

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XX

Issue 24

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

THE GREAT TRANSLATION

Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

Colossians 1:13

Man's love of self-designed religion and the folly of the worship of his own free will was clearly demonstrated on a plain in the Land of Shinar. This was, no doubt, a lovely setting and one which was surely appealing to his flesh. There was an abundance of material which those present could use to accomplish their ends. *"And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar."* (Gen 11:3) They were all of *"one language and of one speech"*. All of mankind has the same aspiration by nature which is to *"make us a name."* (see v.4) Thus, they designed a monument, whose top, would *"reach to heaven."*

Over the centuries, even unto the present day, men have endeavored to make religious monuments of one type or another which would perpetuate their own designs, practices, and various understandings which they consider sacrosanct. We live in an age when religions of all types abound. While we can observe them all from afar, we recognize that each one, regardless of what it is called, has as its main foundation the activity of men as they would recommend or demand (as the case may be) adherence to various codes of ethics and practices which they believe will cause them to be found in a better position to receive the blessings of god (or karma as some might call it). All religions designed by men rely upon the free will of men to put them in this position, and thereby to either gain or lose standing with whatever deity they might choose to follow.

The LORD showed HIS utter disdain for this trait of mankind by confusing the language of men at the tower of Babel. *"But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision."* (Psa 59:8) This simple act by a Sovereign GOD demonstrated the abject weakness of men to act according to their own will in approaching HIM. They could not even so much as communicate with one another, let alone HIM who inhabits eternity. *"Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in: That bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity."* (Isa 40:21-23)

There is but one "true FAITH" in the Earth as Paul informed us by the inspiration of that SPIRIT which was sent into the world by the LORD JESUS CHRIST. *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."* (Eph 4:4-8) Man has had no part in its design, its institution, nor its perpetuation. This is all done according to the will of HIM who is the *"author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."* (Heb 12:2) This FAITH of which we speak

cannot be aided or hindered by anything which men may undertake, even as the LORD HIMSELF declared, "*I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" (Mat 16:18)

When the LORD confounded the language of those busy workers on the plain of Shinar, they were confused and unable to accomplish what they set out to do. In this "confounding" we see, illustrated for us, the inability of men to inherit the Kingdom of GOD by their own devices. They could not communicate with one another, much less HIM who alone grants understanding of the language of Heaven. When men of various languages and dialects come together they cannot understand one another unless a translator is present. The grand miracle which took place on the Day of Pentecost was not the "babbling" of men in languages that they did not understand, but rather that the LORD caused each man to "hear" in his own language. The same ONE who confounds the language of men is HE who causes men to hear the glorious TRUTH of the Gospel of HIS glory. "*And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*" (Acts 13:48)

The LORD told Nicodemus that a man must be "born again" in order to see the Kingdom of GOD. Apart from this "new birth" it is impossible for a man to have any comprehension of those things which are truly spiritual in nature. "*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 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 2:12-14)

In Colossians 1:13, Paul gives thanks unto the LORD who he says has "*translated us into the kingdom of HIS dear SON.*" The Greek word which is used here, literally means "removed from one place to another." Even as he describes having been "*delivered from the power of darkness*". This is the same concept of "translating" one language into another. Those men on the day of Pentecost had such a "translation" given unto them. Even as did those Gentiles in Antioch, who believed. We see such a "translation" vividly illustrated on the road to Damascus as the LORD met Saul of Tarsus and in the twinkling of an eye moved him from the power of darkness to the Kingdom of LIGHT and LIFE. Who can forget that "translation" which occurred on Calvary's mount when one of the thieves, who along with his cohort, mocked the LORD, suddenly was given such a "translation", that caused him to recognize the glory which surrounded CHRIST. He who could not hear the language of the Kingdom, now suddenly, by no effort of his own rejoiced in that which heretofore was foolishness.

This "translation" is both sudden and yet ongoing. There is an awakening, in the life of a believer, which occurs in a moment (though not always perceptible to the one awakened). This is that which is described by the apostle Paul, "*For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*" (2Cor 4:6). There is a moment in time when it becomes clear to the one who has been given the gift of faith that CHRIST is indeed the ONE sent by GOD and he must confess with Peter, "*Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.*" (John 6:68-69) This is the dawn of a new day and at the same time the very basis upon which the sons of GOD stand in the twilight of their last day.

There is also a continual "translation" that takes place on a more gradual basis. Due to the innate corruption which all believers are yet plagued by

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