

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XVIII

Issue 1

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*

THE BLIND SEE

Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. Luke 7:22

John the Immerser, (i.e.; the Baptist) occupies a singular place in history as the last of the Old Testament prophets. The LORD testified of this when HE said, "*For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.*" (Luke 7:28) (see Heb.1:1,2) John was given the distinct privilege to not only prophesy of the coming of CHRIST but to see HIM in flesh and blood, as HE came to John, to be baptized, fulfilling all righteousness, as the law required both the PRIEST and the SACRIFICE to be thoroughly washed in water. (see Mat.3:15; Ex.30:17-21; Lev.1:9,13)

All of GOD's children see the things of the Kingdom of GOD "*through a glass darkly*", yet those who have been privileged to see the crucified and risen SAVIOR, far surpass the understanding of those who have died without this complete revelation of HIS redemptive work. "*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)

John was steeped in the religion of his father and rejoiced in the advent of the MESSIAH, who he expected would deliver his people from the oppression of the Romans, just like the hope of his ancestors, in the ages before him, envisioned the same deliverance from their numerous tormentors. Imagine his confusion when he found himself in prison, even as this ONE, whom HE had recognized as the "*Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*" (John 1:29), was presently upon the scene. Thus, we see him sending his disciples to clarify such things in his mind. "*Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?*" (Mat 11:2-3)

When Pilate asked the LORD if HE was a KING, HE did not deny it, but HIS reply was given in such a manner as to correct the notion of what kind of KING HE is. "*Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.*" (John 18:37) In like fashion HE told Nicodemus the answer to his question even before Nicodemus could ask it, "*Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" (John 3:3) So in this same manner, CHRIST, gave John a most clear answer to his question, but it was framed in such a way as to define the nature of HIS kingdom and the fashion in which HE is pleased to manifest HIS dominion, deliverance, and redemption of the nation HE came to save.

The LORD's response to John was a most clear and glorious statement, that swept away the carnal notions which religious men have of the establishment of HIS kingdom in the earth. It was in many ways a statement of Isaiah's prophecy, *"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law. Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house."* (Isa 42:1-7)

Many in the present day are unable to comprehend the extent and completion of the reign of CHRIST, because they are convinced that HE is not yet seated upon the throne of HIS glory. They yet await various signs, seasons, and carnal events which they believe accompany that reign. All the while HE does most gloriously reign in triumph, having fulfilled the jot and tittle of the law in HIS people's behalf, securing their redemption with HIS blood shed at Calvary and is now sat down at the RIGHT HAND of HIS FATHER in glory and splendor. HE has sent HIS SPIRIT into the world to manifest the glory of that kingdom which is not one of flesh and blood, but rather in power and glory, giving gifts unto men.

John testified of this but could not fully grasp how it would occur, since he clung to his preconceived notions of what was entailed in the deliverance which CHRIST came to secure. *"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."* (Mat 3:11-12) This "fire" of which he speaks is an apt description of the work of HIM who has triumphed over death and does administer eternal LIFE to those whom the FATHER has given HIM. HE will lose none.

The Kingdom of CHRIST is one which can be observed only by the eye of faith. All men could see the miracles which CHRIST performed and could hear the words which HE spoke as HE taught the multitudes. Yet none could see the glory of those miracles nor be enabled to actually "hear" the TRUTH which HE spoke. *"He that hath an ear, let him hear."* Thus, the Kingdom of CHRIST is hidden in plain sight even as the LORD told the Pharisees. (see Luke 17:20,21)

One feature of the unfolding of this Kingdom was the carnal fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy wherein the LORD administered healing to the blind, the deaf, the mute, the leper, and even the raising up of the dead. Yet these things only served as examples of that greater healing which HE is pleased to manifest to those to whom HE is sent. HE does truly cause the "leper", whose sin has covered him from head to foot, to rejoice in HIS cleansing power. He who is "deaf" is caused to hear the WORD of TRUTH spoken by the mouth of HIM who is the embodiment of truth. HE does raise the dead to LIFE as Paul said, *"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved.)"* (Eph 2:5) The lame do indeed walk as HE is pleased to *"work in them both to will and to do of HIS good pleasure."*

A most glorious aspect of HIS triumph and establishment of HIS Kingdom, is seen as the *"poor have the gospel preached unto them"*. As HE said, *"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* (Mat 5:3) HE does indeed lift up the needy from the dung hill as HE sends the gospel of the glory of the blessed GOD to *"bring life and immortality to light"*, revealing unto them HIS purpose to give unto HIS children the Kingdom. (see Luke 12:32). Thus, HE makes paupers to be wealthy men and beggars to sit in royal state. For as HE is pleased to cause the blind to see and the deaf to hear, they can and do rejoice in the triumphs of their KING whose dominion is from and to everlasting. May HE be praised forever. Do you see? mam