

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

THE CONFEDERACY

For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee.

Psalm 83:5

“The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.” (Exo 15:3) HE has ordained that wars and rumors of wars shall occur until the very end of this world as we presently see it. (see Matt.24:6,7) This is so that the depths of man's depravity might be manifested as he goes about to destroy those whom he counts as enemies. Yet the primarily purpose of war is to form a backdrop of conflict in order to demonstrate HIS own utter triumph over all of HIS enemies and all who would array themselves against HIM. Even though various conflicts among the nations of the earth are predestined to occur according to HIS eternal purpose, this does in no wise mitigate the wickedness of those who promote and participate in them. *“Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” (Psa 76:10)* GOD hardens men's hearts in their wickedness and ordains the hands of wicked men to carry out HIS purpose in the earth. The clearest example of this is seen in the crucifixion of HIS only begotten SON. *“Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.” (Acts 2:22-24)*

The grandest triumph of all of the ages is seen as JESUS CHRIST entered in once into the Holy Place having obtained eternal redemption for HIS people, the sheep of HIS pasture. HIS greatest victory was won by the shedding of HIS own blood to secure the deliverance of HIS people who had sat in bondage and were all their lifetime subject unto death. The wars of the nations of this world serve to set the stage that men might be given an understanding of such triumph. Without the knowledge of “war”, it would be impossible for men to grasp the nature of that victory which JESUS CHRIST fought and died for, then rose again in utter triumph over the enemy, death.

When the term “confederacy” is used, our thoughts would usually fasten upon the southern states who joined themselves together to defend their homeland and their way of life by entering into one of the most terrible conflicts on record. We wish neither to glorify that “Confederacy” nor to denigrate it. Someone has said, “to the victor belong the spoils”, and that is clearly seen in the outcome and resultant writing of the history of those times. This whole conflict is a shameful testimony to the cruelty of mankind to one another. Both in the awful and brutal practice of enslaving men for the purpose of monetary gain and the desire on the part of others to gain control of commerce by a subjection of unjust taxation and legislation. There can be no moral defense of the institution of slavery as it was practiced in the south at that time so I will not attempt one. But we can be sure that the LORD ordained both it and the destruction of it in HIS own time and according to HIS purpose.

This "Confederacy" was formed as seven states banded themselves together to secede from the Union and was joined by four others when shots were fired at Fort Sumter. These men were not all "friends" but they joined themselves together to fight a common "enemy". History shows their error and the fact that their triumphing was short lived, and their destruction awaited.

We read here in the Psalms of another "confederacy" which is joined by the multitude of mankind in an even more futile attempt to overthrow the dominion of a Sovereign GOD who rules in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. David writes "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.*" (Psa 14:1) Even fools know that there "is a GOD", "*Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*" (Rom 1:19-22)

Their "foolishness" is not in their "ignorance" of GOD but rather in their desire to throw off HIS rule and to live according to their own desire. All men are by nature born into this "confederacy", and in time they gladly join themselves together in its purpose.

We see this "confederacy" in action on the plains of Shinar (see Gen 11:2) as men came together to build a tower unto their own glory. "*And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.*" (Gen 11:4) This is the dawning of the religion of "free-will", whose altars are scattered throughout the Earth and has no shortage of adherents of various persuasions. All of man's religions have the same basic premise, which is that GOD can be influenced in one fashion or another to bless men according to their own activity. Now it is certain that they acknowledge that there is "a GOD" but they in reality, in their "confederacy", seek to limit HIM and make HIM subservient to their own will and thus deny HIS supremacy. HE said, "*I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the LORD do all these things.*" (Isa 45:5-7)

We see this "confederacy" in action as the Sadducees and Pharisees, who were normally not the best of friends (akin to Democrats and Republicans); nonetheless coming together with a common purpose to destroy HIM who was sent by GOD. "*But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.*" (Mat 21:37-39) All of the Jews were agreed that they would not have this MAN to rule over them. The LORD ordained their actions even as HE did those of Judas whom they paid to betray the LORD. Even their "prophecies" were correct though not as they considered. "*And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.*" (John 11:49-53)

Though men were "confederate" with evil intentions, yet GOD meant it for good as HE ordained the cruel death of HIS only begotten SON as a SUBSTITUTE for sinners. "*And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*" (1Cor 6:11) We are now made "confederate" with one another to worship and adore HIM who is worthy of all praise.

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