

# 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*

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## THE ABSOLUTE SAVIOR

*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*  
*Acts 4:10-12*

Since we believe that the Bible is the “verbally inspired” word of GOD, then we believe every word in it must be considered important. There is no part of the scriptures which is superfluous or unnecessary. We may not “understand” the purpose and import of every word and we might from time to time misapply those words by misreading or ignoring the context in which they are spoken but this does not change the veracity or necessity of each one.

It is a sign of poor scholarship to overlook various words or to take them out of the proper context in which they are presented, but it is downright shameful and dishonest to try to seek to “wrest” or change their meanings or their order to fit our theological bent. The Bible always means what it means, even when those truths are inconvenient to our established dogmas.

When Peter “explained” the authority that they had been given to heal the lame man, he presented the LORD JESUS CHRIST as the Absolute SAVIOR by two related phrases, “*none other name*” and “*we must be saved*”. These are “absolute” statements of fact which must not be ignored or else one is in peril of misrepresenting the nature of the salvation which is wrought by the work of HIM who is indeed the one and only SAVIOR.

In the religious tradition in which I was raised there was great emphasis placed on CHRIST as being the “only” SAVIOR but there was no consideration at all given to the fact that those for whom HE is the SAVIOR “must” be saved. The word “must” was ignored and generally treated as though it meant “might”. “Must” is a word which carries the import of something which cannot fail to occur. “Might” on the other hand is a word which is not absolute but rather sets forth the notion that there can be mitigating circumstances which would prevent that salvation from occurring, and merely denotes a possibility of salvation rather than a certainty.

The prevailing notion about salvation which one hears proclaimed all across our land and even around the world is that CHRIST is an “available” savior. We are told that each and every individual on the planet can have salvation if they will just comply with a few conditions. Salvation is presented as an equation which has a “part” which CHRIST has performed and a “part” which is left up to men to perform in order to complete the equation and bring about the desired result.

This is of course a mere exercise of man’s grandiose consideration of his ability to determine his own destiny and is a disregard of the fact that salvation is a gift of GOD’s grace rather than a reward for meeting certain conditions. This concept presents a savior who does not actually save anyone but rather only makes salvation a possibility for everyone. This sacrosanct ship of free will sails proudly across the ocean of man’s self esteem but runs aground on the words “must” and “shall”, and is destroyed upon that STONE, “*which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.*” (Acts 4:11) who is the same ONE who says “*I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.*” (Rom 9:15-16)

Peter didn't describe a "salvation" which was "available" or "a possibility" but rather one which "must" occur. *"whereby we must be saved"*. He said "we must be saved" because:

CHRIST is predestined to be the SAVIOR. *"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."* (1Pet 1:20) Even as the angel instructed Joseph, *"Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."* (Mat 1:21) It is folly to consider that HE who rules over all things should somehow not accomplish HIS own will. *"But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."* (Psa 115:3) If HE must, or shall, save HIS people then it follows that:

CHRIST has an elect people who shall be saved. *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."* (1Pet 2:9-10) *"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."* (1Pet 1:2) If HE has an elect people who must be saved then it follows that:

CHRIST alone must save them. *"For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away."* (1Pet 1:24) Those whom HE has ordained unto eternal life (see Acts 13:48) are described as dead in trespasses and sins, by nature, and both unable and unwilling to obey HIS commands or even approach unto HIM. (see Rom.3:9-18; Eph.2:1-3) How else can they be saved, unless HE saves them? If CHRIST alone must save them then it follows that:

CHRIST alone has obtained their salvation. *"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."* (1Pe 1:18-19) This is a "redemption" that "redeems" and a "salvation" that saves. Not one drop of the precious blood of CHRIST was shed in vain nor has it fallen to the ground without accomplishing exactly what HE purposed. *"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities."* (Isa 53:10-11) If CHRIST has obtained their eternal redemption by the shedding of HIS own blood, and actually putting HIMSELF in their place of condemnation as their SUBSTITUTE, then it follows that:

CHRIST has saved them; not only from the penalty which was associated with that sin, but from the effects of it as well. *"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls."* (1Pet 1:8-9) The only barrier between the GOD of heaven and HIS elect bride, whom HE has loved from the beginning, is the *"sin which doth so easily beset us"*. Our foolish hearts were darkened by it and our consciences were full of offense and enmity towards HIM. Yet it is that which CHRIST has performed for us and brought to "light" through the gospel that has given us a *"conscience void of offense."* *"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"* (Heb 9:14) Not only are the saints of GOD justified by the blood of CHRIST as pertaining to the just penalty prescribed by the law, but they are forever satisfied in heart and mind by that very work, and *"must be saved"* by it. *"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."* (2Pet.:2-4)

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