

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

BRINGING IN THE SHEAVES

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Psalm 126:6

The Bible is full of practical advice which can surely be of profit to all who read it and seek to have those precepts incorporated into their daily lives. For example one cannot ignore the practical application of the wisdom of Solomon set forth in the book of Proverbs. Yet if all one sees in the scriptures is the literal, practical teaching of them, then that man has missed the greater purpose of those teachings. To stop at the practical application of the scriptures is to rejoice in the shell while disregarding the kernel which is hidden inside it.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2Tim 3:16-17) Any discussion or exhortation unto "good works" which does not include a consideration of the SOURCE and POWER of those "good works" is but an exercise in the flesh which will do nothing but confirm a man in his own self-righteousness and stimulate his pride in his own obedience as we see illustrated in the confession of the rich young ruler who came to the LORD saying, *"All these have I kept from my youth up." (Luke 18:21)*

The scriptures are primarily written to testify of CHRIST and to point to HIM as the fulfillment of all righteousness even as the LORD told HIS disciples that HE would send HIS SPIRIT who would *"testify of me."* (John 15:26) This is exactly the same concept which the LORD taught the Pharisees who were avid students of the scriptures. *"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."* (John 5:39) So the central lesson which must first be learned by any man who would study the scriptures, in order to "profit" or do "good works", is to clearly see this truth. *"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* (1Cor 1:30-31)

The awakened sons of GOD know that they are in need of a PERFORMER. They will despair, when confronted with exhortations of obedience to the precepts of GOD, if they do not clearly see that *"it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* (Philip 2:13) Their comfort is not in their own obedience but rather in HIS. *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."* (Gal 2:20)

The work of CHRIST, as our REDEEMER, is hinted at, described, and prophesied throughout the scriptures as well as being demonstrated in HIS own actions when HE walked upon the earth and in the present hour as our GREAT HIGH PRIEST before the throne of GOD. To fail to see CHRIST as the central subject about which the scriptures are written is to ultimately view them as a simple account; offering advice and historical narrative. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* (John 1:1)

The glory of GOD is the purpose for all things (see Ex.34:14; Deut.4:24; Ezek.39:25; II Cor.11:2) and the scriptures set forth, in no uncertain terms, the manifestation of JESUS CHRIST as the

REDEEMER of sinners as the CENTERPIECE in the unfolding of that purpose. *“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” (Col 1:16-19)*

And it has pleased HIM that this glory might be declared throughout the world in the preaching of the gospel. *“For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.” (2Cor 1:19-20)* *“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.” (Rom 16:25-27)*

So anytime that true preaching occurs CHRIST must be the theme and HIS glory must be the purpose for which that preaching is done. All else that may occur shall be a result of the magnification of CHRIST even as Paul declared that he was called to proclaim. *“According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.” (1Tim 1:11)* This verse could probably be rendered more clearly and made more readily apparent to our understanding as *“according to the gospel of the glory of the blessed GOD”*. All exhortation, reproof, and doctrinal teaching must be undertaken for that purpose.

When we look at the *“bringing”* of *“the sheaves”* we are initially struck with an exhortation to due diligence in what we are called to do. Even in the same vein as the exhortation of Paul to the Galatians. *“And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” (Gal 6:9)* Yet a closer examination of it reveals this teaching in the light of that which CHRIST HIMSELF has undertaken in HIS purpose and determination to redeem HIS elect Bride.

HE went forth with “weeping.” *“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” (Heb 5:7-9)* HE came with a burden to save HIS people and is touched with the feelings of their infirmities and the sadness of the death to which they were in bondage. This is illustrated at Lazarus tomb, *“Jesus wept.” (John 11:35)*

HE bore “precious seed”. CHRIST was given a people from before the foundation of the world which HE has loved with an everlasting love. HE chose them as the objects of HIS redemptive work and it is for them that HE bled and died and does presently intercede. They are the *“seed of GOD”*, elect, and precious unto HIM. (see Rom.9:8) HE carried them in HIS bosom and refuses to be separated from them. HE has imputed HIS righteousness to them even as HE has taken their sins upon HIMSELF by the same act as their SUBSTITUTE. *“For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom 8:38-39)*

HE brings the “sheaves” with HIM. *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” (1Thess 4:14)* *“I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” (John 14:2-3)*

HE does so with “rejoicing.” *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb 12:2)* *“He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied:” (Isa 53:11)*