

GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XXII

Issue 16

Published occasionally for mourners in Zion

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OUR BEAUTY

In that day shall the LORD of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people. Isaiah 28:5

In the book of Genesis we read about the deception of Eve by the Serpent. He began his deception of her by introducing the question in her mind as to the sovereign right of GOD to set the rules of order for HIS own creation. *“And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”* (Gen 3:1) His purpose was to cause her to begin to doubt the absolute sovereignty of GOD and to encourage her to cast off HIS immutable decree in order to exercise her free will. Ever since that fateful day men have arisen in rebellion against HIM as Paul ably describes this phenomenon in his epistle to the Romans; *“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? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?”* (Rom 9:20-21)

Once this seed of doubt was sown in her mind, she then reasoned within herself that she had the right to eat of any tree, doubting the wisdom and goodness of GOD in setting forth this prohibition. Her first actual act of rebellion (even though she was deceived; see I Tim.2:14) was initiated as she “looked upon” the forbidden fruit and entertained the deception whispered in her ear. *“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”* (Gen 3:6)

The likelihood is (as I surmise) that Adam had already “looked upon” the beauty of this tree at some point and perhaps even entertained some desire to partake of it in rebellion against HIS CREATOR and according to his nature when the opportunity presented itself, willingly ate of that which Eve gave him. He was not deceived.

Someone has wisely said that “beauty is in the eyes of the beholder.” Some see beauty in one thing and some in another. Some find the taste of Lemon Pie to be quite delightful while others find it unpleasant. So, it is quite difficult in the natural realm to define true “beauty”. And yet all are able to see and understand beauty when it is placed before them. Who cannot see a sunset or a fog shrouded valley in the mountains on a cool summer afternoon at dusk and not appreciate its natural beauty. Men are naturally drawn to those things they consider beautiful. The LORD designed the woman’s body to be attractive to a man (and vice versa) but at the same time HE set an order in which that beauty is to be observed.

King David was a normal man who entered into a great transgression because of beauty which he observed. *“And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.”* (2Sam 11:2) David’s sin was not in recognizing the beauty of this woman, but rather in disregarding GOD’s order and dwelling upon that which he had no right to behold. One thing led to another, and the weakness of human flesh is revealed in the whole situation which ultimately resulted in adultery, deception, and the murder of a noble and innocent man. We see another man who found himself in a similar situation, but by the grace of GOD was given fortitude to overcome the natural attraction of the flesh. *“And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.”* (Gen 39:12) Joseph was tempted mightily as any young man might be, yet the LORD gave HIM grace to overcome that continual temptation. He did not tarry at this beautiful sight. In this situation the LORD demonstrated this truth: *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to*

man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say." (1Cor 10:13-15)

In Isaiah 28:5, the LORD refers to HIMSELF as a Diadem (i.e.; a crown which encircles the head) of Beauty unto HIS chosen Remnant. (see Isa.10:21; Rom 9:7; 11:5) This Church (i.e.; Remnant) expresses her admiration of her Husband, lover, and friend. "*His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.*" (Song 5:16) The natural world sees no beauty in HIM, (see Isa.53:2) and yet those who are given grace to believe, find nothing but beauty in HIS PERSON, HIS WORD, HIS WORK, and HIS WAY.

The Hebrew word which is, here in Isaiah, translated as "Beauty"; literally means "an ornament of glory, honor, and majesty." HIS beauty is a picture which no artist can paint, no scholar can adequately define, nor any seeker after truth can find any greater. "*Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.*" (Psa 45:2) "*For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?*" (Psa 89:6) "*Let them praise the name of the LORD: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and heaven.*" (Psa 148:13)

We see HIS beauty in HIS PERSON. JESUS CHRIST is ONE with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST. HE who has heard HIM has heard the voice of GOD. HE who by the eye of Faith has beheld HIM has looked into the very FACE of GOD. (see II Cor.4:6) HE holds no secondary place in the GODHEAD but is the "*FULNESS of the GODHEAD bodily.*" (Col.2:9) Thus HE is to be worshipped, and indeed shall be by all of Creation, "*God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*" (Php 2:9-11) And we rejoice that HE is a MAN who is our SUBSTITUTE.

We see HIS beauty in HIS WORD. As HE walked in the Earth HE confessed, "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.*" (Psa 119:105) HE has not only made that confession but has manifested HIS regard to HIS WORD by HIS obedience to it. "*I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.*" (Psa 119:106) There is no shadow of turning with HIM. What HE has said HE will do. "*The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.*" (Psa 19:7-8)

We see HIS beauty in HIS WORK. "*And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me.*" (Isa 63:5) "*And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness, it sustained him. For he put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.*" (Isa 59:16-17) HE labored to perform a mighty work, completely by HIMSELF, as HE obtained eternal redemption for HIS people by the shedding of HIS own blood and the giving up of HIS body. HIS WORK is unto SALVATION for HE will lose none whom the FATHER gave HIM and for whom HE undertook the work of redemption. "*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*" (Luke 19:10)

We see HIS beauty in HIS WAY. When Thomas asked, "*How can we know the way?*", the LORD replied, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" (John 14:6) We desire no other "way" but HIS. Just like Peter who confessed, "*Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.*" (John 6:68) HIS WAY is a WAY of peace and blessing to those who are the called according to HIS purpose. "*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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