

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

ONE HAVING AUTHORITY

For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Matthew 7:29

Capernaum was the city in which the LORD, sometimes, dwelt (see Mat. 4:12,13) and there performed many miracles. Matthew describes it as "HIS own city" (Mat. 9:1). Yet, it is this city which the LORD used to demonstrate the fact that men cannot see the Kingdom of GOD apart from a supernatural work of grace (i.e.; "ye must be born again"). For HE said, "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee." (Mat 11:23-24)

It was immediately after HIS rebuke of Capernaum that HE declared the only means by which men might be enlightened about the nature and substance of HIS Kingdom. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Mat 11:25-27)

Nazareth was the city of HIS youth where HE grew to maturity. It was here that HE grew in favor with GOD and man, yet it was here that HE demonstrated the natural blindness and inability of men to be able to recognize who HE is as HE taught in their synagogue. "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." (Mark 6:3-4) None could see who HE actually is with natural eyes.

No doubt, they could see that HE was a well-spoken MAN and surely HIS character offered them no place to criticize HIS moral standards or kindness to HIS fellow man. So why were they "offended at HIM"? It was because they rebelled at HIS "authority". They would not have this MAN to rule over them, nor could they willingly submit to HIM. They could not see who HE is. This is quite in contrast to the devils who believe and tremble at that same "authority". For they confessed, right here in Capernaum, "Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him." (Mark 1:23-25)

The Scribes and Pharisees considered themselves as "men of authority", because of their learning and appointments to office. They were the epitome of religious men (i.e.; the clergy) who took pride in their titles and position. Yet they had no respect for the LORD JESUS, for HE did not come among them as ONE approved by them nor waiting for their endorsement. Rather, HE was approved by GOD, and thus they despised HIM. HIS "authority" was demonstrated by word and deed, whereas they could only speak and teach such things as they learned from other men.

Here in Capernaum the LORD manifested HIS work of grace in a Roman Centurion, remarking that HE had not found so great a faith in all of Israel as was displayed by a despised Gentile soldier. What was the basis of his declaration of 'faith', of which the LORD took note? It was that he recognized that he had no power or worth and that the LORD JESUS was a MAN of "authority" who had power to do as HE willed. *"The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it."* (Mat 8:8-9) In contrast to the Centurion's testimony, the scribes and Pharisees considered themselves as men to be greatly esteemed and having power over the very life of this ONE who stood before them.

The Greek word (*exousia*) which is translated here as "authority" is also quite often translated in the KJV as "power", (71 times out of 103 occurrences) This word has reference to the strength, jurisdiction, and right of one to rule. The LORD JESUS CHRIST is that ONE who has by HIS own admission been given this "authority". *"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."* (Mat 28:18) The FATHER declared this in Psalm 2:6, *"Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."* And the writer of Hebrews confirms it saying, *"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."* (Heb 1:1-2)

It is interesting to note that the term "all power" is also used one time in the scriptures to denote the working of Satan. *"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders."* (2Thes 2:9) Yet the Greek word ("dunamis") which is translated there as "power" is not the same as that used to describe the "all power" of CHRIST. "Dunamis" simply means "conferred ability" and not "authority or the right of dominion". Satan is GOD's devil, and HE uses him according to the good pleasure of HIS will. In this particular instance, HE uses him to confound and deceive those who despise the authority of CHRIST. *"And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."* (2Thess 2:11-12)

We see HIM exercise HIS "authority", taking dominion over the disease of the leper who came humbly seeking HIS mercy, *"And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean."* (Mat 8:2) This leper was given eyes to behold HIM who has all authority, as he worshipped at HIS feet. In such physical healing, HE demonstrated not only HIS power over such disease, but also HIS authority to forgive sin, as the Psalmist says, *"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."* (Psa 103:3) The LORD pointed out this very truth to those who questioned HIS authority as HE healed the man with palsy. *"But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power (i.e.; authority) on earth to forgive sins."* (Mark 2:10)

HE demonstrated HIS absolute authority over the kingdom of darkness as Matthew tells us, *"When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."* (Mat 8:16-17) The father of lies, has been given limited ability to wound, even, the sons of GOD, yet all of this is done in order that HIS authority might be manifested along with HIS mercy and tender care of those whom HE loves. For we have a HIGH PRIEST who can *"be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; (and) was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."* (Heb 4:15)

We see that HE even has "authority" over the will of men, as HE calls HIS disciples. *"But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead. And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him."* (Mat 8:22-23) Is this not what the Psalmist said; *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."* (Psa 110:3) The LORD declared the same when HE said, *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."* (John 10:27) *"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."* (John 6:37) Do you rejoice in HIS "authority"?
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