

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XVIII

Issue 4

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 HIDING PLACE

Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.

I Timothy 5:24-25

As we see the political drama (or perhaps comedy) playing out before us in our Washington; we are quite convinced that there is no such thing as "impartiality" involved in this process. Each side knew exactly what they were going to do before this chain of events began. If there is one thing that we can be certain of in the political arena; it is that hypocrisy is a commodity which is shared by all. It is ludicrous to think that any politician would ever be impartial, whenever they belong to any "party". It is just the nature of the beast and we can see being played out before our eyes, the demonstration that, by nature, "*all men are liars*". (see Ps.116:11)

Whenever we recognize that fact to be true, then and only then can we set about to point out the untruths which are spoken by others. Most politicians can accuse those, who oppose them, of being liars, but it is extremely rare (actually non-existent as far as I can tell) that they do so while admitting their own dalliance with prevarication of varying degrees. So, we are not particularly surprised when these "statesmen" choose up sides and defend their own dissimulations and those of whatever team they are on.

It is quite refreshing to discover that the Bible does not have "sides". There is one cohesive TRUTH taught throughout its pages from the BEGINNING to the END. (see Rev.21:6) Quite often, we hear that there are competing "truths" found in the scriptures. We are sometimes told that the Bible teaches "the free will of man" as well as the "predestination of all things by an Absolute GOD." We are told that we must "balance", "man's responsibility" with the "sovereignty of GOD". Some take up the sword of "man's obedience", while others take up the spear of "CHRIST's performance." Conditional blessings are juxtaposed over against the unconditional promises of GOD to HIS elect. Yet there are no conflicts in the message which the LORD is pleased to bring unto men, only varying degrees of understanding, as the LORD is pleased to give to everyman the measure of faith.

Those who have clearer understanding cannot boast in it, because they are made to differ from others, only by the grace of GOD. Neither can those, who find certain aspects of Bible truth to be unpalatable to their own mind and that of natural man, find grounds upon which to neglect to declare the whole counsel of GOD. May the LORD grant that we might rejoice in the "unvarnished" truth of GOD whether we like it or not. This very notion is set forth in Paul's argument in the ninth chapter of Romans, "*Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?*" (Rom 9:18-21) Such a message as this is completely "unpalatable" to the natural thinking of men, and anyone is a liar who says that he rejoices in this truth "*in the flesh*".

In his letter to Timothy, Paul sets forth what I would call, "an inevitable truth". The purpose of GOD in the redemption of sinners (i.e., that bride which belongs to CHRIST) is to bring glory to HIS NAME in saving HIS people from their sin. If we believe that HE doeth according to HIS will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the Earth, then we must recognize that HE will perform that which HE has set out to do. There are no options, ifs, ands, or buts about that work which HE will bring to pass.

Modern evangelicalism has reduced this "salvation" to a deliverance from the pit of hell, yet the scriptures describes this "salvation" as "*from their sins*" (see Mat.1:21) rather than some future destination or era. Since the sons of GOD were never "*appointed unto wrath*", it would not be technically true, to say that they have been saved from "hell" by that which CHRIST has performed. Yet it is true that each one of the sons of Adam were by nature, dead in trespasses and sins and it is from this state that CHRIST came to deliver those whom HE loves.

The scriptures are abundantly clear that HE performs a work in the sons of GOD which will be manifested in conjunction with this salvation which HE has determined to bring. "*Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*" (Rom 8:9) "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*" (2Cor 5:17)

The SPIRIT of GOD works in the sons of GOD to give them a love for the WORD of GOD, quite in contrast to those, who "*received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*" (2Th 2:10) HE causes them to "*love the brethren*". "*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.*" (1John 3:14) This same SPIRIT wages war against their sinful flesh within them. "*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*" (Gal 5:17) This is a conflict which is unknown to those who are without Spiritual LIFE and is more than the struggles of the natural conscience which is quite common in all who are not "*seared with a hot iron*" (1 Tim.4:2) This is not a simple sorrow over having done wrong, but is a genuine longing to be made clean in the inward parts. (see Ps.51)

The HOLY SPIRIT is a PRODUCER of fruit in the children of GOD. "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*" (Gal 5:22-24) "*Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.*" (John 15:16) "*I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*" (John 15:5)

Thus, Paul describes to Timothy those who are fitted for destruction and those who are ordained to eternal life. Open and flagrant sinners prove that they shall not escape the terror of the LORD. They despise the way of GOD, blaspheme the WORD of GOD and can be clearly recognized. These are those whose sins are "*open beforehand*". Then there are those who are somewhat timid in their sin and may even be influenced by a tender natural conscience. They often gravitate towards religion and take comfort in their own supposed righteousness compared to those whose sins are "*open beforehand*", they consider themselves to be morally upright. They are those who "*follow after*", ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the TRUTH.

Then there are those in whom the SPIRIT of GOD works mightily. They are described as those whose "*good works are manifest beforehand*". Good works do not influence GOD in any way, but they are the evidence of HIS work in HIS people. "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*" (Mat 5:16) "*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*" (Eph 2:10) "*In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.*" (1John 3:10) Thus the LORD takes away the hiding place of sinful men and does demonstrate the HIDING PLACE of those in whom HE is pleased to work. mam