,

A cordial for our fears. Isaac Watts #213 Gadsby's Hymns

HIS voice is strength to HIS people. Even as Daniel said, *"when he had spoken unto me, I was" strengthened* "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom 10:17) Faith is the gift of GOD, HE is pleased to speak to HIS people through the promises of the gospel and to apply them to HIS elect. *"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2Tim 1:10)* It is the sweet gospel that informs the mourning children of GOD that JESUS CHRIST the LION of the tribe of Judah, has prevailed in their behalf and has obtained eternal redemption for them apart from any effort on their part. HE is their CHAMPION and is pleased to give them the kingdom.

HIS strength is strength to HIS people. Daniel said *"THOU hast strengthened me"*. Daniel did not think that it was by HIS own power that HE could stand. Paul admonished the Corinthians *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."* (1Cor 10:12) We need that constant reminder for we know that HE is our strength. The reason we can stand is not because HE has made us strong enough to stand in our own strength but because HE is continually our strength. *"And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."* (2Cor 12:9) Paul knew that it is our weakness that causes the strength of CHRIST to be made manifest. Vain is the man who hopes to stand one day in his own strength, he is destined to fail. *"Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength (their own) to strength (HIS), every one of them in Zion appeareth before God."* (Psa 84:5-7)

HIS help is strength to HIS people. Daniel said *"Let my Lord (my sovereign) speak"*. He knew that this was his help and hope. The Psalmist said, *"The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me."* (Psa 116:6) HE has come to the aid of HIS elect bride. *"And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live."* (Eze 16:6) *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."* (Rom 5:6) O the depths of HIS mercy the glory of HIS strength to deliver HIS people. *"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)