

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 GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD

Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Romans 8:21

It is impossible for a man to be free if he does not understand what it is that has him bound. Many men have spent years in prison and having been released, ultimately wound up right back in prison. While they were in prison they were convinced that those walls were what had them bound and if they could get out of the bondage of that cell, then they could really be free. Yet soon they demonstrate that it is not the walls of the prison that form the bounds of their habitation but rather the very habits and behavior which got them incarcerated in the first place.

Liberty is a state which is desired by all men. Yet multitudes of those who inhabit the earth will never enjoy true liberty because they cannot identify what it is that has them bound and even when they do, they have no power to cast off their captor or enter into freedom.

Every schoolboy and girl who has studied American History, has been taught that, prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Patrick Henry is purported to have said, "I know not, what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death." Many have striven with other men over the years in a quest to be free from various kinds of tyranny imposed by those who have power, but not one of them, have in this fashion ever gained one day of true liberty. It is sheer folly for those who claim to be preachers of the gospel, to counsel men that they can enjoy freedom by taking up arms and engaging in carnal warfare with other men.

Such "freedom" is fleeting at best, and given the course of time and the natural bent of men, all carnal governments are destined to fall and the "liberty" so desperately sought, and paid for by the blood of "patriots", overturned in time, and those who thought themselves to be "free", find themselves bound at the last.

Paul writes here to the Romans about not just "liberty" but a "*glorious liberty*" which is enjoyed by those who are called the "*children of GOD*". It is interesting that most men would express a belief that all of mankind are the "*children of GOD*", yet Paul, here, speaks of a group of people who are set apart from the rank and file of mankind and identified particularly by this description.

Though they are part and parcel of the "creation" (i.e.; creature), yet they are said to enjoy a liberty which is not "of" the "*creature*" but is yet enjoyed by the "*creature*." Every one of those who are called the "*children of GOD*" are not merely "creatures" like all of the rest, but rather, are destined to receive something which can only be marveled at by that which is natural, and cannot be enjoyed or even valued by any but those who are caused to be delivered from the bondage of corruption.

Paul is here expanding on that which he touched upon in the seventh chapter of Romans, as he identified his "captor" ("*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" (Rom 7:24)), and HIS "deliverer" (*I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*"(Rom 7:25))

Many consider that "sin" is the "captor" of the "*creature*" (i.e.; the flesh). The reality is that the "captor" is this "corruptible body." The LORD JESUS CHRIST, was made in the likeness of sinful

flesh, being born of a woman, and taking on the same form as all other “creatures”, with one exception, HE was completely “incorruptible”, born of virgin birth, so that HE was tempted in all points as we are, yet was never inclined towards sin nor did HE ever entertain any thought of deceit or guile. Though sin is indeed our “stumbling block”, our corruptible and corrupted bodies continually embrace sin in such manner that Paul says, “*So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*” (Rom 7:25)

Sin does indeed “bind us”, but, it would have no capability to affect us at all were it not that we are corruptible as creatures, and therefore corrupt by our own choice. The question arises, how did we get that way, and the only answer that is compatible with the scriptures is that we were created in this fashion even as the scripture declares, “*For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.*” (Rom 8:20)

Those who wish to cavil against the LORD or to seek an excuse for their own corruption, will twist this truth to embrace their sin or to accuse those who declare such truth, of saying that man is not accountable for his sin. He is most definitely accountable because the same Sovereign GOD who made him subject unto vanity also declared that he would die on account of his sin. He is completely without excuse even though he may have some philosophical objection. “*But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*” (James 1:14)

The same ONE who subjected the creature unto vanity, is HE who also ordained the glorious liberty of the children of GOD. HE did not do this upon a whim but rather to magnify the glory of HIS grace. HE did not subject the creature unto bondage as an end in itself but rather that HE might also give them HOPE. “*For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.*” (Rom 8:20)

This “hope” is not in itself the “glorious liberty” of the children of GOD, but it is the precursor or pledge of it which is given unto those sons when they are granted faith to believe the gospel of the glory of the blessed GOD. Thus the scripture speaks of this “hope” as the salvation of those privileged sons. “*For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*” (Rom 8:24-25)

Thus, we find that those who are granted this precious “HOPE”, are yet in a corruptible state, and thereby groan and travail “*within themselves*” as they await a complete deliverance from that which holds them captive. “*Ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*” (Rom 8:23)

In this present life, those who are “born again” (i.e., from above) still struggle with their own “flesh” as Paul says, “*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*” (Gal 5:17) Yet they enjoy a measure of freedom, even while yet in this corruptible state, for they are not captives in their mind, like the men of this world who know nothing of the freedom which is granted to the sons of GOD. “*But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*” (Gal 5:18)

Paul expands upon this notion here in the eighth chapter of Romans as he begins it by saying, “*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*” (Rom 8:1-2) To be set free from condemnation makes the sons of GOD “free indeed”. Paul was incarcerated by the Romans at the behest of the Jews, but he was not in “bondage” even though he was in chains. Even so the sons of GOD walk about as “free men” even though the “body of this death”, clings to them like the foul odor of rotting meat.

The “glorious liberty” of which Paul says the sons of GOD wait for, is a change of this body in which they dwell into an incorruptible one, such as is occupied by their LORD JESUS CHRIST. The day is coming when we shall be “changed” and corruption shall put on incorruption, and the true freedom of the sons of GOD shall be made manifest. We do with patience wait for it saying, “*even so come LORD JESUS.*”