

SALVATION **What Does It Mean?**

O, reader, have you given attention to that which is contained in the word salvation? O man, think of this; it concerns you more than all other objects taken together for which the whole world is in pursuit.

Salvation is worth a thousand times more than health of body; in comparison with which men consider money no object; and for the hope of regaining they lavish gold and greenbacks as freely as dirt. Salvation is more to be desired than all the glory and pleasure that the highest honors of earth can yield. Yea, it places the soul upon a place so elevated as to receive the admiration and adoration of heaven. "If any man serve me, saith the Lord, him will my father honor." (John 12:26). It places a man far above the highest object of earthly ambition. It gives him a kingdom greater than that over which Alexander or Napoleon ruled. "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," even the "kingdom of heaven." "They which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:17). And this glorious reign is not located in some future age; but John, writing to the seven churches in Asia, in the first century of Christian grace, declared that Jesus Christ, who is the faithful Witness, the Prince of the kings of the earth, he that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, hath also "made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." (Revelation 1:5-6). As again seen in this beautiful book of symbols, at the very opening of the plan of redemption the blood-washed celebrated the praises of God with a "new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." (Revelation 5:9-10). And Peter calls God's church a "royal priesthood," i.e., a priesthood of kings.

All who live in sin are slaves to their own lusts, and are not able to govern themselves. But salvation makes us kings to rule over our own selves; over our passions, appetites and desires. "And he that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." Proverbs 16:32. Salvation also places us in kingly triumph over all the elements of this world; over sin, fashion, and popular sentiments; and over the devil himself, who claims to be the ruler of earth; a master of the situation of life, with a peace that nothing disturbs; and a joyful faith in God which sees all things working together for our good, and contributing to our happiness.

Salvation is greater riches than all the gold, silver, and valuable treasures of this earth summed up together. It is a treasure that never faileth. A wealth so great that to the happy possessor, everything of earth is, in comparison, reduced to dust and dirt. "Oh the unsearchable riches of Christ!" Ephesians 3:8. "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye

through his poverty might be rich." 2 Corinthians 8:9. How rich?" He that overcometh shall inherit all things." Revelation 21:7. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32. Yea, hath given. "For all things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours." 1 Corinthians 3:22.

So teaches the word of God, and so bear witness all who have tested His wonderful claims. Reader, look back over that long line of holy martyrs, who, in the possession of this great treasure, gloried in tribulations, and shouted for joy amid the flames, disdain life, with all it could offer, when tendered to them as a compensation for their hope in Christ: and there behold the eternal and incalculable value of salvation. If, then, such unbounded wealth, such innumerable blessings, and such infinite bliss and happiness are all treasured up in salvation; who can afford to be indifferent to the gracious treasure? But again we ask, what does it mean?

Salvation Means Deliverance

The entrance of sin into our world has brought in its train indescribable wretchedness. Guilt and remorse sting the conscience and fill the soul with shame. Sinful habits form the links of an iron chain, which binds the life in utter despair, a chain of bondage which defies all human strength. Burning lusts are set on fire from hell, all clamoring for unholy indulgence; the gratification of which is only followed by greater misery. Restless and unnatural desires deprive the soul of peace; and the half-awakened fears of death and judgment hang dark and gloomy over the life. Hope dies and with it, manhood and womanhood give up their struggle, and surrender the life to dark melancholy or open shame. Reader, salvation means deliverance from all these elements of woe and misery. And should even this picture fall short of the deep shades of your case, salvation yet means complete deliverance from the strongest chains of habit, the lowest depths of sin, the deepest hell of intemperance and debauchery, deliverance from darkness into light, from the power of Satan unto God, From the woes of a guilty conscience unto peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; from remorse unto the joys of pardon; from the thralldom of sin unto the glorious liberty of the sons of God. O how wonderful! Wonderful!! Deliverance by the almighty arm of Him whose name is Wonderful! And when all this blessedness is reached by the divine miracle of regeneration, if the new-born soul continues to "desire the sincere milk of the Word, and grow thereby," he will soon come to the privilege of another great and glorious epoch in divine grace; the entire sanctification of his nature; the utter destruction of all inward bent to evil, and the restoration of the "divine nature." 2 Peter 1:4. Perfect deliverance from the "body of sin," into the "image of God," and his perfected love.

Beloved, this is not an overdrawn picture, nor a tale of human fancy. Nay, it is the very substance of the sure Word of God: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

2 Corinthians 5:21

"Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Hebrews 7:25

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." 1 Timothy 1:15.

And "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Romans 5:20.

Here saving grace is placed over against all sin. And even in hearts and lives where "sin abounded," grace, the saving mercy of God, much more abounds. Though your sins tower up like dark mountains unto heaven, grace towers far above. Though they be as deep as hell, the grace of God with Omnipotent arm reaches unto you. Though great wickedness spreads over all your past life, grace super-abounds to save you. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah 1:18.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. "And the blood of Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John 1:7. To meet your wants as a great sinner, God has sent to you "a Savior and a great one." Isaiah 45:20. Though your soul is cursed by "your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins," (Amos 5:12). you may "make your supplication to the Almighty" (Job 8:5). Though your lusts and wickedness rise like mighty billows and threaten to sweep you quickly down to hell, "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." Psalm 93:4.

"And being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Hebrews 5:9.

"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; 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?" Hebrews 9:13-14

Reader, be assured that the writer is one, and he is personally acquainted with thousands of others, who, though our case has been as dark and hopeless as yours, have, by the grace of God come to a happy realization of those precious scriptures. Therefore, full salvation is not only true in the Word, but also in fact. And if you are willing and obedient, it will prove true in your case.