

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

THE EARTH, THE WORLD, AND THE HEAVENS

He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding. Jeremiah 51:15

Jeremiah reiterates here in chapter fifty-one what he had already said in chapter ten. *"He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion."* (Jer 10:12) In both of these instances he contrasts the true and living GOD with the limited gods of men's imaginations. His declaration is very similar to that which David made when he said, *"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them."* (Psa 115:3-8)

While his words were very appropriate in describing the gods of the heathen, the sad fact is that they seem to describe the god of the majority of those who claim to be the followers of CHRIST in the present day, since most seem to actually subscribe to the notion of a "limited" god, rather than ONE who is absolute. How often have we heard pitiful preachers seeking to exhort their flocks by telling them that GOD is dependent on them to do many things? How HE hopes that they will be obedient and wants to save all men, but just can't, because men won't let HIM. Some even go so far as to imagine the GOD of heaven and earth to be like the gods of the heathen who have no hands or feet, but is rather needy in that HE must rely upon the creature in hopes that HIS will may somehow be accomplished.

Jeremiah says, *"HE has made the earth by HIS power"*. We believe this to have reference to the creation of the earth with its inhabitants and all of those heavenly bodies which comprise the extant universe in which we live and move. John says, *"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."* (John 1:3) *"For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I am the LORD; and there is none else."* (Isa 45:18)

Though the wise men of this world seek out many explanations for the existence of this universe, it remains clear that it could not exist at all apart from HIM who has formed it for HIS glory and by HIS mighty power. *"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."* (Rom 1:20) The creation itself is a testimony to the eternal power of HIM who created it whether men desire to acknowledge it or not, but all, without exception, shall acknowledge it when HE comes to judge the quick and the dead. (see Phil.2:9-11)

Not only has HE *"made the earth, by HIS power"* but Jeremiah says *"HE hath established the world by HIS wisdom."* We believe that the "world" which he is speaking of here has to do with the world order or as the Greeks called it the "Kosmos." This has reference, not just to HIS

creation of all things but to HIS ordering of all of the hierarchy, processes, and occurrences which transpire in that which HE has created, from the beginning to the end. *“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: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.” (Isa 46:9-11)*

Time would fail us to explain (and/or comprehend) in complete and exhaustive detail even the most simple of the processes which HE has caused to occur in HIS creation for one second of time. When we multiply that by the innumerable activities which transpire in the course of one hour and then consider the untold number of years that HE has already caused to pass by in the lifespan of this creation, we are humbled in the dust and made to hide our faces from the immensity of HIS wisdom and power in HIS perfect and complete direction of this creation. Not one note is ever played by this “orchestra” which is not ordered by this CONDUCTOR whether it be during the performance of the greatest symphony or the sour notes which occur during the tuning process. HE directs all things to occur according to HIS good pleasure and there is none that can stay HIS hand or even question HIS doing. (see Dan.4:35)

The GOD, who has revealed HIMSELF to men in the pages of the Bible, is totally and actively in charge of every proton, neutron, and electron of every atom and molecule which makes up the earth which HE has created by HIS own power. Not one of them is ever out of its proper place but follows the prescribed orbit which HE has ordained for it just as surely as HE has ordained the orbits of the various planets (which are made up of those molecules) around the Sun. Just as surely as those atoms move in their proper place, so must all of the events, which are produced by their movement, be established by HIM whose wisdom is beyond our comprehension.

Then Jeremiah says HE *“hath stretched out the heaven by HIS understanding.”* We understand the *“heaven”* to be that realm which man is unable to ascend into or have any knowledge of apart from divine privilege and particular revelation. *“And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.” (John 3:13)* Those whom the LORD has been pleased to reveal glimpses of this realm, such as Isaiah, John, and Paul have all testified with descriptions of it that even they could not fully comprehend. Paul even said that he heard things, there, which were not lawful for a man to utter. (see II Cor.12:4)

Man who is born of a woman, (even if he had never sinned and was obedient to every command of GOD), could in no wise raise himself to partake of heavenly things. Much less can those who are sunk in the mire and rebellion of sin reach up and taste those things. Natural men can not in any wise even see the calamity and destruction which surround them on every side much less escape from it by their own power. It is impossible that any of the potsherds of the earth, should ever ascend into the hill of the LORD, most especially with hands that are feeble and hearts that are thoroughly tainted with the degradation of sin.

In the unfolding of the glory of GOD is seen the impossibility of man approaching his CREATOR, and the utter folly of those who think that by human endeavor of any sort they can make themselves pleasing in HIS sight. This is what moved the Psalmist to declare in absolute wonder, *“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psa 8:3-4)* He recognized the utter insignificance of men (in and of themselves) and testified that apart from the grace of GOD to ordain the salvation of sinners, this could in no wise ever occur, nor could they be regarded by HIM as righteous.

Yet the glorious declaration of the gospel is that CHRIST did indeed ordain the salvation of HIS elect people and has come to the very earth that HE created with HIS own hands and made HIMSELF in the likeness of human flesh, that HE might taste death for every one of them for which HE purposed to redeem. And in so doing did obtain the eternal redemption of everyone of them. *“and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.” (Act 13:48)* mam