

# 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 THREEFOLD CORD OF HOPE

*And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.* *Ecclesiastes 4:12*

All that the LORD has done and is presently doing is perfect in its purpose, execution, and result. HE spoke all worlds, creatures, and world orders into existence and pronounced them "good". Nothing can or ever has transpired which is contrary to HIS ordained purpose or outside of HIS predestined will. HE never makes apologies for HIS actions nor is HE ever reluctant to declare that HE is the FIRST CAUSE of all events. *"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things. Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness: let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together; I the LORD have created it."* (Isa 45:5-8)

This is extremely humbling to men and devils, though neither will willingly submit to it. They would both rather scheme to overthrow HIS purpose than fall down before HIM in adoration and amazement. The scripture indicates that one third of the angels of Heaven, *"which kept not their first estate"* were cast out along with Lucifer, the *"son of the morning"*. (see Isa.14:12; Ezek 28:13-19; Luke 10:18; II Pet 2:4; Jude 1:6; Rev.12:4-9) Their creation and demise were all as much a part of GOD's ordained purpose, to magnify the glory of HIS grace in the salvation of HIS elect, as was the flood which destroyed the population of the world and the ark which Noah was commanded to build unto the salvation of himself, his family, and in essence the world.

Man assumes that he cannot be held accountable for his wickedness if such is ordained by GOD and this forms the whole crux of his rebellious schemes to exalt the free will of men and to dismiss the absolute predestination of all things. Paul lays the axe to the root of this notion in the ninth chapter of Romans when he says, *"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."* (Rom 9:18-23)

Nothing rankles the pride of man more than the revelation of the absolute predestination of all things by the hand of a sovereign GOD who cannot even be called into question by the potsherd of the earth. Men will imagine all sorts of vain arguments against HIS dominion, rather than bowing before the ONE who does all things according to the good pleasure of HIS will, whether they be things in Heaven or things in the earth. Nebuchadnezzar made this discovery in startling fashion. (see Dan.4:35) GOD needs no apologists of any kind. HE will make it plain.

The salvation of GOD's chosen people is part of HIS grand design to bring glory to HIMSELF in the exaltation of JESUS CHRIST as the REDEEMER of sinners. It is this glory which is manifested before men and angels in the work which CHRIST has done and subsequently declared in the proclamation of the Gospel. HE does both raise men up to declare it as well as call men to embrace it while falling at HIS feet in repentance and rising in hope according to the gift of faith which HE so richly bestows upon those whom HE loves.

HE could easily (had it pleased HIM to do so) have merely decreed them "saved", yet it pleased the LORD to show forth HIS everlasting love, HIS boundless mercy, and particularly, HIS unswerving justice by putting HIS only begotten SON to death in their behalf as an ATONEMENT for their sin.. *"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 3:25-26)*

There is nothing which is predestined to occur by GOD which does not have to occur exactly as HE has ordained it. HIS predestination both assures and necessitates the occurrence of all things which must fulfill HIS purpose and redound unto HIS own glory. HE has ordained the belief of the gospel by those HE has appointed to it as much as HE has every event which has set the stage for the manifestation of the redemptive work of CHRIST which is therein declared as the basis upon which their faith and subsequent hope rests. *"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."* (Act 13:48)

The LORD causes HIS people to obtain a "HOPE" which is not explainable nor obtainable to any who have not been made the recipients thereof. Yet to those who have been given this "HOPE", it is their most precious possession. *"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col 1:26-27) "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom 5:2) "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." (Eph 1:18)*

This hope is described for the sons of GOD in a three-fold description... *"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace."* (2Thes 2:16) All things are made to work together for "good" to the sons of GOD. Most assuredly this HOPE is "good", therefore standing against all of the evil which would conspire together to consume them.

*"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God."* (Heb 7:19) This HOPE is better than the law which could in no wise minister anything but condemnation to all who have broken its precepts. Those who are found hidden in the righteousness of CHRIST are better off than they could ever have been even had they never transgressed the law.

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively (i.e.; living) hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."* (1Pet 1:3) This HOPE endures because CHRIST "who is our HOPE" ever liveth to make intercession for us at the throne of GOD. This is manifested by HIS resurrection which is at the very foundation of our faith and the ground of our HOPE.

This three-fold hope causes the sons of GOD to be ever *"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. (Tit 2:13) "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."* (Heb 9:28)

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