

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XII

Issue 18

*Published occasionally for Zion's mourners*

*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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## LOOKING FOR CHRIST

*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.*

*Hebrews 9:28*

That "faith" which is the "gift of GOD" is not passive but is very active due to the fact that the same SPIRIT that bestows this gift also works in those, to whom HE is pleased to give it, both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure. This "faith" is manifested as it causes those who have it to hunger and thirst after the ONE who is its OBJECT. Their greatest satisfaction comes as they see HIM exalted and triumphant over all HIS enemies; most especially as regards the complete payment for the sins of those for whom HE died and the hopeful expectation which they possess, of being found among them at the day of HIS appearing. *"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."* (Luke 23:42)

The man who has no desire after CHRIST, nor any longing to be found included in that number of those HE comes to claim as HIS sheep, (in the day when HE comes to judge the living and the dead,) does not have faith; regardless of what religion he may be a part of, what doctrine he professes to believe, or how loudly he may tell others the way of salvation. Those who are the called according to HIS purpose will be found *"looking for HIM"*.

They weep to think that they might ever grow weary of the preaching of JESUS CHRIST and HIM crucified. Their desire is rather, that such might be their constant source of delight. They rejoice in the accounts of HIS kindness and tender mercies towards unworthy sinners, knowing that they are such. To know that HE is the friend of sinners gives them encouragement. They find comfort in HIS teaching and the manifestation of HIS faithfulness towards those HE has chosen. They weep at the thought of their own dullness of understanding and coldness of heart and lament that they have caused HIS grief and contributed to HIS sorrow. (see Isa.53:3-7)

That which is called "faith" by the multitude is nothing more than presumption which is built upon the notion that a man can believe as a matter of his own free will. The average person which we hear talk of "faith" likens it to a form of "positive thinking", by which they are able to perform all sorts of exploits, conquer any foe, effect great healings, and get any prayer answered according to their own desire.

The man with true faith, on the other hand, casts himself at the feet of CHRIST, all too aware of his own helpless state and cries out, *"Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."* (Mark 9:24) If he is enabled by the SPIRIT to accomplish any task to which he may be called, he acknowledges the SOURCE of his power, and is aware of the LORD's authority and sustenance, *"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."* (John 15:5) They look for HIM.

It would not be an unfair assessment to characterize that, which is known as faith, (among the rank and file of modern Christendom,) as simply a "faith in faith". If you ask the average person who calls himself a Christian; "What is the basis of your hope?"; most would reply, "I have believed". Then they point to a time when they "joined the church", "made a decision", "got

saved”, or were baptized” as the proof of such. True faith, on the other hand transcends such events and confesses; “CHRIST has died for sinners”, believing HIM to be the SON of GOD, able to effect their deliverance and merciful to them that call upon HIS name.. They that have this faith look for HIM..

The ONE who bled for wicked men is the very basis of their hope and expectation, and their longing desire is to be found in HIM. They look for HIM as those who can find no place of rest except there. *“Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”* (John 6:67-69)

When those who have been acquainted with their own depravity and unbelieving spirit, are given true faith, they are most amazed at the thought that such might be found in them. They are often encouraged as they see that “faith” manifested in others whom they call their brethren, but they can never find any “rest” to their own souls in a simple profession of their faith or by repeating some mantra which is composed by another. They find assurance; not in their loud claims of faith, nor even the assurances which are spoken to them by others, but in the sweet promises of the gospel applied to their soul by the work of the HOLY GHOST. This is the place they desire to be found. They are looking for CHRIST.

The writer of Hebrews is here speaking to these Jews in the light of the fact that many of them had made a profession of faith after hearing the gospel. Many of them continued on, even in great joy for a season, but just like that seed which fell on the stony ground and some among the thorns, in time many departed from that faith which they once professed to believe. They returned to their religious traditions and took comfort in the religion of their fathers.

Their eyes began once again to be focused on the dead sacrifices offered by those earthly priests who in reality could never take away sins but could offer a measure of confidence in the flesh. They were satisfied with *“meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances,”* (Heb 9:10) and found comfort in that which they could see with carnal eyes and *“sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:”* (Heb 9:13) They were content to eat the leeks and onions of Egypt which they could see and hold, rather than that BREAD which could only be seen by the eye of faith.

This is much like the “carnal professors,” who claim to be the followers of CHRIST, in the present day. Some can point to much assurance given to them by those who promote “free will faith” while others rely upon an adherence to what they call “sound doctrine”. They can revel in the multiplicity of their good works and deeds, the strength of their religious affiliations, or the accuracy of their “confession of faith”. They are content to abide in these comfortable places and the soothing melodies of their “belief” serve as a suitable elixir. Those who are called by CHRIST are compelled to look for HIM and rejoice in HIS appearing.

When the Aaronic high priest went into the holy of holies once a year with the blood of a bull, he went in as a sinner with sin and he came out in the same condition. (see Heb.9:7) This was the “first tabernacle”, and year after year these same offerings were made which could never take away sin. These carnal offerings were necessary to illustrate the true OFFERING that would be made by a greater PRIEST, after the order of Melchisedec. These carnal offerings by these carnal priests were done the “first time” (i.e. under the Mosaic covenant) and the priest always appeared outside the veil with the same sin which he carried in.

When JESUS CHRIST entered into those holy places not made with hands, HE came as a LAMB without spot or blemish yet laden with the sins of HIS people which HE had imputed to HIMSELF by reason of HIS kinship to those who were hidden in HIM. HE entered upon that heavenly altar as their SUBSTITUTE and suffered the exact sentence of death which was due to each one as transgressors of the Holy Law of GOD. This was the “second time” an offering was made, in contrast to that “first time” when the Aaronic priests made carnal sacrifices. When CHRIST came the “second time”, HE put away sin forever and to those that “look for HIM”, HE appears without sin unto salvation. They need look no further for it is with this perfect SACRIFICE that they are forever sanctified and satisfied.

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