

Grace and Glory

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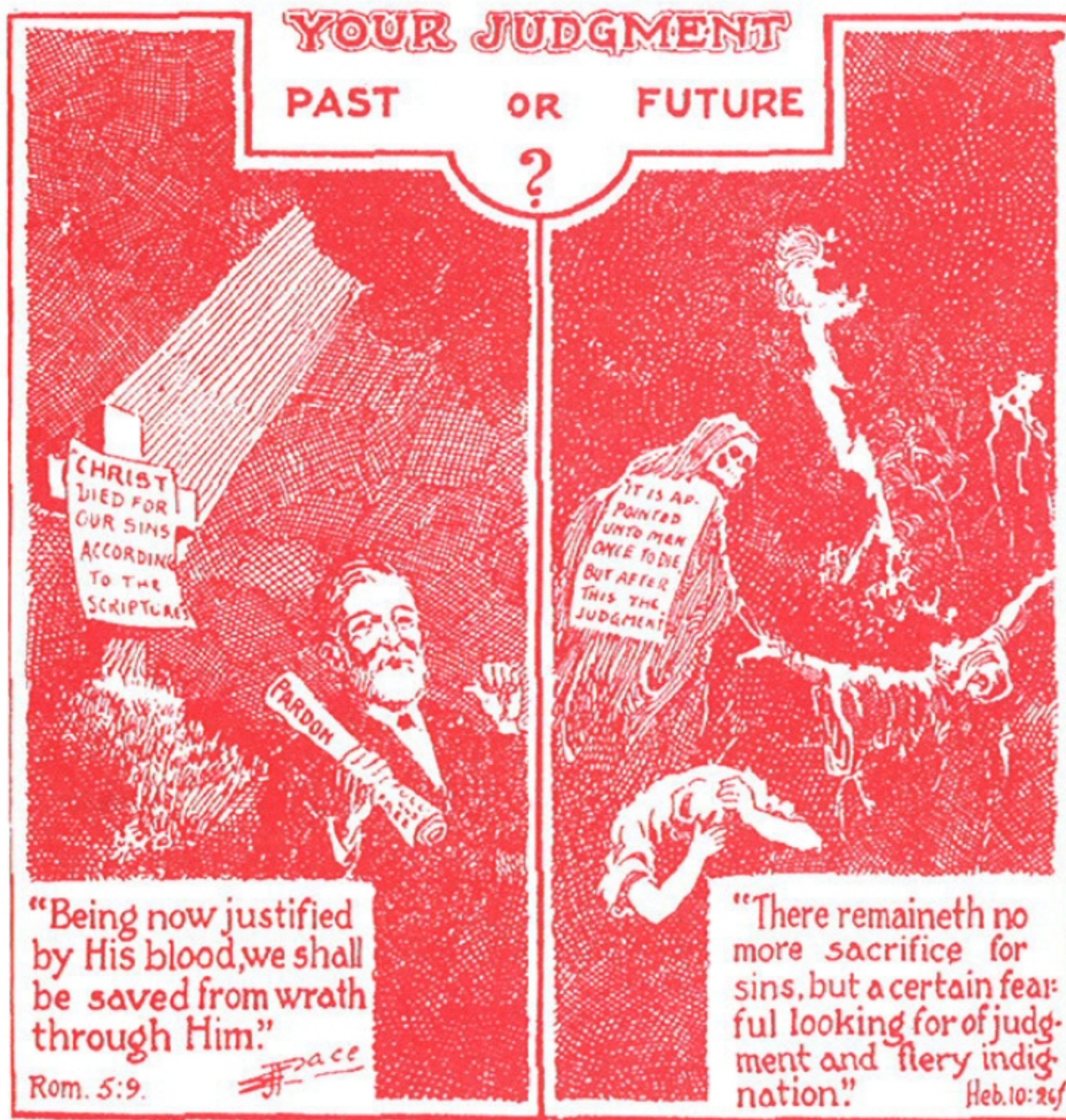


Hope thou in
God:
for I shall yet
praise him, who
is the health of
my countenance,
and my God.

PSALM 42:11

Table of Contents

<u>Article</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Page</u>
Definite Sign Post of the End	Gene Hawkins	3
The Cross, the Foundation of life	Ray Quintana.	10
Agree with God.	Paul Smith.	16
From bondage to liberty.	R.E. Hawk Jr.	20
Grace & Glory.	T.B. Lennon	24
Isaiah (book section).	Gene Hawkins.	28



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Editor: Gene Hawkins



“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,” Matt. 24:37-38

“The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.... and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” Gen. 6:11-13

“Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Jude 1:7

“For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly,... And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; (unmentionable deeds – J.B. Phillips) Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder,.... Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.” Rom. 1:26-32

Paul's words here in Romans are written in the past tense and we can only wonder if he may have had the days of Noah, along with the wickedness of Sodom and Gomorrah, in mind when he penned them. Scripture is very plain that the days of wickedness, violence, and moral depravity portrayed by the above citations are being repeated in our day, and we are also assured that the subsequent judgment of which Jude spoke will also be poured out in the very near future even as it was in the days of Lot

and Noah.

Despite the fact that we know there is “nothing new under the sun,” a report forwarded to us from one of our readers in Australia is appalling. The headline, reflecting material from such news sources as The Australian, Australia Christian Lobby, and kidsrights.org.au reads: **“KIDS HAVE BEEN BRAINWASHED AT 526 SCHOOLS IN AUSTRALIA TO TRY THE GAY & TRANSGENDER LIFESTYLE AND TO CROSS DRESS.”** The article continues explaining how a booklet given to students in “the SAFE SCHOOLS PROGRAM... tells kids how to do homosexual sex when ready with no minimum age. Plus boys are told ‘you have two virginities; one for the first time with a girl and one for the first time with a boy.’”

It gets worse. The Deputy Director of the Australian Research Centre for Sex health and Society at La Trobe University, Professor Gary Dowsett, who publicly supports pedophilia, wrote an article entitled “Boiled Lollies and Band-aids” in which he said: “How different then is that gentle, tentative sexuality between parent and child from the love of a paedophile and his/her lover?.... that kind of love, warmth, support and nurture is an important part of the paedophilic relationship.”

4 We posed the question some time ago in these pages, that since men are simply expressing their “sexual preference” in gay relationships, what would be the difference in them and a pedophile? Apparently, we have our answer. The reprobate mind of which Paul spoke is surely manifest by the ungodly comments of Prof. Dowsett. We also take issue with the idea that all such abominable relationships justify their actions under a cloak of love. Which of the 16 characteristics of that glorious term defined in I Cor. 13 is manifest in this ungodly perversion? The overall attitude of real love, Divine Love, is that she “suffereth long... and **seeketh not her own.**” That is a far cry from the selfish and despicable debauchery of those exploiting children, all in the name of love! The writer of this piece also bemoans the fact that “Aids also is on the increase among youth.”

This article also points out the very young age at which these children are being indoctrinated. “Tots in early sex Ed...Toddlers will be taught about sex and cross dressing in a controversial national program being rolled out at child-care centres and kindergartens. Kids are encouraged to use the opposite sex toilets. Parents then wonder why their boys want to be girls and visa versa.”

Such comments remind us of the ongoing battle in this

country over transgender people demanding to use opposite sex bathrooms. Law suits and demonstrations have erupted over it. Eagnews issued a report in Oct. 2015, declaring that the Obama administration had filed a lawsuit in Gloucester, Va., demanding that schools nationwide "... let boys in the girls bathrooms in transgender fight.... that they must allow students to use whatever restroom fits their 'gender identity,' regardless of their biological gender." Several news sources have reported that North Carolina recently challenged that decree by passing their own law which would "... force public colleges and universities (as well as other public venues and government buildings) to require their restrooms be used only by people whose biological sex at birth matches the sign on the door." We can hardly imagine such a fight as this, but it is simply another indication of the tremendous depths to which men have fallen in their ungodly and vain imaginations. Scripture is very clear "... that in the last days... men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers,... unholy, Without natural affection,... false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;..." II Tim. 3:1-4 Pleasure is the key word of our day and it makes absolutely no difference whose "rights" men have to infringe on, or whom they must accuse to get their own way, and pursue their agenda. This brings us to the final portion of the Australian dilemma. "Of concern is that the person who set up the Safe Schools Coalition Australia, Roz Ward, claims that the program is part of a strategy to radically change society. She claims that 'the homosexual cannot win liberation without a general sexual liberation.' This is to eventually include sex with animals, sex between fathers and daughters and brother and sister, polygamy sex etc. No bares held.... Will bestiality be forced onto little school children also in time to come....don't laugh. If one's sexual orientation is passed for marriage then it will be discrimination to stop any other sexual orientation... after all don't they say it's all about love???? And people love their pets????"

5

It is not hard to grasp the fear and frustration of this woman, for we know that God already warned against all these things many, many years ago, as God included bestiality and same sex relationships in the same portion of scripture labeling them both abomination. "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination. Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman

stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it is confusion. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.” Lev. 18:22-25 Jude very clearly tells us that the judgment of God has already been manifested, as those committing “...fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” That same vengeance is also guaranteed against those who persist in such despicable ungodliness today. God is not mocked!

6 We have been criticized from time to time for addressing such subjects as abortion, same sex marriage, gay rights, and pedophilia in these Sign Posts, because *they are political issues*. We have tried to very quickly point out that the politicians themselves have hauled these moral issues into the political arena. Politicians will do anything for power, and when they find something that they think will give them an advantage in gaining predominant public support, they will most emphatically use it without reservation. Daniel very pointedly tells us that God “... changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings:...” Dan. 2:20-21 Men in democratic type governments do not seem to understand that, but it is God who puts men in power. We also read that “... the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the **basest of men.**” Dan. 4:17 A great many of these “basest” among men have ruled repeatedly throughout the ages, and God has used them to complete His purposes. It has been true during this entire period of Gentile Times and it will culminate with the selection of the antichrist, that basest man of sin, who will complete his 1260 day tenure of wickedness before being cast into the lake of fire. Furthermore, God very often gives people the ruler of their choice which, in many cases, is a reflection of their own ungodly attitudes of corruption and rebellion against Him. Israel desperately wanted a king, but He was not “the man after God’s own heart,” whom God would eventually bring forth. Rather the king who was head and shoulders above everyone else, the king whom God warned, would “... take your sons, and appoint them for himself, ... some shall run before his chariots. ... and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, ... And he will take your daughters

to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers... And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants..... he will take the tenth of your seed,... your vineyards, and give to his servants..... he will take your menservants,... maidservants,... your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which **ye shall have chosen you**; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.” I Sam. 8:11-18 That local man was Saul, and everything God foretold of him came to pass. The lesson is the same for our day. Men often choose those who will contribute to their own hurt, but they choose them because such would-be leaders reflect their own values. Such candidates of leadership are often chosen because the general population has rejected God, even as The Lord consoled Samuel. “And the LORD said unto Samuel, Harken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.” I Sam. 8:7

This is happening in America right before our eyes. Non-Politician and real estate mogul Donald Trump has made an astounding political splash, completely confusing all the political experts and prognosticators. The success of his brash, bombastic and undiplomatic tactics, have literally shocked the entire political establishment. He has openly admitted that his campaign tapped into the intense anger sweeping across the land, even suggesting that if he is not chosen as the Republican Candidate for President, there will be rioting in the streets, again reflecting the anger which has driven his political bus. Scripture is very clear that when anyone makes a decision out of anger or fear, it is quite likely the wrong one, but once again, Mr. Trump has hit the pulse of the people.

Other candidates have completely sold out to those constituents demanding gay rights, women’s rights to abortion, and to some who demand great riches and government hand-outs, for doing absolutely nothing. Those who lust for power will adopt any issue they deem appropriate to put them in the political driver’s seat which they so desire. All these politicians simply reflect what the nation as a whole stands for, and in this current election process, that is anger, and rebellion against

the Judeo-Christian precepts espoused by our forefathers, along with rejection of God Himself! Very soon we will see the king "...which **ye shall have chosen you;**" as God will indeed very often give people exactly what they want, even though it is many times to their own hurt.

We full well know that there are very godly people around the world who do not subscribe to the tremendous examples of evil and ungodliness described in the above report from Australia. Numerous reports from that land show that many are outraged by these things, but as in most countries around the world, the majority will eventually rule. The good news for us is that the majority has never ruled the hearts of those who are committed to the deep precepts of God. We may also be greatly encouraged to know that even in times of extreme spiritual declension, such as that which prevails throughout the entire world today, God has always had a remnant.

8 Our hearts go out to the Christian oriented citizens of Australia who have been straightly informed that "if same sex marriage is approved in August of this year, the curriculum of the 'Safe Schools Program' described above will be compulsory, despite the fact that 14,000 parents signed a petition to close this program down."

Paul described this as a day of "perilous times." The term means "to lower (as into a void):--let down, strike." It also carries the "... idea of reducing the strength; difficult. i.e. dangerous, or (by implication) furious:--fierce, perilous." Thus it is easily applied to the Australian dilemma. God's Word is very clear that impossible situations such as this will increase as the tribulation period draws nigh. Ungodly leaders will ascend to thrones of authority around the world. Though many in the Christian community continue to try and persuade the masses to claim the promise of II Chron. 7:14, the time for that has long since fled. That promise declares that, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." God has kept His Word in this regard down through the ages, and it will yet again be fulfilled when Israel, as a nation, cries out to Him during the tribulation. But the times in which we currently live are extraordinarily different. Perilous times, are now the order of our day. Paul also warns: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for

that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;" II Thess. 2:3 Many may think that this verse simply means that things must get worse before they can get better, but that is not the teaching here. Paul rather speaks here of the Day of The Lord, when Jesus shall officially set up His Kingdom. Situations such as the conditions which prevail in Australia will become more widespread than they are today, along with much more unrestrained wickedness and violence around the world. Paul informs us here that such a "falling away," will continue and escalate until it finally climaxes, not with "revival" but with the revelation of the antichrist, who will officially be unveiled about 250 days before the middle of the tribulation week. There is no amount of prayer, faith, fasting, or supplication that will stop the events leading up to the revelation of this man of sin. There will be no "healing" of any land around the world before that time.

We are, however, not at a complete loss. We can, and must, fall on our faces before God, but our plea is not for the restoration, or "return to greatness" of our nation or any other, but rather that God will protect His Own during this most devastating and dangerous time. Jude exhorts: "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen." V. 23-25 We shall indeed pray for those in Australia that God would literally pull them out of this most devastating firestorm, protect them from the powers that be, and give them wisdom as to how to conduct themselves should this devilish decree become the law of the land. But the urgent prayer which must be on the lips of every believer who would be a part of the aforementioned remnant, and whose desire is to reign with Christ, must be in absolute agreement with the apostle John. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20 Our pre-eminent hope and desire, must be for a speedy exit out of this world!

The Cross, The Foundation of Faith!

Ray Quintana

“But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.” John 19:15-16

It seems, in many ways, that we simply do not have the capacity to thoroughly understand the vast significance of the Cross of Christ. Jesus was slain from before the foundation of the world. This is quite a statement, meaning that before God created this planet or the universe, or before He formed man out of the dust of the earth, we were in His mind.

God’s power and the ability, by which He can bring to pass whatsoever pleases Him, according to wherever His Infinite Wisdom may direct, will produce the infinite purity of His Will. Without Power His mercy would be but feeble pity, and His promises an empty sound. God’s power is like unto Himself; Self-Existent, Self-Sustained. Paul declared by the power of the Holy Spirit, “Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord,...**” Eph. 6:10. We too must follow the same pattern set by Jesus and be strong in the Lord by believing God, but how is this to be done? This same apostle asserted in Heb 12:1 “.... let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,...” which sin is unbelief. Furthermore, “... let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” How can we run such a race? It is by allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth; to build up our faith by studying His Word. We are exhorted to “be strong in the Lord,...” and thus understand that we have no strength in ourselves. To be strong in the Lord means to hide away in Him, to trust Him completely, to rest on His Word solely, and count on His Presence and sufficiency. We must remain strong in the faith. Paul proclaimed this gem in II Cor. 12:10 “Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, ... for when I am weak, then am I strong.” It seems with some that this sentence has just become a Christian proverb, or cliché, but it is a warning and a comfort. It bids the strong to behold the weakness of power, and it sets before the feeble the strength which will emerge from weakness. Some brethren are weak and always remain weak. Many others are weak, and yet not strong: We can only be strong when our consecration and

dedication rests in God alone. Unless we live wholly for God, we will be shut up to our own resources and brute strength will not make it. Then, we must never become weak in our communion with God. Such fellowship is the right arm of our strength, and if this be broken, we are weak. Without God, we can do nothing, and in proportion as we attempt to live without Him, we ruin ourselves. There is a kind of weakness which I hope none of us will ever cultivate. It is called the weakness of faith; for when I am weak in faith, then I am **not** strong in the Lord. Weakness in faith is the indication of spiritual decay. If we remain weak in faith, the Love of God will not grow.

The love of God is among the greatest of all the powers which we can possess. While faith is the gift of God, it could also be deemed somewhat of our own act! "And... though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." I Cor. 13:2 The Holy Spirit works faith in us, but we ourselves must believe. We have a choice. Then comes the second part of Eph 6:10 "... **in the power of His might.**" Ephesians 3 singles out love as being identified with the power of His might. "That he would grant you,... to be **strengthened with might** by his Spirit in the inner man;... That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and **grounded in love,**" V. 16-17 God knew that man, His crowning prize of creation which was even greater than the angels, would fall and reject His Son. But He loved us regardless, and the power of His might is reflected in the love of God seen through His redemption!

We are surrounded by the love of God. It was by God becoming man! He laid aside every trace of deity, while never losing possession of deity! He never ceased to be God! He did not use His power as God while He walked this earth. Jesus was rather absolutely dependent upon His Father for everything just as we must be. Isaiah describes Him as One Who would "...grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root cut of a dry ground, he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him." Isa. 53:2 He was also "... despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." Isa. 53:3

When we see Him soon, He will still be The Man with the nail scars in His hands, side, and feet, but He is God. He will be

King of Kings, Chiefest among 10,000, The Bright and Morning Star. Jesus came to bind up the brokenhearted, and set us free. It was the power of His might, the love that passes understanding which motivated Him. How could any of us fully comprehend it?

Jesus said to His disciples in Lk. 9:23 "... If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." What does such a statement mean? He didn't explain it, but in Luke 14:27 He did set forth the consequence for noncompliance. "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." The disciples surely did not know the fullness of what He was talking about. The cross is the most repulsive form of torture. "Take up," means to voluntarily assume, or actively adopt "His cross" which is scorned by the world, hated by the flesh, but is the distinguishing mark of a real Christian. Follow Me, indicates that one must live as Christ lived to the glory of God. Is a Christian one who holds membership in a Church; or one who believes an orthodox creed; or one who adopts a certain mode of conduct? No! A Christian is one who has received Christ, renounced self and is willing to "...walk ... in Him." Col. 2:6 He is one who takes Christ's yoke upon him and learns of Him, Who is meek and lowly in heart. Matt. 11:29 He is one who has been called unto the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. I Cor. 1:9 This is the disciple who fellowships in His obedience and suffering now, and his reward will be glory in the endless future. These things must describe our walk in this present evil world.

To deny self is to completely repudiate one's own goodness and cease to rest upon any works of self. It is acceptance of God's verdict that "all our righteousnesses (our best performances) are as filthy rags." Isa. 64:6 We must forsake our own stubborn will, human wisdom, and fleshly lusts. Take up his cross daily refers to the cross not as an object of faith, but as an experience in the soul. As Paul states, "be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness." Phil. 3:9 The benefits of Calvary are received through believing that our guilt of sin was removed from our consciousness. But the experimental benefits of Christ's Cross are only enjoyed as we are, in a practical way, "... made conformable unto his death." Phil. 3:10 It is only as we apply the cross to our daily lives, and set our conduct by its principles, that it becomes effective over the power of indwelling sin. There can be no

resurrection where there is no death, and there can be no practical walking “in newness of life” until we “... bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus...” II Cor. 4:10 The “cross” is the evidence of Christian discipleship. It is his “cross” and not his creed, which distinguishes a true follower of Christ from religious worldlings.

According to history, when the disciples went into various cities, they saw people hanging on crosses. What went through their minds as they heard Jesus’ words, “... take up your cross...” ringing in their ears and saw men hanging on crosses when they went from town to town? This same history records that it would sometimes take those victims of crucifixion weeks to die. That was why Pilot was shocked when the Centurion reported that Jesus was already dead after only six hours.

They beat my Lord until His back was cut to pieces! And they put a robe around His shoulders in mockery. They grabbed His beard and pulled it from His face. They put Him on the cross at the time of the morning sacrifice. That was perfect because He was the fulfillment of the millions of animal sacrifices that had been offered up in times past. They all looked forward to this One Sacrifice of the Lamb of God. Then at 12 noon the earth turned black for three hours and the earth shook. The chief priest laughed at Him and reviled Him. We’re not talking about the criminals and the murderers, or the prostitutes of that day, but rather the religious leaders of Israel that committed these crimes against Jesus, an innocent man.

13

They said, Jesus, if you have the power, come down from that cross. But it was the power of His might that kept Him on that cross. It was the love that passes understanding. We can’t understand this love. Our sin hung Him on the cross and it was His love that kept Him there. Yes Jesus could have called 12 legions of angels, but without the cross there would have been no resurrection life for us to enjoy. This is the love that passes understanding! The world hates Christ and the Cross. The world has no problem with Jesus the Healer; or the Miracle Worker; or the Good Man, but Jesus the Sacrifice on a cross says “I love you so much that I gave my life for you.” The world cannot comprehend that. But to those of us who pursue Him, He gives us power to become the sons of God!

Elijah and Ahab were caught in a drought with no rain in

I Kings 18. "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, how long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." V. 21 Elijah then instructed the prophets of Baal to "...call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God." V24 Ahab and all the prophets of Baal went into a frenzy calling on Baal from morning till evening, but there was no answer. V. 26-29 When all this demonstration was finished about the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah, "... built an altar in the name of the LORD: and he made a **trench** about the altar.... And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. He told them to do it two more times. And the water ran round about the altar; and he **filled the trench also with water.**" V.

14 32-35 Why did Elijah dig a trench all around the sacrifice and fill it with water? Everything outside of that trench is of man and it is wicked and evil. Even Elijah was outside of that trench. Yes Elijah knew God alright, but he was just as dependent on that altar as anyone, despite the fact that he was a prophet and was both anointed of God and used of God. We are just as dependent on that altar as the most despicable criminal in the world. The trench said 'everything outside is outside the altar and everything inside is mine says the Lord.' This is God's order that we be inside the trench. It really means separation, but then it means separation from those who don't totally depend upon the cross from those who do. The water signifies the word of God, which is perfect. If anyone tries to separate the Word from the cross, God will not honor it. Those 12 barrels of water were poured over the sacrifice until it soaked everything. The Word of God is joined to the altar; the sacrifice and the altar become one with the Word of God. The Word is based on the sacrifice of the altar; and the altar functions as the Word is applied to it. The water of the Word was poured over the sacrifice! The cross is the foundation of our faith.

Hebrews 11 records many examples of faith. V. 4 Abel speaks loudly to us of the beginning of faith, even at the cross. Both Cain and Abel were taught by their parents that only a blood sacrifice was acceptable to God. But in defiance, Cain brought the

work of his hands and it was not accepted by the Lord and Cain killed his brother Abel. V. 5 tells us of Enoch who represents the end of faith. "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him"... Verse six of this same chapter fills the gap between the beginning and ending of faith, for there is a complete lifetime of experience between the beginning of our faith (represented by Abel) and the ending of it (represented by Enoch). "**But without faith it is impossible to please him:** for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." It is a lifetime of experience believing God more and more which pleases Him. It is through the Gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation. When we believe the message of the cross, we are delivered, but there are many deliverances which we will need throughout our lives and all are by grace through faith. Faith is the channel through which grace flows, and may be likened unto the conduit through which grace flows to the hearts of thirsty men. As we believe the Gospel, it is translated into faith in our lives. The Gospel is the full equipment needed to develop a full mature faith that will take us to the end like unto that of Enoch.

The blood of Christ was shed to purchase our souls, from death and hell. It is a wonder of compassion which surely fills the angels with amazement and it ought to overwhelm us with adoring love. He was bearing the suffering, not, as some say, on the cross alone, **but up to the cross.** It was the pressure of human sin. The cross is the standard of victorious grace. It is the lighthouse with rays gleaming across the dark waters of despair and it cheers the dense midnight of our fallen race. For us at the beginning is grace and at the end it will be grace, but in the middle is the cross. Jesus Christ died upon the cross, but He now lives in our hearts. He has taken possession of my soul and now we only live in Him, by Him and for Him! Yes the foundation of faith, is the cross where they hung my lovely Lord! **But the power of his might was Love! It is Love that passes understanding.** So look to Christ, and "seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." It was by the cross that His love passes understanding and it is the foundation of our faith!

Agree With God

Paul N. Smith

“And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land....and the Lord said unto him, this is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor, but no man knoweth of his sepulcher unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.”

16 If anyone had the right to become bitter, it would have been Moses. Imagine all the hardships he had faced--eighty years in all--putting up with the constant murmuring and badgering of the children of Israel. He was doing everything he could to bring them into the Land of Promise. He shared God's anger a number of times because of their rebellion and unbelief. Now here he was, on the threshold of Canaan, in perfect health, well able to lead Israel over Jordan, where they, as well as he, could enjoy the benefits of God's blessings, and perhaps, forget some of the rigors of the wilderness life.

But no, God said, “You're not going over into the land, Moses, but I'll show it to you.” Can you imagine God saying to us, “I'll show you what heaven is like, but you won't be able to go there”! Would we censure Moses if he had hung his head between his knees and wept? God had told him earlier (32:48-52) why he could not lead the people over. One, he smote the rock the second time, when God said only, “Speak to the rock.” The rock in both cases represented Christ, the first time it was all right to smite the rock, because Christ had to be smitten for us. The second time was not necessary, because Jesus only had to die once, and all we need do is look to the Cross and live.

But another very important reason he could not go in, is that Moses was identified with the Law, and the Law, no matter how strong and vigorous, could not lead the people over into their Promised Possessions. But, this is not our topic primarily.

Did Moses lose anything by not leading the people over into victory? No way! He was given a private burial where only God and the angels were in attendance, and then God hid him. Why? Because He had other plans for Moses. By reading Jude 9, we find that Michael was sent down to claim the body of Moses, to be resurrected. Satan objected because he knew that Jesus was purported to be the first fruit of the resurrection.

We read nothing about Moses' body in the Old Testament, and hundreds of years went by until suddenly a wonderfully strange event took place. In Matthew 16:27-28, Jesus spoke of His coming Kingdom and of His glorification. Then in chapter 17, Jesus took Peter, James and John to the top of a mountain and was transfigured before them. Then to their amazement, Moses and Elijah appeared there with Him and conversed with Him concerning His imminent death in Jerusalem. We are not told when Moses was resurrected, but here he appears in his eternal glorified body, along with Elijah and Jesus. Not bad! How long he remained in his secret grave we don't know, but I believe it wasn't very long. No, he did not get to go over into Canaan, but he did arrive in heaven much sooner than his contemporaries. He was saved the rigors of Canaan fighting and more of the treatment he had in the desert.

17

Tragedy happens to us at times, but let us remember that God always has something much better planned for us. If we go by way of the grave, before the Rapture, we'll just miss a lot of suffering and fighting. Whatever God says, we will be agreeable, just like Moses!

* The mature believer is one who has realized his weakness, ceased to strive for strength, and rests in Christ for every need.

* When down in the mouth, remember Jonah --- he came out alright.

REFLECTIONS REFLECTIONS

... From the Editor

“For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” Gal. 4:25-26

18 The only way to enter the kingdom of God is by grace through faith. Thus “mother grace” is the mother of us all. However, as Paul instructs in this portion, there are many Christians who literally try to adopt “another mother.” We are quickly told in these verses that Sarah and Hagar represent two cities and two covenants. Hagar portrays the law and Jerusalem “... which now is...” both of which engender bondage. Sarah expresses the glorious freedom demonstrated by the Abrahamic covenant of grace, depicted by Jerusalem from above.

These Galatians had been duped into thinking that righteousness came by the law and had thus literally robbed themselves of the tremendous benefits offered to them by their birth mother. We would note two glorious benefits, the first of which is portrayed directly by Sarah. “Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.” Gal. 4:30 Mother grace is absolutely adamant that only her sons and daughters receive the choicest of inheritance. Sarah was unbending, intolerant, and relentless in her demand that only Isaac be the sole heir of all the promises couched in God’s covenant to Abraham. Contrariwise, Hagar could only “wander” in the wilderness of Beersheba, the well of the oath representing God’s glorious benefits. She could never deliver an inheritance and could only weep bitterly because she was powerless to deliver her son from death. Gen. 21:16

The second benefit dispensed by this choice mother is that of a teacher. There are some very prominent children in Scripture who have learned valuable lessons from their mothers. Isaac

surely learned the value of a protective mother by the conduct of Sarah. Samuel, Solomon, and Abishag the Shulamite, all received invaluable teachings which only a mother can relate in regard to life, godliness, and relationships.

Mother grace is also a most powerful and loving teacher. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;" Tit 2:11-12 She teaches not only what we must NOT allow in our lives, but also instructs how we SHOULD conduct ourselves, even "... in this present world," which in reality is a very violent, corrupt, and ungodly environment. Mother grace insists that we need not succumb to its bondage, and her final lesson for us all is that we must live such victorious lives over sin and ungodliness, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" Tit. 2:13 This will be the glorious realization of the full inheritance which Sarah sought for Isaac and all the children of Mother Grace.

GH 19

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

*Living Waters Tabernacle Youth Camp July 24-28, 2016*

Highlands Camp and Retreat Center in Allenspark, Colo.

Bible studies for all ages in the mornings, supervised recreation each afternoon, and Church services every evening.

For lodging and registration please contact Pastor Jesse O'Dorisio at 303.907.8099, email at [jfo2000@gmail.com](mailto:jfo2000@gmail.com) or Polly O'Dorisio at 303.594.0933, email [pollyodorisio@gmail.com](mailto:pollyodorisio@gmail.com).

Forms and additional information will be available at [www.livingwaterstabernacle.com](http://www.livingwaterstabernacle.com).

# FROM BONDAGE TO LIBERTY

R. E. Hawk, Jr.

*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:32;36.*

**20** The extent of the bondage suffered by the human race is a terrible thing to behold. It is only after we have been freed from this bondage that we can begin to see the depths from which we have been brought. In verse 34 of the above chapter, Jesus said, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." This servitude is one from which we could never have freed ourselves. It is only through Jesus' perfect obedience and sacrifice that we enjoy freedom from the penalty of sin. The way we understand how deeply we were in bondage to sin is by coming into more and more of the benefits of being "free indeed." The grace of God was manifest in setting us free because grace can only be shown to those who do not deserve it and who cannot help themselves. That is surely a description of us, and what a praise comes from our hearts as we learn it. However, not only is it the purpose and will of God to free us from the penalty of sin, but He also desires to free us from its power in our daily lives. Paul gives us the secret of this liberty in Romans 6:11. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." We are free indeed because we are dead indeed, unto sin. It is sadly true that while all believers are free from sin as far as condemnation from God is concerned, many are not free from the power of "sin in our members," and our victory in this important matter is in agreeing with God that "Our old man was crucified with Christ that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin"—Vs. 6. Bondage to sin is a terrible thing, but there is no excuse for anyone not to take the victory which comes from agreement with God's Worth. The victory is not won by our own efforts, but by our steadfastly reckoning with what Jesus did for us at Calvary.

Then there is another kind of bondage from which very few believers are completely free. That is bondage under law. Satan

uses this form of bondage to great advantage in the great majority of religious circles today. Even those who know that we are saved by grace and not by works seem to have great difficulty in going on from that point "continuing in the grace of God." It is very important for us to realize that all God does is completely upon the basis of grace. He never has and never will save, bless or help anyone upon any other basis. Any worthiness which we have or think we have falls far short of God's requirement. Our only worthiness is in our identification with The Lord Jesus Christ. We are only "accepted in the Beloved." The term "law" does not mean only the ten commandments of Moses, but can apply equally to any set of rules, regulations, by-laws, etc. by which we may feel we should be governed. These things only put limits upon us and prevent the full leading of the Holy Spirit. It is not that there is anything morally wrong taught in these rules and laws, but more that their scope is too limited. There are only two possibilities where law is concerned. Either a person seems to keep the law, and becomes self-righteous, or else he is unable to keep it and gives up. But when we are led of the Spirit, anything accomplished in our lives only glorifies the Lord and boasting is excluded, except that we boast of the grace of God. Many think that we teach freedom from the Law in order that we may "live like the devil," but this is completely false. There would be no liberty in that. Our liberty is not freedom to sin, but from sin. Those who are under the bondage of sin can do nothing but sin: They are free from righteousness. But we, "being made free from sin,..." have our fruit unto righteousness. God did not free us from the law and all laws in order that we could be free to sin, but rather that we might be free to do His will, something we could never do when we were in bondage. 21

Law and law-keeping places limits upon our experiences, and would only conform us to the "letter" of a group of words. Grace has no limits except the will of God, and conforms us to the Lord Jesus Himself.

Adherence to a group of rules can produce nothing but a crowd of robots each the same as the other, mechanically going about the performing of those things contained in their laws. Grace works in each of us individually, causing us altogether to be a fit

habitation for God in which each member functions, not by a set of regulations, but by the leading of the Holy Spirit. We will not all be exactly alike in heaven. God's grace is too manifold for that. As we yield to the work of the Spirit, He does a work of grace in us which will display the glory of God throughout eternity. Eternal glory will be the result of grace working now. If the work done in us were the same in every individual, then God's grace would not be fully displayed, but God's grace will be displayed in a many-hued spectrum of GLORY. A real revelation of this wonderful truth causes us to cease judging others, as we realize that it is not the Holy Spirit's purpose to make all of us exactly alike. The work He is doing in my brother or sister is not the same as the work He is doing in me because they are going to display a little different phase of the manifold grace and love of God. Oft times we are tempted to compromise some phase of truth, and make it conform to our experiences, but when we begin to realize this truth of our liberty, we then let the Spirit conform our experiences to the Word. And we cease to attempt to regulate our lives by external

22 things when we realize that we "are His workmanship." No longer do we worry whether the people like the way we act, dress and talk. Not that we try to offend others, but as we first let the Spirit take control, He will work a love that "looks not on our own things, but on the things of others." People who are under law assume that those who refuse to be under law do so only to be able to sin. They do not realize what power the Holy Spirit has in our lives. When we realize our liberty, we do not want to displease Him in any way who has freed us from all things. "The love of Christ constrains (arrests) us," where law brings forth rebellion. If God's love and grace do not make people want to serve Him, then nothing else can possibly work.

Finally, let us look at yet another kind of bondage. "For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. Because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God"—Rom. 8:19-21. When Adam sinned, he plunged not only all his descendants, but all creation into the "bondage of corruption." It is here promised that eventually all the things which

hinder tranquillity in the natural creation will be done away. However this will not come until the "manifestation of the sons of God." And even we as sons are at present under this "bondage of corruption" to a great extent. Much as we enjoy the blessings of God, much as we feel the bliss, peace, rest, and all the other joys of His salvation, we are yet in a "body of humiliation," which will have to be changed before we can "know as we are known." So Paul says in verse 23, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit (the earnest), even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption (son-placing) to wit, the redemption of our body." Yes, in glory even the restraints of this limited body will be gone, and we will be able to enjoy Him as never before, praise Him as never before, and enter into the understanding of His purposes as never before. But let us realize that right now there are glorious liberties to be taken, wonderful experiences to have, ever new ways in which to learn Him.

(Reprint 1961)

### *They Stand Firmly*

23

There's nothing quite so grand in trees  
As the oak that grew alone,  
Unsheltered from the stormy breeze  
That laid the forest prone.  
The tempest swept around its boughs  
And tore and beat and tugged,  
Unable to uproot it now;  
For far beneath the sod,  
Its roots are fast in rocky clefts.  
It lifts its head to God.

There's nothing quite so grand in men  
As he who's one with God,  
And lets Him lead him even when  
He wields the chast'ning rod.  
Safe from the tempest's subtle wile,  
In God's whole armor clad,  
All Satan's darts are out of style,  
Tho' he be ere so mad.  
He's hidden in the cloven Rock.  
His heart is light and glad.

Hattie Thayer Moore

# GRACE & GLORY

*T.B. Lennon*

*“For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Psa. 84:11*

Grace is the manifestation of God when He veils His brightness in the person of Jesus Christ. Glory is the manifestation of God when He shines as the Sun of Righteousness through Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords. The Lord our God is a shield. As such, He gives grace. The Lord our God is a sun, and as such, He gives glory. Neither in grace, nor in glory, will He withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly.

24 It is most significant that the incarnate Son of God is spoken of as the "effulgence of God's glory and the very image of His substance." Heb. 1:3 H.V He is the shining forth of His Father's glory, Hallelujah! We can see the sun only through the medium of the light which it sheds upon us, and we can see God only in that revelation of Himself which He has made in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, who is the Light of life, the Light of the world. As the sunlight is the sun, so also is the incarnate Lord as truly God in substance, in nature and in glory. The sun is the source of all life as well as all light. The fragrance which lades the air, the colors which delight the eye, the flavors which regale the senses, the water and food which sustain the body, are all brought forth by the same sunbeams.

The sun never sets really; but it is carrying on all the time. The thousand trades by which man gains a livelihood, are made possible by his shining. To God be the glory; for He is its Creator. The Lord is The Bright and Morning Star, a Rock in a weary land, The Water of life, The Bread of life, The Light of life, The Resurrection and The Life, The Corn of Wheat, The True Vine, The Righteous Branch, The True Servant and The Lamb of God who beareth away the sin of the world. He is also The Son of David, The Son of Man and The Son of God, The Great I AM, which is, which was, which is to come, The Almighty: The Wonder of wonders, Marvel of marvels, He is mine. Is He yours?

It is He who gives the sun the power to grow and ripen



the grain for the millions of the earth; and the mechanical power by means of steam and vapor, to lift the water-floods to the sky, and so feed the rivers and shower the plains and turn the wheels. He is The Great Architect, Who builds the rocks and grows the trees which the sculptor, mason; joiner, cabinet-maker and carpenter only hew and polish. He is The Great Artist, who paints the sunset and colors the landscape, Who tints, the flowers with a beauty which the best and highest human skill can only imperfectly copy. Having thus sketched the office of the sun as the fountain of life and light, let us turn and consider Him who is "The True Light which lightens every man that comes into the world." His is exactly this twofold office of life-giving and light-giving. The two functions are simply interchangeable. We are told that Christ is "the Light of life," and again, that "the Life was the light of men."

It is impossible for man to live without the light of God's Holy Word, or the light of His Son. Is it not one of the most fatal errors of unbelief that it separates what God has joined together, and presumes to feed man's moral and spiritual nature without the true light? Of course there are dead virtues just as there are dead works. Men call light darkness, and darkness light. There are exhibitions of truth and justice and honor, which are simply the old coins of righteousness still passing current, after God's image and superscription have been worn off from them, so that they who trade in them, know not whence they are. And as there are dead virtues, so there is a dead light which they send forth. Here is the best illustration of it, which I have read: Decayed wood in the forest emits a strange glow at night. There is light, indeed; but it is utterly cold; it is the light of death.

Not a ray could be gotten from it to illumine the path of the bewildered traveler, nor a spark to kindle a fire; all is death. And, alas! this is all that many have, who, while denying God, still boast that they are walking in the light. They delight in the phrase, "The First Church." We find it even among the later organizations. No matter how dead they have become, they are perfectly satisfied if only they can boast of being the FIRST CHURCH, meaning first in the city, town, or hamlet. Alas, when Grace and Glory are departed, what is left? Even though they be the first, "ICHABOD" may be written over the door.

**"God is light."** He leads men in paths of righteousness,

not simply by lighting up the way for them, but most of all by strengthening them to walk in that way, through building them up in their most holy faith, and strengthening them, giving power and inward holiness. He gives food to the soul before He gives guidance. "Light is sown for the righteous;" and not until we have received it through the operation of the Holy Spirit, will we be able to walk in the light of it. This is the divine order. Mere external light is only a mockery without the internal life enabling us to follow its teachings.

*(Reprint 1936)*

## Whom God Chooses

When God wants to drill a man,  
And thrill a man, And skill a man;  
When God wants to mold a man  
To play the noblest part;  
When He yearns with all His heart  
To create so great and bold a man  
That all the world shall be amazed,  
Watch His methods; watch His ways.  
He ruthlessly perfects

Whom He royally elects!  
He hammers him and hurts him,  
And with mighty blows converts him  
Into trial shapes of clay  
Which only God understands,  
While his tortured heart is crying  
And he lifts beseeching hands!

He bends, but never breaks,  
When his good He undertakes.  
He uses whom He chooses  
And with every purpose fuses, him;  
But every act induces him  
To try His splendor out—  
God knows what He's about!

—Selected

# GRACE & PEACE

**W**e live in the sixth dispensation, The Church age. Paul defines it as the "... **dispensation of the grace of God...**" Eph. 3:2 He begins his epistles and ends them with this message. He taught it to others, and gave orders that it be taught. "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, **who shall be able to teach others also.**" II Tim. 2:1-2. "Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Eph. 1:2 "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." Eph. 6:23-24

We hear people talk and sing of the grace of God, but few have any real knowledge of it, and the manifold blessings available to us by such grace.

Peace is the most sought after thing in the world, the nations desire peace, individuals desire peace, but it is only available by the grace of God. Nations would buy peace but they cannot. They make treaties only to break them. Individuals cannot buy it. It is not found in fame, nor can it be earned. It is not available under the law, for the law keeper has no peace, but only fear of failure under its dominion. The rich have no peace because they worry constantly about the security of their riches. The poor have no peace for they worry about their lack of money. The famous have none for they fear the loss of their fame. The powerful do not have peace because they fear the loss of their power.

Only when you learn to rest in the grace of God, and love Jesus in sincerity, loving and looking for His soon appearing, does the peace of God, which comes only by the grace of God, begin to flood your very being. "And the peace of God; which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:7 When the rest of the world is sorely troubled, we look for the appearing of Jesus as our bridegroom.

"Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." II Cor. 1:2 What a wonderful blessing to have and to rest in the most desired thing on this earth, **GRACE AND PEACE.**

Author Unknown

# ISAIAH 42

*Gene Hawkins*

28 This chapter of Isaiah forms a beautiful correlation with the Gospel of Luke, which portrays Christ as The Man. Jesus announced His earthly ministry, as a Man, when He went into the synagogue at Nazareth immediately following His temptation, in the wilderness. “And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor:...to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,...” Luke 4:17-19 This text is actually taken from Isaiah 61, but the same glorious truth of it, describing Jesus’ ministry among men, is also found in verses 1-7 of our present chapter. He is called “my servant,” in verse 1, upon Whom “I have put my spirit,...” Note also that He “shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” Luke 4 describes the furor in Nazareth when Jesus announced that His ministry also included those despised Gentiles. While they “...wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth,...” they also despised His lowly state in life, with the query, “...Is not this Joseph's son?” This would be a reference to His lowly role as a carpenter’s Son. Lk. 4:22 Their “wrath,” was displayed when He gave three striking examples, from the O.T., demonstrating the fact that God had favored the Gentiles above The Jews, during some of the most troubling and trying times of crisis. The implication was that The Jews were steeped in unbelief at the time. Luke is simply proclaiming that Jesus, came as a Man among men, and that His ministry did most emphatically include the Gentiles, as noted here in Isaiah.

Luke is the only Gospel writer to record the details of Jesus’ lowly birth in the manger. He alone chronicles His various ages and stages of growth, as The Divine Human, Who grew from an infant, to the time when He would enter His earthly ministry. Only Dr. Luke traces His lineage from the Second Man Adam back to the first man Adam.

So also, Isaiah 42 describes Jesus’ role as a Man, Who came to minister to the entire world. “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.” V. 1

The Humanity of Jesus is emphasized by His earthly service, and, as seen in Luke, such service does reach even to the “judgment to the Gentiles.” “My servant,…” Jesus, is the subject here, and the prophet makes it quite clear that God will “uphold,” or maintain Him. He was literally anointed with “my spirit,” as The Holy Ghost descended upon Him in the form of a dove, on the banks of the River Jordan, just prior to His temptation in the wilderness. After that, He would launch His aforementioned earthly ministry at Nazareth. Isaiah continues this discourse concerning Him, asserting that “He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.” V. 2 This seems to indicate that He would not cry out for an assemblage “in the street,” in His Own behalf. He had rather come in total obedience to the Will of His Father. His Own demeanor is next described for “A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.” V. 3 He did indeed “bring forth judgment unto truth,” but Jesus’ first advent set forth a very meek, and humble Man, Who had no intention of pouring out destructive judgment upon mankind. He did not come to break the “bruised reed,” or to inflict more damage and pain upon those who were already hurting. Contrariwise, both Isaiah and Luke declare plainly that He came to “set at liberty them that are bruised.” Note further that He would not quench the “smoking flax,” but would rather fan, even the faintest fire of life and light, into an open flame.

29

Jesus made it very clear to His disciples that He had not come in a spirit of judgment, even when men openly rejected Him. Listen to Luke’s account in Ch. 9, after He was summarily rejected by the Samaritans. “And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but **to save them**. And they went to another village.” V. 54-56

Our text, here in Isaiah, defining the perspective of judgment, continues as Isaiah proclaims that “He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.” V. 4 This is the purpose for which Jesus came in the flesh, for “...the Word was made flesh, and dwelt

among us,..." John 1:14 He further declared: "...I am the way the truth and the life..." John 14:6 This God-Man did come to establish "judgment in the earth:..." The word means a "verdict or decree," and The Master demonstrated God's decree in Living Color. He showed by His Life exactly what God requires of all men, and He set such an example by living under the same conditions, and in the same environment, as any other man in this world. He demonstrated plainly the glorious power of God's Word, and thus established such a law, even for the "isles" or Gentiles.

30 God's Power and Authority, demonstrated by Creation, is next announced, and this too, centers on Christ Himself. "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;" V. 5-6 John plainly declares that "All things were made by him; (The Word) and without him was not any thing made that was made." John 1:3 "He (Christ) was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." John 1:10 Paul is also very emphatic, announcing that God gave Creation as a distinct witness of His Own Existence, and thus it is no mystery that men are trying desperately to eliminate the idea of Creation. If they get rid of Creation, they think God too will also disappear. Isaiah points out here that Christ is not only the Center of Creation, He has also been given as "a covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles." V. 6 God has ordained a number of covenants with "the people," that is, Israel, throughout the ages, and every one of them were, and are, guaranteed only in Christ. However, He has also come forth as a Light to the Gentiles, for they too are included in these great blessings, even as Jesus declared in Luke 4. That ministry, for all men, is "To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." V. 7 The truth of this verse is almost verbatim to that outlined in Luke 4:18, wherein it is proclaimed that "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives,

and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." That is a glorious provision for all men, including the Gentiles.

Isaiah continues this list of things that may be attributed to Christ, declaring that "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Though Luke most assuredly presents Christ as The Man, He is also emphatically declared to be Jehovah, and is thus capable of accomplishing all the aforementioned phenomena and miracles.

The "LORD," Jehovah, is His Name and He will not share His glory and praise with the graven images of idolatry. He further distinguishes Himself from these "gods," by reiterating the same test of falsity which He had ordained in Isaiah 41:23. "Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them." V. 9 Only God, Jehovah, knows the end from the beginning. Though these ungodly false prophets cannot "...Shew the things that are to come hereafter,..." (Ch. 41:23) God most assuredly can, and indeed He has, testifying of that which will transpire, hundreds, or even thousands, of years in advance. It is for this reason that He must be set apart, as The Only One, Who is worthy of man's highest praise. Thus all men are exhorted to "Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein; the isles, and the inhabitants thereof." V. 10 Revelation 5:9 also proclaims a "new song," which is sung "from the end of the earth," or Israel, but also includes "...the sea, and all this is therein;" along with "the isles," all seemingly references to the Gentiles. John recorded the song as being sung by those who have been redeemed "...to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;..." Rev. 5:9

Isaiah continues this paean of praise with the invitation to "Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit: let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the LORD, and declare his praise in the islands." V. 11-12 It seems that all, including both Jew and Gentile, are to sing this glorious **song of redemption**, for as the four living ones and twenty four elders proclaim, "... thou wast slain, and

hast redeemed us to God by thy blood..." Isaiah further exhorts "the inhabitants of the rock," Christ Jesus, to sing, and those inhabitants include both Jew and Gentile even as is described in Luke.

32 Mark proclaims Jesus as the Perfect Servant, while Luke portrays Him as The Man, but His praise must also include the fact that "The LORD shall go forth as a mighty man, he shall stir up jealousy like a man of war: he shall cry, yea, roar; he shall prevail against his enemies." V. 13 This LORD is most assuredly The Man, but He is also The Warrior, and His cry, or even "roar," will be one of complete triumph, against all who would dare resist Him in the great tribulation. When Jesus takes His throne in heaven, as seen in Rev. 4-5, all nations on earth will immediately be ruling in usurpation, and will not be willing to relinquish their power. He will thus take the kingdom by force, for as noted here, "I have long time holden my peace; I have been still, and refrained myself: now will I cry like a travailing woman; I will destroy and devour at once. I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools." V. 14-16 He surely has been most patient during this entire Church Age, but that will change dramatically and judgment will be swift. The mountains and hills, indicating large kingdoms and small, will be completely laid waste and none shall prevail against Him. However, His eternal pattern of showing mercy in the midst of judgment is highlighted in these words. "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." V. 16

These gracious words are simply a promise to the needy, and even in these horrendous days, when the wrath of God will be so severe against rebellion and unbelief, the opportunity to accept Him will still exist. He will still be able to "make the crooked things straight" for the promise "...whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved," will still be valid in that day. Acts 2:21 Isaiah further asserts; "These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

It is clearly evident that the blessings of this chapter do include the Gentiles, but the final verses of this text contain a reprimand, and prophecy, directed specifically toward Israel,



which has a radical history of idolatry. Blessing is coming to them, as outlined above, but “They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to the molten images, Ye are our gods.” V. 17 They shall indeed be “turned back,” for this people must come to an end of their own idolatrous ways. They will also be “greatly ashamed,” so much so that they will finally bow their knee before The Messiah. These who turned a deaf ear to Him at the beginning of this age, are now exhorted to “Hear, ye deaf; and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD'S servant?” V. 18-19 All these characteristics clearly describe God’s Chosen People. He did intend for them to be “my servant,” and “my messenger,” but they went forth in their own perfection, steeped in their own ways rather than those of Christ. God further accuses them of “Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.” V. 20 They had the opportunity to have known the full spectrum of His promises and purposes for them, but they simply ignored them, choosing rather to walk after their own hypocritical ways. However, “The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.” V. 21 This is simply an emphatic declaration that God’s righteousness is still intact. Despite their unbelief, He will still magnify His law, for that law is bound up in Christ. Israel will one day learn, even as we do today, that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled only in Christ. They too will, in that day, see clearly that “...Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Rom. 10:4 However, at this present time, “...this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses: they are for a prey, and none delivereth; for a spoil, and none saith, Restore. Who among you will give ear to this? who will hearken and hear for the time to come?” V. 22-23 The words seem to be rather hopeless, and they are a literal reflection of present day conditions in Israel. They are “robbed and spoiled” spiritually, but they are also being literally robbed and spoiled of their land as they are “imprisoned by the nations,” being pressured to give up such land in an effort to “buy” peace. Such a tactic will never work, for God never did intend for them to relinquish that valuable real estate which He freely gave to Abraham. Thus the following

question is both asked and answered in the closing verses of this chapter. "Who gave Jacob for a spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the LORD, he against whom we have sinned? for they would not walk in his ways, neither were they obedient unto his law. Therefore he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle: and it hath set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet he laid it not to heart." V. 24-25 It is God Who has brought them to this state, because of their rebellion and unbelief. The "fury of his anger," of which Isaiah speaks is a reference to the great tribulation, and these words will be fulfilled in their entirety during the 1260 day reign of antichrist known as the time of "Jacob's trouble." It will be the most devastating period the world has ever known, so much so that Jesus said; "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." Matt. 24:22 The "elect" is specifically Israel, and God must bring all this "wrath" upon them just to get their attention. Scripture is very clear that they will eventually bow to Him, and when they do, God will finally be able to fulfill the glorious promise of restoration stated previously in this chapter.

34 "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

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Saints resemble three types of vessels, sailing along on this sea of life towards heaven. Some may be called "row-boat" Christians; those who depend on their own efforts to get them to their destination. The oars or paddles they use are ineffective against high and strong waves. Others are like sail boats, which depend upon the tide and wind to push them along. These kinds of saints are tossed to and fro and never get to any certain destination. Then there are those Christians who could be called "steam boat Christians." These have the power inside, propelling them to their destination. These rely upon the Holy Spirit to take them over the waves. Which kind are you?

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