

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XII

Issue 45

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

THE SET TIME

Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.

Psalm 102:13

Time has no purpose or meaning at all except in the realm of that which is created. GOD is not affected by time nor is HE in anywise subject to it. HE has created time for the benefit of HIS creation which is finite, having sprung from HIM who alone is Eternal and *"inhabiteth eternity."* Eternity encompasses time but is in no wise measured or limited thereby. Thus we read, *"But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."* (2Pet 3:8) *"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night."* (Psa 90:4)

In contrast to that which is eternal the Psalmist speaks of time as standing still, *"We spend our years as a tale that is told."* (Psa 90:9) In the same vein we read Solomon's words, *"That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."* (Eccl 3:15) Such considerations simply leave us speechless and we must put our hands upon our mouth and be silent in awe before HIM who orders time to march along according to the dictates of HIS own will as HE would demonstrate his unfailing purpose to HIS creation.

We are brought to confess with David, *"But I trusted in thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my God. My times are in thy hand."* (Psa 31:14-15) However limited our philosophy of time might be, we find great consolation, in the confession of the Psalmist. Even as all those who are enabled to trust the LORD find peace, in the midst of all of the uncertainty which they perceive might surround them in this passing world, *"My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."* (Psa 121:2-8)

Thus we see the glories which are demonstrated (in the unfolding of GOD's purpose to redeem and preserve HIS people), in the time in which we are given to occupy this world. Though we have been shown the certainty of that deliverance through the promises which HE has given to those HE has appointed unto salvation, it has pleased the LORD to give them the privilege of seeing that salvation manifested in the record of years, times, and seasons which the LORD has appointed to come to pass, and to enjoy it in the present time of their own existence.

An understanding of this fact causes us to see that there are no "insignificant times" but that "all times" are a "set time" ordained by HIM according to the good pleasure of HIS will. While time itself has no bearing upon GOD (rather HE has bearing upon it) yet time is a precious commodity which men, in general, and the sons of GOD, particularly, are taught to value highly. We see this concept, taught in the prayer of the Psalmist, as he prayed, *"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."* (Psa 90:12) This world is passing from us and us from the world in a very rapid fashion. We are reminded throughout the scriptures that *"it is appointed*

unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:” (Heb 9:27) Solomon in his earthly wisdom , in reflecting upon this matter said, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all. For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.” (Ecc 9:10-12) In light of this he goes on with a very timely exhortation to the young; “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.” (Eccl 12:1)

Thus Paul exhorts the sons of GOD to “walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, (i.e.; using time wisely as one would a purchase) because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.” (Eph 5:15-17) Due diligence in the use of the fleeting moments we have, is to be wise in that understanding.

Now while it is true that there are no insignificant “times” in the earth, yet we are certain that there is a very special and momentous “set time” which is here spoken of. We must pay special heed to this “set time” if we are to have any understanding of the LORD’s purpose in the earth.

This “set time” is for the manifestation of GOD’s work of salvation in the establishment of the kingdom of the LORD JESUS CHRIST in the earth. “God, who at sundry times (i.e. different or various) and in divers (i.e.’many) manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.” (Heb 1:1-2) “behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” (2Cor 6:2) This “set time” is that which Peter, filled with the HOLY GHOST, spoke of, saying, “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”(Act 4:11-12)

This is that “set time” which was spoken prophetically by Isaiah, as the LORD declared that HE would manifest HIS redemptive work for that elect bride which is here called Zion, the fortress of GOD, which in the broader sense is synonymous with HIS Kingdom. In the fulfilling of that “set time”: there were other “set times” which were ordered to occur in the manifestation of that mediatorial kingdom. Each of these events was necessary for the “set time” spoken of by Isaiah to come, they could not occur either too early or too late. These things must come to pass.

“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Mal 3:1)

“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isa 7:14)

“For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” (Isa 53:2)

“Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Act 2:23)

“For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” (Mat 12:40)

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” (Joh 6:37-39)

“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:3)

mam