

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

ELECT, PRAYING, AND PROVEN

And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Luke 18:7, 8

The LORD made it clear that HE had chosen Israel as a favored and beloved nation in the Earth, not for any obedience which they had rendered unto HIM. Neither was it because they were a dominant force in the Earth or were a people set apart by faith in HIM. *“For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.” (Deu 7:6-8)*

HIS choice of them was based upon two things, HIS love for them in particular, and HIS determination to manifest HIS faithfulness to HIS promise. The LORD does all things for HIS own glory and is well worthy of all praise as HE declares, *“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. I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images. Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.” (Isa 42:6-9)*

There are few things that anger the natural, religious man more than a declaration of the absolute sovereignty of GOD and HIS predestination of all events, times, and activities in the Heavens and the Earth. This is most especially true when the subject of HIS unconditional election of a people in CHRIST from before the foundation of the World is set forth in unequivocal terms. Paul recognized this when he penned these words to the Romans, *“(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) ----, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. ---- Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?” (Rom 9:11-20)*

HIS choice of Israel (an Earthly nation) as an object of HIS mercy was not an end in itself but rather a foreshadowing in the Earth of that people which HE chose in CHRIST from before the foundation of the world whom HE would manifest in time to come. HIS dealings with this carnal nation in the sight of men serves as an illustration of that “true Israel”, which are not the descendants of Jacob (after the flesh), but rather a people of every kindred, tribe, and tongue, which were hidden in CHRIST from the beginning and chosen unto salvation because of HIS great love for them. *“For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac*

shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." (Rom 9:6-8) "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal 3:29)

The LORD's election of a people in CHRIST is in itself a most glorious subject. But "election", while it may be unto "salvation", is not in itself "salvation" (i.e.; deliverance). Our glorying is not simply in the decree of GOD to choose a people which HE created in CHRIST, but in HIS demonstration of HIS love, power, and grace in their redemption. That redemption is carried out by CHRIST through the shedding of HIS blood as an atonement for their sins. HE, being their KINSMAN, is qualified to redeem them by paying a debt which they could not pay even before they knew themselves to be bankrupt.

Since HE, alone, had no sin of HIS own (born of a virgin and without any inclination to sin, tempted in all points, yet without sin) HE alone could stand in their place as their SUBSTITUTE, imputing their sin unto HIMSELF, and HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS unto them. Dying as an unblemished SACRIFICE for their sin, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. "*For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*" (Lev 17:11)

As offended as religious men may be with GOD's unconditional election of a people in CHRIST from before the foundation of the world; that offence pales in comparison to their offence when the cross of CHRIST is set forth as the complete SALVATION of HIS people, which in no wise depends upon the participation by men nor any activity of their "free will". "*Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."* (1Pet 2:7-9)

Thus, we see that HE not only has chosen a people in CHRIST from the beginning, designed and carried out their redemption by the blood of the PERFECT SACRIFICE, but HE has called them out of darkness and into the LIGHT. This is the present work of the SPIRIT of GOD who goes about as that "*WIND which blows where it listeth*" (i.e.; where HE determines) (John 3:8). We cannot tell from where it comes nor determine where it goes, but we hear the "sound" thereof and we can see the results of where this WIND has blown.

These results are seen as those whom HE is pleased to call become those who "*cry day and night unto HIM.*" "*And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*" (Gal 4:6) "*Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*" (Rom 8:15) Natural men will "pray" in order to get something from GOD. They will often make requests for aid for themselves and even for others. Yet the true prayer of the saints of GOD has as its primary motivation, the fact that they love the ONE to whom they pray, desiring that HIS will be done in the Earth as it is in the Heavens. "*And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*" (Rom 5:5) They can say with David of old, "*For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand (elsewhere). I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.*" (Psa 84:10) While they may express many desires to their FATHER, their chief desire is to be delivered from the sin which doth so easily beset them, causing them pain because such sin is an affront to the ONE whom they love. (see Ps.51:4)

The answer of the LORD to HIS children is not always "speedy" according to their timeline but it is always right on time according to HIS. HE never neglects them nor does HE ever send trials to them haphazardly or for any other purpose but to benefit them, causing them to cry unto HIM the louder. "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*" (Rom 8:28) We see this "proving" illustrated in the life of Abraham (on Mt. Moriah), Job with his miserable comforters and ultimately in the WHIRLWIND, and Paul with his "*thorn in the flesh*" sent to remind him where his STRENGTH in weakness was. Daily the LORD is FAITHFUL to HIS own. HE will never leave nor forsake them but will bring them to a "wealthy place" after patience has had its perfect work. "*My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*" (James 1:2-3) "*And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.*" (2 Thes 3:5)