

# 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*

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## LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

*And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

*Matthew 6:13*

Nowhere in all of the scripture is there a more clear declaration of the absolute sovereignty of GOD and HIS total control of all actions and events, than is set before us in the model prayer which the LORD gave HIS disciples.

HE begins this prayer by addressing the FATHER, with great deference in recognition of HIS glory. *"Our FATHER which art in heaven, hallowed be THY name."* (v.9) Even as HE said to Moses, *"I AM THAT I AM:"* (Exo 3:14) HIS name is indeed "hallowed" (or revered) since the Seraphim cease not day and night to cry out, *"Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."* (Isa 6:3) The LORD would remind us that, *"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* (Isa 55:8-9) So it is needful when coming to the place of prayer to remember WHO it is that we are addressing and to take off our shoes for this is indeed "holy ground". (see Exod.3:5)

Then HE says *"THY kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"* (v.10) This is exactly what David meant when he said, *"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."* (Psa 115:3) It is also the very lesson that the LORD taught Nebuchadnezzar when he testified, *"And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? ..... Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."* (Dan 4:34-37)

Then HE ends the prayer by saying *"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."* (Mat 6:13) There is no "end" to HIS dominion, and all things that transpire in the heavens and the earth shall forever redound unto HIS honor and glory for HE doeth all things well and according to HIS good pleasure as the twenty four elders testify in Revelation *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."* (Rev 4:11)

The purpose of prayer is primarily worship. The man who is ignorant of this fact cannot possibly pray aright but is like that one who James speaks of *"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."* (James 4:3) Those who spend more time asking than they do extolling the glory of GOD are likely praying more with themselves (see Luke 18:13) than they are with the True and Living GOD.

The very act of prayer is a testimony to the absolute power of GOD over all things or else why would someone take the time to ask something of a GOD who was unable to grant the request. Those who hate the “absolute predestination” of all actions and events by GOD often argue that it would be pointless to pray if GOD has all things occurring according to HIS will. But I say that the exact opposite is true. What would be the point in praying to a GOD who was dependent on the actions of someone else or may or may not be able to bring something to pass? Or one who could only wring HIS hands as evil ran rampant in the earth and men and devils thwarted HIS purpose at every turn.

The phrase *“Lead us not into temptation”* is a clear testimony to the teaching of the LORD JESUS that there is no action which is not under the complete control of GOD. Even the very steps which men take in the earth are directed by HIM. *“A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.” (Prov 16:9) “Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way? “ (Prov 20:24)* We are totally at the mercy of HIM who says *“I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” (Rom 9:15-16)*

The scripture clearly teaches and our experience bears it out that the depravity of our heart is what inclines us to sin and brings about the consequences thereof. *“Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren.” (James 1:13-16)* The only thing that will preserve us from the destruction that waiteth at noonday (see Ps.91:6) is the mercy of GOD. Should HE not see fit to preserve us we will destroy ourselves.

The word for temptation that is used here literally means a trial. Paul told the Corinthians, that , *“There hath no temptation 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)* These trials may be simply the heartaches and suffering that occurs to all men or they may be the result of the sin which doth so easily beset us.

GOD has ordained all things to occur in the lives of HIS children for their benefit, even when it does not appear so at the time. Our mind goes to Joseph: the LORD saw fit to direct the steps of his brethren to sell him into slavery that it might ultimately fall out to the good of his family and fulfill GOD's purpose. Those trials often include our own sin. The LORD is sometimes pleased to remove HIS restraints from us (which is the only thing that keeps us from destroying ourselves) that we might be chastened by our sin even as HE did with David, in order to acquaint David with the utter depravity of his own heart. (see Ps.51)

So we might say that on the one hand if the LORD was saying we should pray that the LORD would not “lead” us into trials of any sort we would be sometimes praying against the will of GOD who has designed these trials for our benefit. Therefore it seems to be quite clear that what HE is instructing us to pray for is a deliverance from the destructive power of those “temptations” or trials. For HE goes on to say *“but deliver us from evil”* or from the power of evil to destroy us. Let us not be overcome with evil or become the total slave thereto. Even as Paul reminded the Corinthians, HE will *“with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*

This is why David could now say in the Psalms, *“I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. 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.” (Psa 91:2-7)*