

# 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 RESURRECTION

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you.* 1Peter 1:3-4

There are many doctrines that are taught in the Gospel which are quite distinctive compared with Judaism which has its foundation in the Law and the Prophets of the Old Testament. Yet, most all of the teachings found in the Gospel have references in the Old Testament, which are generally quite vague and not clearly spelled out. Thus, we can say that the Old Testament was obscure (by GOD's design) and the full revelation of GOD's TRUTH awaited ONE who would come to make all things plain. We read about HIM in Hebrews, "*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.*" (Heb 1:1-2)

There are but two ages in the Earth; the "former times" (see Isa.42:9; 48:3) and the "latter or last days" (see I John 2:18). The unfolding of TRUTH, was not complete in the "former times" but was hidden even from those who were ordained to speak and write various prophecies. "*Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*" (1Pet 1:10-12)

One of the most important teachings found in the Gospel is that of the "resurrection" of those who are asleep in CHRIST. This is not just a speculative or theoretical doctrine but is a TRUTH which has been demonstrated by the LORD JESUS CHRIST who has not only laid down HIS life unto the death of the cross but has also personally taken back HIS LIFE and risen from the grave in the same body in which HE was placed in the tomb. "*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.*" (1Cor 15:20)

Paul rightly points out the folly of preaching the gospel without the reality of CHRIST's resurrection. "*But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.*" (1Cor 15:13-14) So we can clearly declare that the resurrection of CHRIST is the very bedrock of the gospel which has been preached since the very earliest days following the ascension of the LORD. "*Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.*" (Acts 2:22-24) "*And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.*" (Acts 4:33)

The Greek word for "resurrection" literally means "a standing up again," and appears 42 times in the NT. The concept of "resurrection" was not unknown in the OT but was not clearly understood

since no one had ever seen an example of it, much less witnessed the only MAN who had the power to lay down HIS own life and to take it up again. The Pharisees theoretically believed in a resurrection in contrast to the Sadducees who denied such an idea as being foolish. We are not sure of the exact time period of Job's life and testimony, but we do know that he declared his own belief in the resurrection as well as a LIVING REDEEMER. *"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."* (Job 19:25-27)

The testimony of CHRIST concerning HIS resurrection is in the Psalms along with the hope of the writer who was inspired to pen HIS words. *"O LORD, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave: thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit."* (Psa 30:3) *"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."* (Psa 16:10) *"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me."* (Psa 49:15)

Without CHRIST there is no "resurrection", since HE alone is *"the RESURRECTION and the LIFE"* as HE told Martha (the sister of Lazarus whom HE raised from the dead to the utter amazement of all who were present, see John 11:25). There are many who think that the "resurrection" is a function which must occur due to their belief in man having an "immortal soul". One can search the scripture and find no evidence that such is the case. The only immortality which any man has is that which is bestowed upon him by the grace and power of GOD, on the day of the resurrection. Thus, we can unequivocally say that CHRIST is our resurrection, and apart from being in HIM by the grace of GOD there is no LIFE to be had owing to their birth as a son of Adam. *"Ye must be born again".* *"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* (John 14:6) *"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."* (1Cor 15:53-57)

CHRIST is our RESURRECTION in HOPE. Those who are blessed with the gift of faith in CHRIST are *"begotten"* (i.e.; brought forth) *unto a lively* (or presently living) HOPE. We have confidence that we shall be raised from the dead because we believe that CHRIST is risen from the dead as an EXAMPLE of those whom HE shall raise in the last day. HE is *"the firstfruits* (i.e.; the first to rise from the grave) *of them that slept* (i.e.; who have fallen asleep or are in the grave.)" Apart from HIS resurrection we have no hope but are as Paul said, *"we are of all men most miserable"*. (1 Cor. 15:19) Thus, it is in HIS resurrection that we have the proof of the satisfaction of the Law, the cancellation of the sin for which HE shed HIS blood, and HIS (and consequently our) complete acceptance with the FATHER who ordained HIM as our REDEEMER.

CHRIST is our RESURRECTION as heirs and joint heirs with HIM. All that CHRIST has done has been unto HIS glory in granting the benefits of sonship to those that HE loved from the foundation of the world and who were thus chosen in HIM. (see Rom.8:28) In HIS resurrection HE has given HIS elect *"an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled"*. There is no shadow of turning with HIM, what HE has said HE will do. HE is our TREASURE in heaven, *"where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."* (Mat 6:20-21) This TREASURE *"fadeth not away but is reserved in Heaven."*

CHRIST is our RESURRECTION as our SUBSTITUTE. HE came into the world as a MAN without sin, even though just a babe. We are made without sin by HIM as our SUBSTITUTE. HE obeyed the Law in its jot and tittle. We are judged by the Law as those who have kept its every precept as HE is our SUBSTITUTE. HE has borne the just penalty of our sin by laying down HIS own life for us. We have no condemnation because HE is our SUBSTITUTE. HE has tasted death for us, suffering at the hands of many tormentors. In HIS death we have been given LIFE since HE is our SUBSTITUTE. HE has triumphed over death in HIS resurrection, taking back the very life that HE laid down. Gone forever is the sting of death, the power of sin, and the terror of the yawning grave, for HE is our SUBSTITUTE who has risen from the grave for us. Blessed be HIS NAME. mam