

# 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*

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## THE LIGHT IS COME

*Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee.      Isaiah 60:1*

The LORD's everlasting love for that people which HE chose in CHRIST has neither diminished nor increased from the foundation of the World. HIS purpose to manifest HIS glory in their redemption is woven throughout the record given to us in the Holy Scriptures which we call the Bible. Therein we read of HIS watch care over them and HIS announcements of their complete and full salvation. Yet in a measure we must declare that this blessing which HE determined to lay upon them, must take a backseat to the primary reason for which this salvation is decreed.

The Eternal GOD who is the FIRST and the LAST knows all of HIS works from the beginning. It has pleased HIM to exalt the NAME of HIS Only Begotten SON above every name. And it is HIS purpose to magnify the glory of HIS grace in JESUS CHRIST as the REDEEMER of HIS elect Bride. Rather than doing this in secret HE has manifested the works of CHRIST in the record given to the prophets of old, who primarily ministered their prophecies to the carnal nation of Israel. *"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)*

HE would use the nation of Israel to demonstrate two vital truths. The first is that HE has an elect people which HE chose according to the good pleasure of HIS will. *"The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you."* (Deu 7:7-8) The second is that even though the glorious truth of HIS SALVATION was spoken to them by the prophets, they did not believe it, nor would they abide in HIS precepts. *"For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" (Rom 10:16) "To Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."* (Rom 10:21)

Thus, we have demonstrated for us, the utter impossibility of any of mankind, ever embracing the TRUTH of GOD's WORD, by the activity of their own free will. *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* (Rom 3:10-12) This is a fitting epitaph for the carnal nation of Israel and an accurate description of the whole race of mankind, who would rightly and quickly perish apart from HIS sovereign grace to raise beggars from the dunghill.

The LORD hid HIS eternal purpose in a mystery which was not revealed until it pleased HIM to send forth HIS SON, born of a woman and made in the likeness of sinful flesh. Now, that mystery is set forth in a two-fold sense. The first is spelled out by the Apostle Paul when he said, *"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." (Rom 16:25-26)* HE has revealed that the true Israel of GOD is not defined by natural birth but rather to *"as many as the LORD our GOD shall call"*, out of every kindred, tribe, and tongue.

The second sense of the unfolding of this "mystery" is seen in the delivery of GOD's TRUTH, "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; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." (Heb 1:1-3) The salvation of HIS people does not rest upon their actions but rather HIS. "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col 1:26-27) CHRIST is not simply the SAVIOR, but HE is the SALVATION of HIS people.

So, we are brought right back to where we began in a consideration of the LORD's unity with HIS children. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom 8:38-39) HE is both the BEGINNING and the END of the salvation of HIS elect. This is the declaration of the gospel of HIS glory. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end." (Eph 3:17-21)

As we look at the 60<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah, we can see this union of CHRIST and HIS saints quite vividly portrayed. Many have read this chapter and come away from it believing that the one being addressed and spoken of is the Church, the Bride of CHRIST. Yet many others (myself included) believe that the SON of GOD, the SAVIOR and REDEEMER is the primary ONE addressed. As I look at it, I can see both CHRIST and HIS people spoken to and spoken of.

CHRIST is the LIGHT of the world. (see John 8:12) CHRIST is the LIGHT which shineth in a dark place. (see 2 Peter 1:19) CHRIST is that LIGHT which has shined upon the sons of GOD to reveal HIMSELF unto them. (see 2 Cor.4:6) Yet the LORD also told HIS disciples, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." (Mat 5:14) Paul said, "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness." (1Thess 5:5) (see Eph. 5:8-14; 2 Cor. 6:14; Phil. 2:15) CHRIST is the LIGHT and the children of GOD dwell in that LIGHT which is reflected in them by HIS SPIRIT.

"Arise, shine for thy light is come." CHRIST came into the world at the appointed time to illumine the sons of GOD by HIS TRUTH. HE is given that position of glory by HIM who appointed HIM to suffer in our stead. Far from regretting this undertaking, HE has taken delight in it and rejoices as a strong man to run a race. Just as that star shone over the place where the child JESUS was, guiding the men of the East to HIM, so too does HIS STAR shine ever so brightly to cause HIS people to fall down and worship at HIS footstool. The time of HIS glory is now, for this is the day of HIS SALVATION. "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." (Isa 60:3) "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev 5:13)

"And the glory of the LORD is risen upon THEE." Where else but in CHRIST can the glory of GOD be seen in its fulness. Indeed, HIS glory is seen in HIS handiwork of creation, but the majesty of HIS NAME is made manifest in the work of redemption. So much so that "he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house." (Heb 3:3) It has pleased the LORD to exalt CHRIST above all. And if HE does exalt the REDEEMER as the INHERITOR of all things, are not those who are hidden in HIM also lifted up with HIM. "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." (Rev 21:6-7) Are you thirsty for this WATER of LIFE? "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." (John 7:37)

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