

# 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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## A TWO FOLD CALLING

*Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand.*

*Psalm 149:6*

The prophet Micah said, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Mic 6:8) No man can stand before GOD and ever say that the reason he did not walk according to HIS commandments is that he did not know what HIS requirements were. Willful ignorance is not real ignorance. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them." (Rom 1:18-19)

The apostle goes on to say, "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: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened." (Rom 1:20-21) This is the place that all men are in by nature, fully accountable for their every thought, deed, and ultimate action, yet wandering in complete darkness that they have embraced with a glad heart. "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19)

It is in the midst of this scenario that the wondrous grace of GOD is manifested, as the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the ETERNAL SON of GOD did appear in flesh and blood to redeem HIS own possession, by offering HIMSELF as a SUBSTITUTE for them. In doing so HE made atonement for their sins and demonstrated HIS willingness and ability to justify them in the sight of men and angels, and before the law, having loved them from before the foundation of the world.

In appearance, this possession, (HIS elect which HE purchased,) could not be distinguished from those who were appointed unto condemnation. (see Jude 1:4) Paul describes the condition of the sons of GOD (in flesh) as being identical to those who perish. "Wherein (i.e.; the deadness of sin) in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." (Eph 2:2-3)

In HIS own time (according to HIS grace freely bestowed in the good pleasure of HIS will) HE does see fit to manifest HIS purchased possession by calling them out of darkness and into the light, by and through an effectual call. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Act 2:39) Though the sons of GOD are scattered far and wide upon the face of the earth yet there is a gathering of them from the highways and byways of this world (of every kindred, tribe, and tongue) at an appointed time

even as Paul described his own calling, *"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace."* (Gal 1:15)

This "call" is not something that can be predicted or anticipated.(see John 3:8) It cannot be precipitated or aided by men nor can it be prevented nor in any wise hindered by them. Neither is it the result of the preaching of men. Men cannot participate at all in this "calling". Rather it is completely the work of the HOLY GHOST who quickens dead sinners, awakening them to recognize the state that they are in by nature. In this awakened state, which is the result of their calling they are given ears to hear and eyes to see the revelation of JESUS CHRIST which is declared in the gospel, which they are made to hear and believe. (see Rom.10:13-15 ) *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:"* (2Tim 1:9-10)

Now there is indeed a secondary "call" which is addressed to those who have been "called" by the SPIRIT, which is declared each time the gospel is preached. This is illustrated in the "call" which was set forth by JESUS CHRIST when HE said, *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* (Mat 11:28) Apart from a calling by the HOLY GHOST a man cannot know himself to be heavy laden (i.e.; bowed under sin's oppression), and in a place of great need. Nor is the "call" of the gospel ever given indiscriminately but is rather addressed to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, whose "calling" precedes their hearing and believing; as is illustrated in the case of the Ethiopian Eunuch unto which Phillip was sent.

So those who are "the called" according to HIS purpose, are "called" unto HIS purpose as well. *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* (Eph 2:10) These good works unto which the sons of GOD are ordained are described for us in Psalm 149:6. This is a two-fold calling. Number one is to give glory unto HIS name forever and number two is to manifest HIS judgment in and upon this world.

*"Let the high praises of God be in their mouth".* So it is that the sons of GOD are ordained or "called" to offer up the "sacrifice of praise" unto the LORD in all things. *"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."* (Eph 2:5-7) Though the fallen sons of GOD are the beneficiaries of the salvation which is wrought for them, the primary purpose of that salvation (as are all things) is to bring glory to HIM who alone is worthy of praise. *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."* (Rev 4:11)

*"And a twoedged sword in their hand".* The "two edged sword" is a symbol of the word of GOD, (see Eph.6:17), most especially as it manifests the righteous judgment of GOD. This is the vision of CHRIST which John had, *"And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength."* (Rev 1:16) This "sword" is given to those for whom the SON of GOD prayed saying; *"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."* (John 17:14)

The LORD manifests HIS word in the people of HIS choice revealing them as a separate people, even as Peter says *"a peculiar people"* (1 Pet.2:9) The world hates the children of GOD because their election unto salvation serves as a witness against the unrighteous deeds of men and testifies of the LORD's sovereign right to do with HIS own as HE wills. *"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? (1Cor 6:2) "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."* (1John 3:10) One edge of this sword slays the pride of the sons of GOD, to their delight; while the other edge slays the wicked unto their consternation. mam