

# 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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## OUR LEADER

*But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you. Mark 16:7*

We are struck with the same amazement that stirred the imagination of the Psalmist (i.e.; David) as the LORD breathed these words into his mind and subsequently to his pen: “O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether. Thou hast beset (i.e.; enclosed) me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee. For thou hast possessed my reins (i.e.; owned my very essence): thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.” (Psa 139:1-13)

Such glory surrounds the LORD's faithful watch care over those whom HE loves with an everlasting love. Yet, nothing is more terrifying to a man who has been made aware of his own sinful flesh, than to discover that the LORD “knows” his every move, his whereabouts, and even his very thoughts. No comfort can be had in such knowledge, apart from the LORD revealing to him HIS purpose to bless him in CHRIST providing a deliverance from his sinful self and way. This is that revelation which HE spoke to Jeremiah, “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.” (Jer 29:11-13)

The salvation of the LORD's elect is not accomplished by some haphazard method which they are able to influence in one way or another, nor does “chance” enter into it in any fashion, for their SALVATION is a matter of purpose which HE has designed and provided for them. The scriptures are quite clear as to the LORD's “knowledge” of those which were chosen in CHRIST from before the foundation of the world. “Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2Tim 2:19) “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:27)

Not only does HE reveal HIS intimate acquaintance with HIS people (i.e.; HIS elect, HIS sheep, HIS Bride, HIS church) but HE clearly sets forth HIS determination to deliver them from all bondage and bring them to a “wealthy place” (see Ps.66:12; i.e.; a place of great Spiritual blessing). This is that condition that Paul speaks about to the Romans, “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 (i.e.; the principle) of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” (Rom 8:1-2)

As we look at the message which the “young man” (i.e.; an angel or messenger from the LORD) spoke to the women, (Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome) who had come to

the tomb, we are reminded of the LORD's promise to never leave nor forsake those whom HE loves. We also see this specific and particular love, pointed out as he (i.e.; the angel) told them not to forget to convey this message to Peter. No doubt, Peter was at this time quite ashamed of himself for having denied knowing the LORD JESUS in the courtyard of the palace, as the LORD was on trial at the hands of wicked men. Peter, of all of the disciples, was the most vehement in his declaration of complete loyalty to the LORD, even when the LORD explained to him what he would do when put to the test. According to the ordained purpose of GOD, Peter's pride was destroyed just as the LORD prophesied, yet true to HIS own determination to deliver Peter, the LORD told him that HE had prayed for him that his faith would not fail. Thus, HE made specific instruction (through the angel) for the women to remind Peter that he was in HIS thoughts.

Later on, as they were by the seashore, HE tenderly restored Peter as HE drew confessions of love out of a reluctant and now humbled Peter. (see John 21:15-19) In this confrontation we see an illustration of John's later instruction to those to whom he wrote his first epistle. *"And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."* (1John 3:19-21) CHRIST's faithfulness to us and not ours to HIM is of the utmost importance and is the basis upon which all of our HOPE is built. *"If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."* (2Tim 2:13)

The LORD taught us through Isaiah, how to determine those who speak truth and those who distort truth. *"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."* (Isa 8:20) And HE gave an even clearer fashion in which we might recognize the worth of a prophet. *"The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the LORD hath truly sent him."* (Jer 28:9)

The LORD JESUS CHRIST is just such a PROPHET. HE came to bring a sword to execute the judgement of the LORD as HE made a difference between HIS people and the people of the world. Yet HE primarily came bringing a message of peace to those whom HE would give ears to hear it. *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* (John 14:26-27)

No doubt, HIS disciples were quite fearful and confused by HIS announcement that HE was going away from them. They had all, basically, put their lives on hold for the last three years and followed HIM wherever HE went. Now HE plainly tells them that HE is leaving. Yet true to HIS status as the PROPHET of the LORD, HE would never forsake them, but would provide them with something which they had not fully experienced up to this point. Each time that fear had overcome them, or doubts had crept in among them, HE was always with them to allay their fears and strengthen them by HIS presence. Yet now, though they did not understand immediately, HIS faithful purpose for them was to strengthen them by HIS SPIRIT who now would dwell with them and in them, teaching them all the things which they would need to know and upholding them in the midst of their trials, the extent of which they could not yet see. HE has proved HIMSELF as that ONE sent from GOD.

The children of GOD cannot escape HIS determined purpose to deliver them from their own destructive path. As David of old wrote, wherever they go HE is already there. HE has designed and predestined all things to come to pass unto their benefit. *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* (Rom 8:28) We could expect nothing less from the HAND of HIM, *"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."* (Col 1:15-17)

One of the most blessed statements of the LORD JESUS as HE told HIS disciples of HIS soon departure and HIS sure return was this, *"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know."* (John 14:1-4) HE is our LEADER in all things, THE WAY, THE TRUTH, and THE LIFE. mam