

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XIX

Issue 19

*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*

---

## DEAD YET ALIVE

*Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Romans 6:8*

No experience is more universally shared among the members of the human race than that of death. Yet no other subject is more studiously avoided in the conversations of those affected by it. The LORD told Adam what would happen when he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which the LORD forbade him to do. Yet true to his nature, Adam disregarded that prohibition and thereby brought death and its curse, not simply upon the human race, but, upon the whole of the Earthly creation.

Yet it is through the illustration of death, most certainly its finality, that one of the greatest of blessings which GOD gives to men is brought forth. In regard to that death which CHRIST has undergone in the behalf of HIS elect, Paul sets forth the great deliverance which is visited upon the awakened sons of GOD. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col 3:3)

Regardless of the crimes (which are prosecuted by men) which a man may have committed when he was alive, whenever the death angel has visited his house of clay, those crimes can no longer bring him to condemnation nor can the penalty of a broken law exact anything from him. "*For he that is dead is freed from sin.*" (Rom 6:7) "*Death hath no more dominion over him.*" (Rom 6:9) which is illustrated by the death of CHRIST and HIS subsequent triumph over sin and its penalty.

CHRIST needed not to die afresh, continually, for the sins which HE bore but in that HE died for sin once, and made a show openly of HIS victory, HE is utterly free from any obligation, having borne the sin of HIS people and carried their sin away as far as the east is from the west. "*For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*" (Rom 6:10) "*For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." (Heb 9:24-26)*

Paul states one of the most glorious truths which can be found in all of the scriptures when he exhorted the Roman believers to, "*Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*" (Rom 6:11) Some have perceived that he is telling them to merely act as though it is so in a sort of make-believe type of way. Yet that is contrary to the true meaning of "reckoning". My grandpa might say that he reckoned that it might rain and we understood that he was merely guessing that such would take place. However, when Paul uses this word, he speaks of no guesswork or happenstance, but rather of the certainty that this is true.

The word "reckon" as Paul used it means to "take an inventory of" or "examine the facts", "to calculate or establish by counting." That of which he speaks is a certainty which the sons of GOD are given LIGHT to behold and to rejoice therein. This is an expectation built upon a SOLID FOUNDATION. No doubt or assumption is had. CHRIST has died the sinner's death and if we be in CHRIST, then we are indeed dead to sin and alive in HIM. He further expands upon this very theme later in his writing to them saying, "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*" (Rom 8:1-2)

Those who believe this truth and dare to unequivocally declare it are often accused of the very thing that many of the Judaizers accused Paul of. They use fancy words such as “antinomian” or “libertine” to describe what they (wrongly) perceive the ultimate end of such preaching to produce and which Paul addresses in the beginning of the sixth chapter of Romans. *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?” (Rom 6:1)* He resoundingly answers the question, not by appealing to the flesh of men to “keep the law”, but rather to show how preposterous it is to think that the law could ever keep men from sin. *“God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Rom 6:2)*

This is the only remedy for the dominion of sin. The grace of GOD does not simply provide a payment for sin, but also a cure for the sinner. He cannot embrace sin, encourage others to sin, or delight himself therein, for he has been set free from the power of sin and death. When the LORD healed the lepers, HE did not simply pronounce them clean, but rather HE removed the disease from them. This is that of which we read in the book of Hebrews, *“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” (Heb 10:19-25)*

The greatest lament for those who have been indwelt by the SPIRIT of GOD is that they find themselves to be weak in the flesh and prone to sin of all types in that flesh. Paul described such woe when he wrote, *“For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Rom 7:22-24)*

Those who are quick to decry “antinomianism” usually assume that they are “keepers of the law”. Yet any man who has ever been awakened to the true nature of the Law (as Paul was, *“For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.” (Rom 7:9)*) and of his own natural depravity is quite convinced of his inability to keep that Law. For the whole purpose of the Law is to reveal sin and condemn the sinner. *“For the wages of sin is death” (Rom 6:23)*. The need of the sons of GOD is not to be brought under the Law but to be delivered from it.

This is why JESUS CHRIST came into the world and brought LIFE through death. Paul begins chapter 7 of Romans with an illustration of the law of marriage, (which is quite apropos in our society which completely disregards it). He points out that when a man “dies” the woman who is married to him is no longer bound to him by reason of his death. Then he uses that illustration to teach the relation of the believer to the law. *“Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” (Rom 7:4)*

The Law remains unchanged but its power to rule over her is negated. She is free from it and is now wed to ANOTHER who has given her LIFE and IMMORTALITY. No longer can any condemnation arise based upon her first marriage, she owes no allegiance to that union, but rather is rather set free to be wed to another.

Those who would press upon the sons of GOD their “duty” to keep the Law which CHRIST has satisfied, are like those who would seek to prevent a woman whose husband is dead from marrying another by bringing up the wedding vows which she made to her now deceased spouse. Those who are alive in CHRIST are one and the same with those whom the LORD has *“written the Law (not the Ten Commandments or principle of sin and death which is part and parcel of that Mosaic charter) upon their hearts”*. This is the Law of SPIRIT of LIFE in CHRIST JESUS.

*“A debtor to mercy alone, Of covenant mercy I sing; Nor fear, with thy righteousness on, My person and offerings to bring. The terrors of law and of God, with me can have nothing to do; My Saviour’s obedience and blood, Hide all my transgressions from view.” (by A. Toplady) mam*