

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

THE MORE EARNEST HEED

Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.

Hebrews 2:1

None of us would dare to say that the Law of Moses is a lie. Yet we can most surely say that if a person should regard that law, apart from seeing it as a mere schoolmaster to bring us to CHRIST then such adherence is based upon a lie. This is the very error of those who use the law as a means of establishing their own righteousness or of supposedly proving their own righteousness. This is described by Paul when he spoke to the Thessalonians concerning those who were not given a love of the TRUTH. *“And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”* (2Th 2:10-12)

Those who would define “righteousness” as some allegiance to a moral code of ethics would no doubt take issue with the definition of “righteousness” as being related not to morality but rather to an embracing of the ONE who is the very epitome of TRUTH and RIGHTEOUSNESS. Yet this is the only RIGHTEOUSNESS that is accepted in the court of Heaven.

The Epistle to the Hebrews begins with a most profound and comprehensive definition of the RIGHTEOUSNESS of GOD and the ONE true MESSAGE which defines the TRUTH of GOD. *“God, who at sundry times and in divers 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; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”* (Heb 1:1-3)

To miss this declaration or to minimize or marginalize its glory is to believe a lie and to dwell in the darkness of unbelief regardless of how much of the scriptures one may profess to believe and follow. GOD has indeed spoken in “times past” by the prophets which were chiefly given to the natural nation of the descendants of Jacob.(see Rom3:2) Yet in these “*last days*” HE has spoken to those whom HE would (see Acts 2:39) of every tribe, by a clearer and final WORD.

The scriptures know of but two times, the former times, which were until CHRIST came, and the latter day, now that HE has accomplished the work for which HE made the world and to which all of those prophets of old pointed to as the restitution of all things. John clearly states this when he says, *“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.”* (1John 2:18) We are not looking for another age, nor another message than that which has been plainly set forth in that which the SON of GOD has accomplished. This is why Paul said, *“But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”* (Gal 6:14-15)

The superiority of CHRIST and HIS complete and utter fulfillment of the law for HIS elect's sake is contrasted with that law (or set of principles) which was set forth by the "*disposition of angels*" (Acts 7:53; see Deut.33:2; Ps.68:17) and delivered to the Israelites. This law was universally broken by all who claimed allegiance to it due to the fact that it was, "*weak through the flesh*". (Rom.8:3; see Acts 7:53) It could in no wise bring any sort of deliverance or aid to those who were bound by its tenets. Yet those who would go about to establish their own righteousness conveniently forget this because of the enmity that they have to the TRUTH.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, recounts several verses of scripture, setting forth the superiority of CHRIST over the angels, even as that ONE who created them, yet subjected HIMSELF to a position beneath them, so that they even ministered unto HIM as that ONE who is the HEIR of all things. (see Heb.1:12; v2) Though they ministered to HIM in HIS weakness, (see Mat.4:11) HE is yet their LORD and MASTER, and they move at HIS beck and call.

Then he sets forth a big "if", to further illustrate the superiority of CHRIST and HIS message over any which had been previously spoken and relates the utter spiritual bankruptcy of those who would disregard this message. "*For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.*" (Heb 2:2-3)

A man does not have to have a knowledge of the details, of the prophecies spoken by men in the Old Testament, in order to obtain salvation. Nor does he need to be aware of that law which was given to Moses and spoken by angels. Yet no man, regardless of what else he might have heard, if he has not heard that more "*sure word of prophecy*" which is spoken by CHRIST and been given a love for it, he will surely perish.

Thus we find out what the "*therefore*" is there for. "*Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*" (Heb 2:1) It is impossible to ignore or fail to give attention to that message of HOPE which declares CHRIST to be the HEIR of all things, and to be found a partaker thereof. Thus CHRIST calls those that are HIS and displays the glory of HIS grace in their understanding causing them to delight even as Simeon of old, "*For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*" (Luke 2:30) and to declare as Peter, "*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 6:68-69)

The Greek word, which is translated here as "*give the more earnest heed*", appears in the New Testament twenty four times. Seven of those times it is translated as "*beware*" such as in Matthew 16:12 and Luke 12: 1; "*Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.*" Any message which does not declare that all of the righteousness of the saints is found in CHRIST alone cannot be the TRUTH which HE has spoken in these last days. It is another message which is incomplete and those who declare it are false teachers.

Men can be mistaken about many things concerning the truth which is found in the scriptures. But we are here warned of the folly of letting this "final message" from GOD, carelessly flow by us (i.e.; "*let them slip*") without due and proper attention (i.e.; "*the more earnest heed*"). For if that word which was given by angels and prophets, in times past, could not be in anywise disregarded, how much less can we be found walking in the truth if we pay no heed to this word spoken by CHRIST. This is to "*neglect so great a salvation*" and is to perish along with those who despised Moses law. "*For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"* (Heb 10:26-29)