

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XIV

Issue 52

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

THAT ETERNAL LIFE

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

John 1:1-3

The most significant, biological revelation which men have been directed to, in the last century, is the discovery of DNA. This DNA is the building block that defines a man's genealogy and identifies his particular ancestry. If a person shares kinship with another human; that can be discovered by a match in the DNA markers which are shared by all in their common heritage.

This DNA testing ultimately proves that all of mankind have sprung from common parents. This fact is already known by those who are given faith to believe the Scriptural record in the Bible. All natural men share in a common heritage, having sprung from the loins of Adam, who had all of the natural DNA of the human race in him, when he was created from the dust of the Earth. Eve partook of that same DNA as she was formed from a rib taken from Adam's side.

Thus we can say, in this measure at least, that all natural men share in this "fellowship" one with another, even though it be a "fellowship" or "kindred spirit" which trends toward death and ends in destruction. *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom 5:12) "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom 3:23)*

Men are born sinners, under the curse of death, and manifest that corruptible nature by acting out in (i.e. committing) sin according to that heritage which they share in Adam. None can escape it by their will or desire. The natural man denies this fact, which can be seen in his natural religion which considers that he is born in a pure state, (thus we hear some say, "oh look at the little angelic baby") and only becomes a sinner by the act of sin. Thus in his will worship he believes that he can stop sinning whenever he has a mind to. Now it is true, that a man can (in a measure, in his natural ability) curb some of his more egregious activities (i.e.; adopting moral standards of one type or another), such as is demonstrated when drunkards follow a twelve step program and overcome their addiction to alcohol or drug addicts successfully complete a rehabilitation and turn away from their habit.

Yet their "DNA" does not change. They remain sinners, unable in their flesh to remove their corruption or avoid the curse of death in the natural realm and unable to see and love the glory of GOD. Because men can adopt the ways of outward morality (in a measure) they often mistake this for "righteousness" and by their religious transformations and regimens think that they can cause themselves to become acceptable or pleasing in the sight of GOD.

Isaiah clearly reveals how the LORD would regard the "righteousness" of man's flesh, as he says, *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that*

calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.” (Isa 64:6-7) He does not compare our iniquities to “filthy rags”, but rather “our righteousnesses”. He is plainly saying that man in his best state is altogether vanity. This notion is not palatable to the natural man who remains convinced that he can yet reason with GOD or present something of his own with which the LORD will be pleased. Modern “Christianity” tells a man that he can bring “his faith” to the table as a bargaining chip and when the LORD sees it he will be satisfied. To believe such is to perish.

John speaks of another sort of “DNA” (which some are made partakers of) which is not conferred by natural birth and is not bestowed upon natural men through any means available to them. Yet this “DNA” is even more powerful and pervasive in those who are its recipients than any which could be derived from the first Adam.

This “DNA” is that which John describes as “*that ETERNAL LIFE*”. Just as the LORD conferred natural life upon Adam who in turn passed that natural life unto all of HIS posterity, so too has the LORD JESUS CHRIST manifested “*that ETERNAL LIFE*” which was given to HIM by HIS FATHER. “*For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.*” (John 5:26)

HE is the “*FULNESS of the GODHEAD bodily*”, the “*express IMAGE of GOD*”. HE is eternal, dwelling in the light to which no man can approach. In HIM, and nowhere else, is this “LIFE”. Even as HE told HIS disciples in John 14:6 “*I am---THE LIFE*”.

When John says this LIFE was “*manifested to us*”, HE is speaking about CHRIST HIMSELF. He goes on to say that “*our fellowship is with the FATHER, and with HIS SON JESUS CHRIST.*” Just as those who are born of Adam by natural birth, all “*have fellowship*” one with the other in that shared “natural life”, so too, do those who are “born from above” (i.e.; born again see John 3:3) have fellowship in that LIFE which they are given by CHRIST HIMSELF.

The natural man cannot receive this LIFE, nor in anywise participate in it, for it must be conferred by the grace of GOD. “*Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*” (John 1:13) Those who are made “*Heirs and joint heirs with CHRIST*” do indeed share in that LIFE even as John says, “*That which -- we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled*”. Those who are born again are the SPIRITUAL offspring of JESUS CHRIST. They have no LIFE but that which is HIS and their rejoicing is in HIM alone. They live because HE lives.

“*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*” (2 Cor 5:17-21)

John says, “*we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that ETERNAL LIFE*”. Here he demonstrates his desire to be an “*ambassador for CHRIST*”, beseeching those who have been given “that LIFE”, to “be reconciled unto GOD”. Thus we preach the gospel in order that those who hear and believe might know the extent of their blessings. “*That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*” (Eph 3:17-19)

This is indeed the “fellowship” of those who are given “*that ETERNAL LIFE*”. “*And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*” (1John 5:11-13)

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