

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XVII

Issue 18

*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*

---

## NOW

*But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.* *Hebrews 8:6*

Time is only relevant to that which is created, and then primarily, only to that part of creation which has the capability to comprehend the concept of its fleeting nature. The animal kingdom, apart from mankind, is completely oblivious to the importance of time. The only thing they are aware of is the ongoing nature of it, rather than the necessity to make the best use of it or to keep a record of its transient quality. By nature, men are completely shut up in time. All things having to do with time, have a beginning and an end, and man is no different.

The LORD reveals HIMSELF to the creature in a fashion that they can have some understanding of when HE calls HIMSELF, the "ANCIENT OF DAYS". Yet HE is more clearly revealed as that ONE which man, by nature, can have no real comprehension of as Paul says HE is that ONE, "*Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting.*" (1Tim 6:16) Isaiah said, HE is the "*One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy.*" (Isa 57:15)

Finite man can speak of Eternity but in reality, has no mechanism whereby to actually comprehend such a subject. It is truly too high a concept and outside the realm of his natural understanding. When enlightened by the SPIRIT of GOD to see a mere glimpse of HIM who is ETERNAL, he can but fall upon his face in worship even as Job, Daniel, and Isaiah; who all confessed that the sight was more than they could bear.

Thus, we see the LORD speak of HIMSELF as that ONE who encompasses time and also the only ONE to whom time is inconsequential. "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*" (Rev 1:8) "*Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.*" (Rev 1:11) "*But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*" (2Pet 3:8)

It is interesting to consider that when the LORD first revealed HIMSELF to John in the opening pages of the Revelation, saying "*I AM ALPHA and OMEGA*" that John fell at HIS feet as a dead man, completely overwhelmed with fear at HIS awesome presence. Yet HE brought comfort to John with the same revelation as HE said, "*Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.*" (Rev 1:17-18)

It was then that John was lifted up in a vision of HIM who has LIFE in HIMSELF, yet took upon HIMSELF the likeness of sinful flesh, died a sinner's death, and arose triumphant over sin and death, and as our GREAT HIGH PRIEST does live forevermore. O what a wonder, for it is only as the LORD reveals HIMSELF as our REDEEMER that we can behold HIM in SPIRIT and TRUTH. We now see through a glass darkly, but one day face to face. Can there be any place of greater delight and comfort for the saints of GOD than such a sight?

Thus we read in the Hebrews of that purpose for which HE, (as that ONE who has neither beginning of days, nor ending of life, did both have a beginning as babe in Mary's womb, and an

end of that life in HIS mortal flesh on Calvary's rugged and shameful cross;) did come to accomplish. "Now" (i.e.; in the present time) HE has obtained (i.e.; secured or attained) a more excellent (i.e.; surpassing all others) ministry (i.e.; place of ministration or service, accomplishment). "*behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*" (2Cor 6:2) "*And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*" (Rev 12:10)

There are basically two Greek words which are translated into English as "now". One of them is synonymous with the conjunction "but" which we see in the first verse of Hebrews 8. "*Now (but) of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.*" (Heb 8:1) The other is the strongest form of emphasis for "just now" or the "very present"; which is akin to what the Psalmist says, "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*" (Psa 46:1) This is the word which is used in Hebrews 8:6.

In Romans 3:21, we see both words used in tandem "*But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets.*" The English word "but" is usually used to contrast two ideas. This is exactly true both here and in Hebrews 8:1. The writer which I believe to be Paul in both cases, is setting forth the superiority of that which CHRIST came to minister with the testimony and weakness of the law. Even those who labored under the law in the Old Testament, understood that this law which they ministered was unable to deliver those to whom it was given. "*God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*" (Heb 11:40) "*Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*" (1Pet 1:10-12)

That which has now been made clear in the ministry of CHRIST, is the total and absolutely complete salvation which HE has brought to HIS elect by that which HE has performed as their REDEEMER and KING. They needed wisdom; HE is the wisdom of GOD who tabernacled among men and leads them in paths of RIGHTEOUSNESS for HIS NAME's sake. They needed righteousness; HE is the RIGHTEOUSNESS of GOD, who has imputed the same unto them. They needed to be made holy; HE is their SANCTIFIER, who has set them forever apart from that which is unholy. They needed redemption; HE is their REDEMPTION, long awaited and now obtained by HIS work alone as their great HIGH PRIEST and SIN OFFERING. "*But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: --- He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*" (1Cor 1:30-31)

The LORD HIMSELF did speak of the contrast between all ministrations of the word of GOD before HE came upon the scene and that which is now come. First, HE contrasted the end of an era, culminating in the ministry of John the Immerser who was the direct forerunner of CHRIST. For as great as John was, his ministry was severely limited, and he could only look from afar at the ministry of that ONE who was greater than he. "*Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.*" (Mat 11:11) The LORD showed the same thing to the women at the well in Samaria. "*But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*" (John 4:23-24) Ultimately, HE summed this up to HIS own disciples. "*Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" (John 14:6) Now is the accepted time. mam