

# 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 WORK AND EFFECT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

*And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.*

*Isaiah 32:17*

Isaiah begins this chapter by saying, "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness." (Isa 32:1) HE is not primarily referring to any finite earthly king which has or would arise among sinful men, but rather that PRIEST-KING who has neither beginning of days nor end of life. That ONE whose kingdom is not of flesh and blood nor able to be seen with the natural eye. This is that exact kingdom of which the LORD JESUS CHRIST spoke to the woman at the well in Samaria saying, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23-24)

The kingdom of the LORD JESUS CHRIST is one which is established in mercy (see Isa.16:2) and wrought in the earth by the demonstration of HIS righteousness. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom 3:24-26)

HIS righteousness is declared in the earth as HE hung on Calvary's cross, pouring out HIS life's blood as a SUBSTITUTE and sin offering for those whom HE came into the world to save. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (II Co 5:21)

The work of righteousness is completely performed by this KING who reigns without rival "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Col 2:15) HE has made manifest that HIS righteousness alone is that which is acceptable to the FATHER. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." (John 14:6-7) HE is the RIGHTEOUSNESS of HIS people. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1Cor 1:30)

Therefore HE has made peace in the heavens and the earth by that which HE has performed. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Col 1:19-20) Justice is satisfied and hope is brought to sinners by the unfailing work of HIM who trod the winepress of wrath alone for those whom HE loved from before the foundation of the world.

Not only has HE satisfied justice in their behalf but HE has purchased gifts for HIS own (see Eph. 4:8) and delivered them from the darkness which had them bound by giving them faith to see that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy

*Ghost.” (Rom 14:17) HE has sent messengers into the earth with the message of this peace. “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the LORD’S hand double for all her sins.” (Isa 40:1-2)*

The ascension of CHRIST back into the heavens from whence HE came declares that HE is that ONE acceptable SUBSTITUTE and is the exclamation point at the end of the sentence which HE has written with HIS own blood. HE has indeed made a short work in the earth. *“For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth.” (Rom 9:28)* Those things which are yet to unfold to the sight of men are already accomplished by HIM whose decree shall not fail and *“who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.” (Rom 4:17)*

HE has finished the work which HE came to do. Those who are the apple of HIS eye, HIS beloved sons, and the sheep of HIS pasture are those who reap the benefits and enjoy the effect of the righteousness which HE has wrought for them in the earth. Even as HIS work was done in peace as to its procurement, so the effect of HIS work is to produce peace in all of those whom the LORD is pleased to give faith to believe HIS promise and rejoice in the hope which is set before them. *“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” (Heb 6:17-20)*

Sometimes we hear men describe the work of the SPIRIT, in the sons of GOD, as being a “progressive” work. Normally they mean that the saints are becoming more CHRIST-like as they traverse this lowland of sin and sorrow. Yet it seems quite clear from the scriptures that the sanctification of the sons of GOD is a destination rather than a journey. This destination is to be found in CHRIST even as Paul describes, *“And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” (Phil 3:9)* There are no “degrees” of being found there, one is either in CHRIST or not. *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (II Cor 5:17)* *“Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Rom 8:9)*

Yet there is indeed a work of the SPIRIT that continues in the children of GOD. Paul describes it thusly, *“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (Phil 2:13)* It is HIS good pleasure to give HIS children the Kingdom and to this end HE ministers peace and assurance to them in the preaching of the gospel which says *“Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:32)* The effect of HIS righteousness is the ministration of assurance and peace to HIS children by the gift of HIS HOLY SPIRIT. *“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (John 14:26-27)*

Peace by his cross has Jesus made; The church’s everlasting Head  
O’er hell and sin has victory won, And, with a shout, to glory gone.  
When o’er thy head the billows roll, And shades of sin obscure thy soul;  
When thou canst no deliverance see, Yet still this Man thy Peace shall be.  
In tribulation’s thorny maze, Or on the mount of sovereign grace,  
Or in the fire, or through the sea, This glorious Man thy Peace shall be.  
Yea, when thy eye of faith is dim, Rest thou on Jesus, sink or swim,  
And at his footstool bow the knee, For Israel’s God thy Peace shall be.