

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XXI

Issue 44

Published occasionally for mourners in Zion

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

OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

*Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens,
Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.*

Hebrews 4:14

There are many men in this world who clamor for “position” among their fellows. Generally, they do so because they desire to possess power, either to impress others or to exert influence over others in fulfilling their own fantasy and meeting their own needs. Some seek it in the pursuit of wealth either by legal or illegal means. Others do so by some “notorious” act, whether that be famous or infamous. Still others pursue it in the political arena. A few do so with assumed intentions of doing good but most often with greater intention of aiding themselves in the process and raising their esteem among men.

Paul, in writing to Timothy, said “*For the love of money is the root of all evil.*” (1Tim 6:10) Now to be sure, the pursuit of the silver and gold of this world has drowned many in perdition, yet we must understand that the admonition of Paul is not simply about loving monetary treasure but in any type of carnal gain which blinds the eyes of those that seek it, be it gold or power.

The LORD has made the societies of this world to operate in an exact fashion to fulfill HIS predestined purpose, all the while holding accountable all who walk in opposition to HIS law and the principles which HE has demanded that they follow. Men seek to deny this truth, even to the extent of vehemently opposing this idea with cursing. As they do so they demonstrate the wickedness which is in all men by nature as they rebel against the Sovereign GOD who made them. The worship of free will is alive and well. We see the manifestation of this truth in the example of Pharaoh whom the LORD created and animated to demonstrate HIS own power as HE hardened HIS heart even as Pharaoh hardened it himself. Another example, most clearly set forth, is Judas whom the LORD ordained unto destruction through his own actions, even though it was determined before he was ever born. (see Mark 14:21)

In the Law which the LORD gave to Moses, HE ordained a “power structure” and set forth those who would occupy those positions in the Tabernacle worship. HE made it quite clear that these places of authority and power could not be coopted by any but those whom HE had appointed. The cases of Korah, Dathan and Abiram (see Num.16) not to mention Uzzah (see II Sam.6) go to prove it.

The LORD ordained the Levites, alone, as those who would be the attendants of the tabernacle and the overseers of the Ark of the Covenant, with Aaron and his sons being those who would specifically carry out the priestly duties of the offering of sacrifices unto the LORD in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple. No others were qualified to do so. In this work which Aaron (who was the first High Priest under the law) performed we can see a picture of that work which the LORD JESUS CHRIST came into the world to accomplish. While we see all that Aaron did as an illustration of CHRIST’s work, the scripture makes it abundantly clear that the LORD JESUS was not a PRIEST after the Aaronic order, but rather came as ONE after the order of MELCHIZEDEK. “*The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*” (Psa 110:4)

This is a very important point which must not be overlooked or confused. If it is neglected, one will have a faulty view of that Law under whose principles the children of GOD are called to live. Paul speaks of this “principle” (i.e.; law) in Romans, “*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*” (Rom 8:2) He goes on to point out that the Law of Moses could do nothing but condemn those under it, because the flesh is weak.

Yet just as surely as HE ordained the Aaronic priesthood to operate “under the Law”, HE did ordain a PRIEST whose power was not derived in the flesh (or under the Law) but rather in an ENDLESS LIFE. Thus, setting free from condemnation all whom this HIGH PRIEST would minister in the behalf of. *“If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law,) what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron? For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law. For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of which no man gave attendance at the altar. For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood. And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest. Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life.” (Heb 7:11-16)*

Mystery surrounds this MELCHIZEDEK in the Old Testament, as we first see HIM meeting Abraham after his battle with Chedorlaomer. *“And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.” (Gen 14:18)* HIS identity, however, is clearly set forth in the New Testament in the unfolding of CHRIST as the HIGH PRIEST of GOD who brings forth “bread and wine” (i.e.; HIS body and blood) for the benefit of HIS people. There is no other accepted and acceptable HIGH PRIEST over the house of GOD, than HE who lives forever. *“(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;). (1John 1:2)*

CHRIST is a “**faithful**” HIGH PRIEST. *“Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.” (Heb 2:17)* HE is, first and foremost, faithful to HIS FATHER. By HIS own testimony HE said, *“For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” (John 6:38)* HE was ordained and sent by the FATHER to accomplish a particular purpose. Thus, HE was faithful to HIS cause. HE did not shrink back from treading the winepress of GOD’s wrath alone in the behalf of HIS elect. *“But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” (Heb 9:11-12)* In so doing HE demonstrates that HE is faithful to HIS people. He came to “save HIS people from their sins” (Mat. 1:21) and HE does prove HIMSELF faithful to them in that accomplishment.

CHRIST is a “**merciful**” HIGH PRIEST. Well did David repeatedly say, *“HIS mercy endureth forever.”* (see Ps. 136) Those under the Aaronic priesthood perfunctorily performed their tasks as a duty which the Law demanded. CHRIST, however, came with great desire to minister to and for those whom the FATHER had given to HIM. *“my delights were with the sons of men.” (Prov 8:31)* HE came to seek and to save that which was lost. When none deserved HIS mercy, HE poured out HIS mercy on unworthy sinners, offering HIMSELF as a SACRIFICE for them. *“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” (Heb 8:12)*

CHRIST is a **suitable** HIGH PRIEST. *“For such an high priest became us, (i.e.; exactly suited or fitted to our need) who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.” (Heb 7:26-28)* Everything which we are not, HE is, and everything we have stood in need of, HE has supplied. CHRIST is ALL. *“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.) (Heb 10:21-23)*

CHRIST is a **glorious** HIGH PRIEST. *“We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” (Heb 8:1-2)* HE is worthy to be praised, both in HIS OFFICE as HIGH PRIEST and in HIS person as the ETERNAL SON of GOD, without beginning and without end. HE is the ALPHA and the OMEGA. O come let us adore HIM, CHRIST the LORD. mam