

# 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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## SIGHT AND SEEING

*And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.      John 9:39-41*

The king of Syria became angry when he suspected that there was a spy in their ranks, since it seemed that every time he sought to corner the king of Israel, he would somehow escape, as if he knew exactly where the Syrians would be and what they were going to do. One of his aides informed him that it was not a spy among them but rather that Elisha the prophet, was able to know his whereabouts and plans and was informing the king of Israel..

Thus he set out to capture Elisha who was in the city of Dothan, by sending a great host of soldiers, horses, and chariots to surround the city. When Elisha's servant arose early the next morning he was struck with fear as he saw the surrounding army, with no hope of escape. He excitedly awoke Elisha, expressing his despair and overcome with fear. Yet the man of GOD seemed to have no fear at all, and spoke words of comfort to him saying, "*Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.*" (2Kings 6:16)

These would have been comforting words to the servant yet they offered little immediate help to him because he could not clearly see what Elisha saw by the eye of faith. The servant longed for deliverance from the enemy but he could not see the grounds upon which to hope for such until his eyes were opened to behold the glory and might of HIM who is "*mighty to save*". "*And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.*" (2Kings 6:17)

The gospel is a glorious message of hope and deliverance, yet it can afford no comfort or help at all to those who are blind, even as the scripture describes them "*dead in trespasses and sins*". This is exactly what the LORD said to Nicodemus, "*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" (John 3:3) Unless and until a man is "born from above" he will remain in his natural state of spiritual death, unable to see the truth of GOD, and unwilling to embrace it. In this account of Elisha's servant, we see that truth illustrated very plainly.

He could only see what natural men see. He had some measure of confidence, no doubt, in the prophet, Elisha, having seen him perform miraculous feats, even as natural men have some measure of confidence in their own religious standing. Yet he lacked understanding and had no vision of the things which are hidden from the natural man and therefore remained ignorant of the truth of GOD even though his deliverance was ordained. Paul describes this for us in his letter to the Corinthians. "*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*" (1Cor

2:14) We see the grace of GOD demonstrated as the LORD opened the eyes of one who was blind (spiritually) from birth and removed his fears when HE showed him HIS salvation.

The other interesting part of this account is that those who came for the purpose of capturing Elisha, were ultimately made captives themselves. *“And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha. And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria.” (2Kings 6:18-19)*

We see this same scenario illustrated for us time and again when the Pharisees and Sadducees sought to “capture” the LORD with various arguments and conundrums which they imagined in their own wisdom would be HIS undoing. The LORD described them as being “judicially blind” because they thought they could see.

They were smugly incredulous when they asked *“Are we blind also?”* The LORD replied that they were condemned; not because they were innocently blind, but rather that HIS judgment had come upon them, and their own supposed “wisdom” would be that which would minister their condemnation. This is exactly what Paul refers to in his letter to the Romans as he describes man’s natural affinity for the law (when it works to his advantage). *“Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)” (Rom 2:15)* The very law by which men think to be exonerated is that which shall condemn them as they are “without excuse”.

The servant of Elisha was a man of humble means, fearful demeanor, and knowledgeable of his own weakness and inability to deliver himself. He could not be greatly affected by the power of positive thinking or a description of how he could “be saved” by his free will. Though he was blind by nature, he was greatly favored of GOD to be given eyes to see the salvation of the LORD.

These Syrian soldiers, on the other hand, were certain of what they could see and confidently thought they could easily take a lone prophet into captivity by their own devices even as the Pharisees (and their descendants) thought they could attain unto the kingdom of GOD through their own wisdom and supposed righteousness.

These soldiers who could see were “made blind” by the power and judgment of GOD and the captors became the captured. Not only were they blind, but were deceived by the prophet as he led them right into Israel (Samaria being the capital) while all the time they were convinced that they were going to accomplish their goal of capturing the prophet. (see 2 Kings 6:19)

By nature all men are blind. All are deserving of wrath. *“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes.” (Rom 3:10-18)*

Yet by nature all men think they can see. The prophets of “free will” assure them that they can be saved anytime they are ready to exercise their choice to be saved. Such a message is steeped in the wisdom of men and they will use their “sight” to prove their theories and reinforce the natural man’s conviction that he can somehow earn the favor of GOD. Men are born into this world believing that they have a “free will” and no man can convince them otherwise.

The only way that any man can become acquainted with what he truly is by nature is to be stripped of his natural “sight” and made to “see”. A man cannot be saved who retains his “sight”, rather only those who are made to “see”, can behold the glorious salvation that is found in JESUS CHRIST alone. According to HIS sovereign grace and abundant mercy the LORD is pleased cause guilty sinners to “see” themselves and to behold HIM who is the SAVIOR. Do you have sight or do you see? *“Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?” (John 4:29)*

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