

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XVI

Issue 36

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

NO WEDDING GARMENT

And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 22:11-13

The carnal nation of Israel, (i.e.; the natural descendants of Abraham and most specifically the offspring of the twelve sons of Jacob, who was a favored son of Isaac) is often used in the scripture as a type and foreshadow of that "nation" which are in SPIRIT and TRUTH, the sons of GOD. Peter makes mention of this "nation" in his first epistle, "*But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*" (1Pet. 2:9-10)

Peter does not have reference to that carnal nation of Jacob's seed, but rather that "holy seed" which is the generation of CHRIST through the faith of CHRIST. They are not known by their carnal bloodline because "flesh and blood" cannot inherit the kingdom of GOD. Rather they are manifested as the sons of GOD through the operation of faith which is the gift of GOD. "*For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*" (Rom 2:28-29)

Peter addresses himself to this "nation" whom he calls "strangers" scattered throughout the provinces of the world. (see 1 Pet.1:1) He goes on to describe them and the manner in which they became a part of this "holy nation" and how they shall continue therein. "*Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*" (1Pet 1:2-5)

He describes the FOUNDATION upon which this "nation" (or kingdom) rests, which is in stark contrast to any carnal or natural standing which men may assume to have before GOD. "*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." (1Pet 2:5-8)*

There are few doctrines in the scripture which raise the hackles of natural religious men, more than this which Peter sets forth in just a few words. Just as surely as the generation of CHRIST

is appointed to obtain salvation; so too those who are called the “reprobate” are appointed to receive the fruit of their own disobedience and rejection of that STONE which is laid by GOD. The natural man cannot and will not bow before the throne of HIM who is the REDEEMER of true Israel and “*A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.*” (Heb 8:2)

We live in an age when the rank and file of those who would call themselves “evangelical Christians” almost totally reject the plain and clear message which Peter sets forth. They are convinced that they should spend their time in trying to get men to accept the truth of GOD in order to become the sons of GOD. They compass sea and land to make converts by appealing to the free will of man, rather than simply declaring (to all that will hear) the gospel of the glory of the blessed GOD which declares that CHRIST has obtained the redemption of HIS people and will have all of the glory in it as HE calls HIS own sheep by name and they follow HIM.

The LORD taught in parables for this very purpose and we see HIM manifest the natural man’s rejection of HIS truth which is demonstrated by the same carnal nation of Israel which HE often uses as a type of HIS holy nation.”(i.e.; a people set apart). HE said that wedding guests were invited to attend the marriage of a king’s son. Yet none of those which were invited would come for one reason or another. They even slew the messengers that were sent to bring them this invitation. Thus the gracious King sought out a people which were scattered abroad and compelled them to come to the feast.

In this parable we recognize that the “invited guests” which would not come have reference to “natural Israel”, who were given every benefit, “*What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.*” (Rom 3:1-2) Thus we see demonstrated in them the folly of thinking that men can gain an entrance into the kingdom of GOD by instruction in the traditions of religion, the foundations of sound doctrine, or their supposed “free will” which is bound by sin. They had all of these things, even prophets of GOD sent to them with the clear message of GOD’s mercy and kindness, yet they preferred their own way and delighted in their religion rather than in HIM who is the CHIEF CORNERSTONE of the temple of GOD.

Paul says that Israel (after the flesh) has stumbled, “*For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*” (Rom 10:2-3) While they embrace their religion and tradition with great enthusiasm, they nonetheless perish in it because it is built upon the wrong foundation which they willingly embrace, being gladly ignorant of the TRUTH of GOD and HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Thus we see natural Israel used as type of all of those who embrace a message which exalts the will and means of men in approaching the throne of GOD. All who would believe that their acceptance with GOD rests on what they do, decide, or embrace are ignorant of GOD’s RIGHTEOUSNESS and in one measure or another go about to establish their own righteousness. It is true that there are varying “degrees” in which men in their chosen religions go about to establish their own righteousness. Some promote good works as this means. While others reject the notion that any works of the law can justify a man before GOD, yet they promote self-righteousness nonetheless by attributing their acceptance with GOD on the basis of their own faith and adherence to HIS commands. They would call it “accepting JESUS”, giving HIM your heart, or “letting” or “making” HIM your LORD.

The true gospel is preached in all the Earth as a testimony to the goodness and grace of GOD in sending HIS only begotten SON into the world as a REDEEMER of HIS people. Thus we see in the parable that the king sent his servants into the highways to compel men to come to the wedding. He did not ask them to come but he made it mandatory. Thus the LORD calls HIS own sheep by name and says, “*all that the FATHER giveth me shall come to me.*”

But there were some who came in to this wedding feast who were not clothed in the proper garments. They were not said to be naked but simply not clothed in the proper apparel necessary to attend this wedding supper. They were cast out to their own consternation. They are representative of those men of religion who consider their own clothing to be sufficient. They are those who are the tares sown among the wheat. They are the foolish virgins who had no oil in their lamps. They are those to whom the LORD shall say, depart from me I never knew you. Only as a man is clad in the righteousness of CHRIST shall HE stand before GOD. mam