

# 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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## THE BEGINNING

*But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: II Thessalonians 2:13*

It is quite fitting that the first words, we read in the Holy Scriptures, should be; *"In the beginning"* (Gen. 1:1). The LORD, who is the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our FAITH, spoke these words to HIS servant Moses, who recorded them for the ages to come. HE is the "BEGINNING" as HE revealed HIMSELF to John. *"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."* (Rev 1:8) *"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."* (Rev 22:13) These declarations should serve to shut the mouths of any who would seek to gainsay against HIM or question HIS doing. But alas, the natural rebellion of man is stirred up to a fever pitch when this TRUTH is pointed out in detail and all the ramifications of such a revelation are set forth.

In his desire to exalt his own free will, man will offer explanations which are designed to rob GOD of the glory which is rightfully HIS in being the FIRST CAUSE of all causes and events. In something as "mundane" as the natural creation of the world and its inhabitants, men have sought out "science falsely so called" (see I Tim.6:20) to offer up alternative explanations for their existence. Professing themselves to be wise they have become fools. *"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."* (Rom 1:19-21)

If in such natural things men by nature walk in darkness, why should we be surprised that they should embrace even greater darkness when it comes to those things which are spiritual. *"For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"* (Luke 23:31) *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* (1Cor 2:14) This is exactly what the LORD was teaching Nicodemus when HE startled him by saying, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* (John 3:3) In such a state of darkened nature he is content with the platitudes of religion and a rote obedience to the Law of GOD.

The LORD went on to describe to Nicodemus who the AUTHOR of this "new birth" is and how it occurs. *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water (i.e.; natural birth) and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."* (John 3:5-8) In like fashion as a man comes forth from his mother's womb through "natural" means outside of his free will, so too is that man who is "born again" made a new creature by the power of the SPIRIT of GOD without the activity of his free

will, his choice, or his obedience to any precept. John says of them, *“Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”* (John 1:13) The result of this “new birth” is that those so born, believe on the NAME of the ETERNAL SON of GOD as they hear IT. This “new creation” is the work of HIM who is the “BEGINNING”. The LIFE of this “creation” is HIS LIFE and not their own. *“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”* (1John 5:11-12)

If we are given to truly understand HE who is from the “beginning” and is the “BEGINNING” then we cannot help but rejoice in those things which HE tells us HE has done from the “beginning”. GOD “alone” is ETERNAL and the possessor of ETERNAL LIFE. *“Which in his times he shall shew, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen.”* (1Tim 6:15-16) *“Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.”* (1Tim 1:17)

**The LORD knows HIS works from the beginning.** *“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”* (Acts 15:18) How foolish it is for men to depict GOD as defining anything which HE purposed to do because “HE knew” it would occur. Rather HE knows “HIS works”, (we might say HIS purpose) and it is HIS works that brings about the activities of men in order to fulfill that purpose. *“Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.”* (Isa 46:11) *“A man’s heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.”* (Prov 16:9) Men are culpable or accountable for their actions but every step they take is directed by the LORD. *“The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.”* (Prov 16:1)

**The LORD knows them that are HIS from the beginning.** *“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) The very basis and purpose of HIS election of a people in CHRIST, unto salvation, is revealed in this verse. Even as Paul declared *“HE hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation, through sanctification (i.e. the setting apart or making a differentiation) of the SPIRIT and belief of the truth.”* The purpose of the LORD in choosing a people is that HE might manifest the glory of HIS grace in their redemption and deliverance from the ruin of their sin by the work of HIS SPIRIT, causing them to believe upon the ONLY BEGOTTEN SON of GOD, who purchased their redemption with HIS blood. *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”* (Eph 2:10) *“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”* (Eph 1:4-7)

**The LORD knows the WAY that they shall take.** Salvation is not by chance but is accomplished by HIM whose purpose it is to save those that HE loves. *“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”* (John 10:27-28) *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”* (John 6:37) *“And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.”* (Isa 42:16)

**The LORD delights in blessing HIS children through JESUS CHRIST.** *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”* (Eph 1:3-6) Have you known HIM who is the BEGINNING?

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