

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

WHO SHALL BE SAVED?

And they that heard it said, Who then can be saved?

Luke 18:26

The LORD shocked HIS disciples when HE told them, *"It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."* (Luke 18:25) Being Jews they believed that the Messiah's establishment of the kingdom of GOD in the earth would be one of carnal power and authority. Thus they were amazed when HE said; rich men and those in seats of power would hardly enter into it. In this same fashion there are many even today, Jews and Gentiles alike who believe that the LORD will yet establish a carnal kingdom in this earthly realm. The LORD has clearly taught us that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of GOD, for it cometh without observation (i.e.; it is spiritually discerned) even as HE told Nicodemus, *"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."* (John 3:3)

It is quite common to hear men of all stripes and sects of those who claim to be the followers of CHRIST speaking about salvation. Yet very little of what we hear described by the multitudes as "salvation" has any foundation in the scripture and is largely rooted in religious folklore of one kind or another.

The prevailing notion among just about all of those who would tell us "how to be saved", is that mankind is put upon the earth to live in a sort of probationary period, where whatever he chooses to do will affect his eternal destiny and his ability to gain salvation or be utterly cast out of any prospect of eternal bliss. In their line of thought, they would picture men as holding the key to their "salvation" in the very palm of their "free will" to either gain salvation or miss it.

The subject of "salvation" is indeed a very important one and is not to be counted unworthy of consideration, but as in all things it is useless to seek truth anywhere other than the Holy Scriptures. So we find that the Greek word which we translate as "save" or "saved" appears about 93 times in the NT. Most of those occurrences have reference to what we might term "eternal salvation" or "deliverance", though some of them speak of a temporal deliverance of one type or another.

We find that the "salvation" of GOD's people is spoken of in three separate tenses. Past, they have been saved. Present, they are being "saved". And future, they shall be saved. Let us quickly look at these tenses.

Past. First of all, we understand that the salvation of those chosen in CHRIST has been decreed by GOD before the foundation of the world. *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."* (2Tim 1:9) This is a glorious consideration to be sure but we also consider that the work which CHRIST has performed in our behalf, in the earth is accomplished in the past tense insofar as we are concerned. *"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."* (Heb 9:12)

In light of these truths some have said that GOD's children have always been saved. That is not exactly true, since GOD's children could not be "saved" until they were lost. Eternal election is unto salvation but it is the redemptive work of CHRIST which was necessary to effect their salvation. They have never been appointed unto wrath and have always been accepted in the BELOVED, but according to the good pleasure of GOD were made subject unto vanity in Adam, and became sinners in need of "salvation", lost in trespasses and sins. "*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*" (Gal 3:13) Thus HE is our "salvation". (see Luke 1:69)

Present. This is the realm in which we live and it is in this realm in which the SALVATION of GOD is made manifest unto HIS people. "*For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.*" (Tit 2:11) "*In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.*" (Eph 1:13) "*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*" (Rom 10:10) "*And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*" (Acts 13:48) "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*" (Tit 3:5)

Future. "*And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we (first) believed.*" (Rom 13:11) Though the salvation of GOD is manifested to HIS elect in the present time, by the gift of HIS HOLY SPIRIT, HE does give them an abiding hope in a future deliverance from the grave even as Paul described it. "*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.*" (1Cor 15:19-21)

The essence of the HOPE of the sons of GOD and thus their SALVATION is to be "saved" or "delivered" from the grave. "*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*" (Heb 2:14-15) "*And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*" (Rom 8:23)

So who shall be saved?

Those that call upon the LORD, being the called by GOD. "*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*" (Rom 10:13) "*For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*" (Act 2:39)

The remnant, that peculiar people, the elect of GOD. "*Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved.*" (Rom 9:27)

Those who believe in CHRIST. "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*" (Act 16:31) "*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*" (Rom 10:9) "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*" (Mar 16:16) "*The eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*" (Act 8:36-37)

Those who are justified. "*Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.*" (Rom 5:9)

Those who are reconciled. "*For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*" (Rom 5:10)

Those who are quickened by grace and given the gift of faith. "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*" (Eph 2:8-9)

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