

# 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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## THE GLORY OF GOD

*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. II Corinthians 4:6*

There is no subject that a man is any more ill prepared and furnished to make an observation upon than the "glory of GOD." Isaiah and John both were given glimpses into the very heavens to behold heavenly creatures who surround HIS throne with covered eyes, and cease not day and night from the time of their creation to declare HIS holiness. (see Isa.6:1-5; Rev.4:8,9) It is this "holiness" that is the very epitome of HIS separateness from all of HIS creation and which forms the essence of HIS glory, making an approach unto HIM totally inaccessible. As Paul said, HE alone *"hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen."* (1Tim 6:16) HE testifies of HIMSELF, *"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, 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 46:9-10)

When GOD appeared unto Moses in the burning bush (see Ex.2:3-6) HE told Moses to take off his shoes because this was "holy" ground or a place "set apart". When HE spoke to him on Sinai, Moses asked to see the glory of the LORD (see Ex.33: 18-23). Yet the LORD told him, *"Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live."* (Exo 33:20). Then HE told Moses that HE would hide him in a cleft of the rock and cover him with HIS hand so that when he was passed completely by HE would remove HIS hand and Moses could just catch a glimpse of HIS backside. Such is the glory of this ETERNAL and ABSOLUTE GOD that is inapproachable and unable to be discovered by HIS creation.

HIS glory is the reason that HE forbade the children of Israel to make graven images of HIM to bow down unto. HE would ever make them aware that HE is the GOD who cannot be seen. As Paul describes HIM, *"Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen."* (1Tim 1:17) The ark of the covenant was representative of HIS glory and was not to be opened. (see Num.4:19,20) In fact HE slew over fifty thousand of the inhabitants of Bethshemesh for opening it. (see I Sam.6:19) HIS glory is that which natural men cannot see.

Anyone can read the bible and see the wonders of nature, but few are given grace to behold its AUTHOR. Anyone can be exposed to the preaching of the Gospel, but few are given grace to behold the SUBJECT of that Gospel. In fact this is the very reason that Paul says; GOD is pleased to remain hidden *"For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* (1Cor 1:21) It is demonstrated also in the LORD's rejoicing in the work of the FATHER, *"In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight."* (Luke 10:21)

HE is clearly not a GOD who is trying to get men to notice HIM and somehow frustrated in that quest.. Rather HE is so resplendent in HIS holiness and glory that it is impossible for a

man to see HIM as HE is. This makes HIS determination to show mercy to some all the more glorious when one considers that it is impossible for any of HIS creatures to approach HIM apart from the bestowal of that sovereign mercy. (see Rom.9:13-18) That HE would condescend to help any is profoundly remarkable and is designed to stir up the thankfulness of those who are made to know the depths and experience of that mercy.

It is with this knowledge in mind that Paul writes with amazement, *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."* (II Corinthians 4:6) The same creative power that was demonstrated in the creation of the heavens is necessarily displayed in the creation of life and light in the children of GOD who are reborn by HIS SPIRIT as new creatures. HE commanded the light to shine when the sun first sparkled and emitted its light, but the light did not originate from the sun but the sun received its light from HIM who said *"Let there be light: and there was light."* (Gen 1:3) *"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."* (1John 1:5)

In the same fashion HE "hath shined in our hearts" and given us light, if indeed we be those who behold JESUS CHRIST as that ONE *"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell."* (Col 1:15-19) The world looks at HIM and has but a passing interest, content with loaves and fishes but those who have been given eyes to see HIM as HE is must fall down and worship at HIS footstool in adoring wonder, and can cleave unto no other. As Peter testified, *"Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."* (John 6:68)

That glory which could in no wise be looked upon by men, HE has been pleased to reveal in utter clarity in the PERSON of the LORD JESUS CHRIST. We have looked on HIM and lived as HE declared unto Phillip, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?"* (John 14:9) *"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."* (John 1:18)

All that the children of GOD could ever need to know about the eternal GOD has been set forth before us in CHRIST, *"For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power."* (Col 2:9-10) HE has not only been pleased to reveal to us HIS glory but to make provisions for us to enjoy HIS presence forever. *"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* (1Cor 1:30-31)

*"God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."* (Heb 1:1-4) Those who have seen HIM face to face delight in the prospect of spending eternity praising HIS name and rejoicing in HIS glory for HE has been pleased to reveal HIMSELF (to those HE has loved before the foundation of the world) as the GOD of all glory and praise. *"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."* (Rev 7:9-10)