

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

THE DESTROYER

Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. I Corinthians 10:10

We have looked on the events of the past few days with mixtures of amazement and sadness as we have beheld a once proud and unwavering nation humiliated in the eyes of the world by a rabble of thugs and barbarians, not mention the incompetence and timidity of its leaders. On the one hand we are thankful that such events serve to remind the children of GOD not to trust in the arm of the flesh. Yet on the other hand we cannot rejoice when we see the needless human sufferings brought on by poor decision making and inept planning. What is even worse is that those who are to blame for this fiasco are even now boasting of their “success” in solving a problem which they caused by their fecklessness and ineptitude.

We would most certainly despair except that we realize that HE who knows the end from the beginning has ordered all things to occur exactly according to HIS purpose. While men will demonstrate their ignorance, weakness, and fallibility, the LORD of GLORY will manifest HIS sovereign sway over all events and have all in derision who question HIS AUTHORITY. *“Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.” (Prov 1:24-31)*

This ONE of whom we read here is indeed the “*UNKNOWN GOD*” among the vast majority of those who call themselves Christians in the present day. Most preachers among the religious multitudes declare a “pipsqueak” god who wouldn’t hurt a flea and is falling all over himself to try to get them to mend their ways and give him the opportunity to help them out in the daily struggles of life. According to them, he is just hoping that they will let him give them an abundant life and teach them how to be prosperous in their finances, relationships, and worldly pursuits. Little if any thought is given to the true and living GOD’s sovereign rule and the abject poverty of mankind in devising a means whereby to approach unto HIM who dwells in the LIGHT to which none can approach. It is impossible that a man can have any appreciation for the mercy and kindness of HIM until they have come face to face with HIS utter glory and their own shame.

In contrast to the ineffectual guidance of our own nation’s leaders, we recognize that the GOD of whom David speaks is a supreme RULER, *“But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.” (Psa 115:3)* HE is that ONE who is a “*MAN of WAR*” whose hand cannot be staid nor can HIS motives and purpose be questioned as Nebuchadnezzar learned. Destruction is in HIS hand and HE is not ashamed to declare HIS use of it. *“I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water: and I will sweep it with the besom (i.e.; broom) of destruction, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Isa 14:23)*

The LORD raised up the nation of Babylon and exalted Nebuchadnezzar above all the kings of the earth in order to use him for the chastening of Israel by bringing her into captivity and

destroying the temple. Then the LORD brought destruction upon Babylon for daring to lift its hands against the anointed of the LORD. The destroyer of Israel, was destroyed by HIM who is the DESTROYER of all who glory in themselves.

Paul admonishes the Corinthians against murmuring, here in I Cor. 10:10. The sin of murmuring was quite prevalent among the Israelites and they often felt the lash of the LORD's hand in the midst of such. Murmuring, or questioning our lot and position in various circumstances of life is the epitome of man's selfish pride. That which would cause a man to "murmur" before the LORD is his penchant to consider that he is worthy of better circumstances. It was that which urged Adam to eat of that fruit which Eve was deceived into partaking of. Paul goes on to say to the Corinthians, *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."* (1Cor 10:12) It is the same thing that he warned the Galatians of. *"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."* (Gal 6:3)

This is the same attitude which is described by Solomon, *"Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him."* (Pro 26:12) He also pointed out the outcome of such a mind. *"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."* (Pro 16:18) So Paul speaks of falling into the hands of the "DESTROYER". Even as we read of HIM in Hebrews, *"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."* (Heb 10:31) HE is a jealous GOD and will not share HIS glory with any. Let us flee from murmuring and may we be given grace to follow in our LORD's footsteps as HE said, *"Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."* (Mat 11:26) *"Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."* (Luke 22:42)

CHRIST is the DESTROYER of the wicked. *"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."* (2Thes 1:7-9) HE told HIS disciples who it was that was to be feared. *"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."* (Mat 10:28)

CHRIST is the DESTROYER of the enemies of HIS people. *"Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it."* (Col 2:14-15) HE has triumphed over all of the foes of HIS people. Neither the law, sin, death, hell, or their accusers can bring them into condemnation.

CHRIST is the DESTROYER of the pride of those whom HE loves with an everlasting love. Herein is seen the fullness of the blessing of the LORD to HIS chosen bride. HE gives the wicked over to a reprobate mind and leaves them in the pathway that results in their destruction, but HE will not allow HIS people to be destroyed along with them. Rather, HE calls them out of darkness and into the LIGHT. Their self-reliance must be destroyed as we see HIM illustrate in his dealings with Peter, as Peter boasted of his willingness and supposed ability to stand with the LORD in all things. The DESTROYER unsheathed HIS sword of kindness and brought Peter to tears and remorse. David assumed that he had hid his sin from GOD and the people, yet the DESTROYER sent the prophet Nathan to confront him and slew the confidence of David, as he cried out, *"For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."* (Psa 51:3-4)

Jonah assumed that he would circumvent the call of GOD but the DESTROYER brought him to the very pit of hell, causing him to exclaim, *"And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice."* (Jon 2:2) It was then that he learned in an unforgetful manner that *"Salvation is of the LORD."* (Jon 2:9) Saul of Tarsus confidently trod the road to Damascus with letters of reprisal against the people of GOD. But the DESTROYER kindly met him on that road striking him blind and revealing HIMSELF as the LORD of all. *"Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies."* (Psa 103:1-4) Have you met the DESTROYER? mam