

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

DEATH BY SIN

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.

Romans 5:12

When the LORD created Adam from the dust of the ground, HE breathed into HIM and Adam became a living soul. The LORD then planted a Garden in Eden and put the man therein to dress and keep it. He was surrounded with the bounty of GOD's creation and was privileged to enjoy the beauty of that Garden and to commune with the LORD in his mortal state.

At this point, he had no knowledge of death and as yet had not tasted of the bitterness of death's curse. He was created to fulfill the exact purpose for which the LORD made him and he would in no wise do anything other than act according to the nature which was given him.

He was neither the master of his fate nor the captain of his soul. His times were in the hands of his CREATOR. The LORD forbade him to eat of the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil and decreed his demise, when HE said, "*in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" (Gen 2:17) True to his corruptible nature he did knowingly eat of that fruit which the Serpent had beguiled (i.e.; deceived) Eve into partaking of and presenting to him. Thus in the eating of that fruit, in direct disobedience to GOD's commandment, he did plunge himself and all of his future posterity, into and under the curse of death which is "*by sin*".

Though it was Eve, who in her ignorance (i.e.; deception) offered it to him, he was in the transgression as he gladly partook of it and could blame no one but himself, as he fulfilled the decree which GOD had made. Man in this state of fallen nature has always sought out an excuse for his sin, and it is impossible for him to recognize his own utter corruption before GOD apart from the enlightenment of the SPIRIT of GOD, whom the LORD has sent to "*reprove (i.e.; convince) the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.*" (John 16:8)

In this fallen natural state, (in which the whole human race presently abides) man is convinced that he can approach unto GOD and even find favor with HIM by either abstaining from acts of sin (as he defines it) or by some activity which he has designed to demonstrate his "righteousness" unto the LORD. He does not comprehend the utter contempt which the LORD has for all of the deeds which are performed in the power of human flesh. (see Isa.64:6)

Nor can he grasp the fact that "death" does reign in his mortal body because of sin. It is this reigning power of sin which forever separates him from the presence of a HOLY GOD, who is of purer eyes than to behold sin. Man surmises that sin is what he does, rather than understanding that sin is what he is.

Because of this blindness, he is often mired in various schemes and varieties of religions, superstitions, "*vain babblings,*" and "*science (i.e.; knowledge) falsely so-called,*" (see I Tim. 6:20) which hold out hope to him that he might yet improve himself and escape the curse of death. This is the exact same reason that many pursue the lusts of the flesh, blindly thinking that such will offer them some (at least momentary) reprieve from their own mortality and open up vistas of pleasure and satisfaction which will fulfill this quest.

Yet all of these pursuits are completely vain and ultimately leave these “pursuers”, “knowers”, and “performers” in the exact same condition that they were in from the beginning; under the inescapable curse of “*death by sin*”. One cannot paint a bleaker picture than the reality of this condition, it cannot be exaggerated. Thus arise those who would tell men that they just need to think positively and dwell upon happy thoughts and not listen to the “naysayers”, which is how they would characterize those who declare the truth as it is set forth in the Bible.

These same “blind guides” would also seek to inform men that the “faith” with which GOD is pleased is that which they are able to produce by a decision of their own free will. They would declare to their hearers a message which can neither heal their hurt, mollify their wounds, nor provide a remedy for this “*death by sin*” which they have inherited from Adam.

Dying is a “natural” process which produces all illness and disease and clearly results in the eventual demise of every mortal. The open grave, therefore serves as a reminder to all of Adam’s sons that “*the wages of sin is death*”. While it is clear that every man who is buried is dead, it is also true that every man is dead in trespasses and sins as soon as he comes forth from his mother’s womb. This latter fact is not so clear to his natural understanding nor is it readily received by those who would be promoters of “feel good religion”.

Yet the Bible plainly states that “*The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.*” (Psa 58:3) “*There is none righteous, no, not one.*” (Rom 3:10) “*For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.*” (Ecc 7:20) This pervasive wickedness is evidence that all of Adam’s children do already manifest the “death by sin” which they inherited from their father. Even as natural death does incapacitate the natural man, so too does this “death by sin” incapacitate him spiritually, as well. He will not cease from sin, because he cannot, and he cannot because he is already dead therein. Nor will he seek after GOD in SPIRIT and TRUTH, because he cannot, even as the LORD told the Pharisees, “*Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.*” (John 8:43)

Now surely they could “hear” the words that HE spoke with their natural ears, yet they had no understanding thereof because they were spiritually dead and could not receive those things which can only be “heard” by those who are “alive.” This is what the LORD explained to Nicodemus when HE said, “*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*”(John 3:3)

The final outcome of “*death by sin*” is the everlasting destruction of body and soul in hell by HIM who holds the keys thereof and man is powerless to prevent that conclusion. For even though the word of GOD plainly declares the REMEDY for “*death by sin*”, the natural man is both, deaf to its message, and unwilling to embrace the only SOLUTION for his problem. Thus the only hope that exists for those who are captives to “*death by sin*” is the free and sovereign grace of GOD who delights to show mercy to those whom HE loves.

The LORD has revealed HIS willingness to show mercy and HIS provision of LIFE to those which sit in darkness and the shadow of death. The LORD JESUS CHRIST has come into the world to cancel sin, thus removing the curse of death for all of those for whom HE has come to save. These recipients of HIS mercy can only be known as they are given life and the gift of faith, causing them to embrace the judgment of GOD upon themselves, owning their corruption and crying out to HIM for mercy.

By this gift of faith and the indwelling of HIS SPIRIT in them, they are made to glory in HIS TRUTH and to love HIS way, bowing to the LORDSHIP of CHRIST and rejoicing in HIS free salvation. Thus we see sinners saved and CHRIST glorified.

All who truly mourn for their sin give evidence of this work of grace for that man who is dead in trespasses and sins is either indifferent to his sin or hopes to merely be delivered from its punishment. All who call upon the NAME of the LORD in sincerity and truth manifest the work of HIS SPIRIT in them, for those yet dead in their sins are satisfied with their “faith” and/or religious deeds and sacrifices. CHRIST is the ANTIDOTE of death, the GIVER of LIFE, and HE who has tasted “*death by sin*” in the behalf of HIS elect.

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