

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

MARK HER BULWARKS

Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God forever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death.

Psalms 48:12-14

From the very ancient times men have gathered themselves into walled (fenced) cities in order to protect themselves from marauders, villains, and their enemies of one sort or another. The taller and more impenetrable those walls were the safer the inhabitants therein thought themselves to be.

Since it is in the heart of men to make war, one with the other, much effort was spent in designing implements of destruction which would be able to breach or surmount those walls. So there was a constant necessity to design and build better and more impregnable walls even as there was the constant effort to overcome them.

When the children of Israel came to the very famous walled city of Jericho they had no such man-made implements or devices of war to either climb those walls or destroy them. Yet they had with them ONE before whom all walls built by the hands of men are but paper or mud. GOD fought for the children of Israel and the walls of Jericho "came tumbling down", for HE is a GOD of war and would fulfill HIS promise to fight for them and to give them a land which flowed with milk and honey.

GOD has created the world for the purpose of demonstrating HIS defense, protection, and deliverance of a people which HE chose and gave to the LORD JESUS CHRIST. The fact that men began to build cities (in HIS purpose) surrounded by walls and bulwarks was so that HE might demonstrate this defense and protection by the types and foreshadows of these walls. HE was pleased to move the Psalmist to write of it in the text that we have chosen.

In the same fashion has HE designed that those walls built by the hands of men should fail to protect the inhabitants of those cities. Even as HE has ordained the breaches of those walls and the captivity of the residents of those cities in order to demonstrate the captivity of men in sin and darkness which HE as a CHAMPION would deliver them in the appointed time and cast about them a WALL which could never be breached nor could any foe ever successfully assail.

GOD is committed to the deliverance and protection of HIS people and will spare no expense to provide it for them. *"But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life."* (Isa 43:1-4)

The preaching of the gospel is for the purpose of declaring to those whom GOD has thus favored, the glory, beauty, and impregnable nature of that defense which the LORD has surrounded HIS beloved sons with. None but the heirs of grace shall ever take delight in her bulwarks or find rest inside those glorious walls. This city appears but an irrational sort of defense to those who have never felt the safety therein or longed for an entrance into this holy city. *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."* (1Cor 1:18)

All of the saints in every age have sought for the confines of this fortress even though many of them died; having only seen it from a distance. *"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country."* (Heb 11:13-14) Even as Abraham, who left the country of his birth, looking *"for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."* (Heb 11:10)

We are not those who have thus died without seeing these promises fulfilled for we have seen HIM who is our SHADE by day and our DEFENSE by night. *"Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul."* (Psa 121:4-7) *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."* (John 1:14)

O ye sons of the most high GOD, look well to this BULWARK, gaze upon HIM who was slain for your defense and suffered for your freedom. See that SALVATION, wrought by HIS mighty hand, even in the very weakness of HIS human flesh. Tell it to the generations to come. Declare it in the hearing of men, HE is indeed a SAVIOR, mighty to save. ONE who is set for the deliverance and protection of those for whom HE shed HIS precious blood and has risen from the grave triumphant over sin, death, and hell.

- 1 Rejoice, ye saints, in every state, Divine decrees remain unmoved;
No turns of providence abate God's care for those he once has loved.
- 2 Firmer than heaven his covenant stands, Though earth should shake and skies depart.
You're safe in your Redeemer's hands, Who bears your names upon his heart.
- 3 Our Surety knows for whom he stood And gave himself a sacrifice:
The souls once sprinkled with his blood, Possess a life that never dies.
- 4 Though darkness spread around our tent, Though fear prevail and joy decline,
God will not of his oath repent: Dear Lord, thy people still are thine!

82 Gadsby's Hymns by Benjamin Wallin

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom 8:31-39)

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