

Salvation, a free Gift

by Armin A. Wolff

Salvation consists of the forgiveness of sins, the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and the gift of eternal life, received by grace through faith alone, entirely apart from works.

• *Salvation in Old Testament*

In the Old Testament the meaning of the word Salvation is most commonly associated with the physical, such as being rescued from great danger and enemies. It is used to describe to save, help in distress, rescue, deliver, set free, first in a physical, temporal sense, but also spiritual eternal sense.

• *The Hebrew word*

yesha` {yeh'-shah} or yesha` {yay'-shah}

AV - salvation 32, safety 3, saving 1; 36

- 1) deliverance, salvation, rescue, safety, welfare
 - 1a) safety, welfare, prosperity
 - 1b) salvation
 - 1c) victory

• *Rescue from enemies*

Exodus 14:13 Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.

Here Of course is the great physical rescue of the Israelites from the Egyptians as they crossed the Red Sea.

• *Rest for the soul*

Psalms 62:5 Find rest, O my soul, in God alone; my hope comes from him.

Psalms 62:6 He alone is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.

Psalms 62:7 My salvation and my honor depend on God ; he is my mighty rock, my refuge.

Psalms 62:8 Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.

Most instances of the use of the word Salvation have to do with immediate danger physical rescue, but there is also the idea of peace and rest for the soul.

• *Salvation in the New Testament*

In contrast, the concept of salvation in the New Testament, though it may include material preservation, usually signifies a deliverance with special spiritual significance. In addition to the notion of deliverance the Bible also uses salvation to denote health, well-being, and healing.

• *The Greek Word*

soteria {so-tay-ree'-ah}

- 1) deliverance, preservation, safety, salvation
 - 1a) deliverance from the molestation of enemies
 - 1b) in an ethical sense, that which concludes to the souls safety or salvation

- 1b1) of Messianic salvation
- 2) salvation as the present possession of all true Christians
- 3) future salvation, the sum of benefits and blessings which the Christians, redeemed from all earthly ills, will enjoy after the visible return of Christ from heaven in the consummated and eternal kingdom of God.

- ***Salvation from Sin***

When the idea of salvation is expressed in relation to Sin, it clearly tells us that we are saved from the penalty, power, presence and the pleasure of sin.

- ***Salvation embodied in a person***

Luke 2:29 "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace.

Luke 2:30 For my eyes have seen your salvation,

Luke 2:31 which you have prepared in the sight of all people,

Luke 2:32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

In the new Testament, much more than in the Old salvation is pictured as a person, the person of Jesus Christ, rather than as a concept. The Hebrew name Yeshua (Jesus) means savior.

- ***Component of salvation -- forgiven***

According to the statement of faith, salvation depends on or contains several components. The most important of these is the forgiveness of sins. Sin has two parts, first, a crime or affront committed against another and secondly the idea of missing the mark or as I as an engineer like to say, not meeting specifications. Forgiveness therefore has to do with a pardon received from the one against whom the crime has been committed and a restoration or renewal so that the required specification is now met.

- ***Only one sin forgiver***

Though we as human beings constantly commit sins against one another, ultimately all these fall back as sins against a Holy God, our creator. We are told we must forgive each other, but in the over all picture, if there is going to be any forgiveness, it has to be initiated and accomplished by God and thankfully it was. An incident in the life of the God-man Jesus in Matt 9.

Matthew 9:2 Some men brought to him a paralytic, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

Matthew 9:3 At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

Matthew 9:4 Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?"

Matthew 9:5 Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

Matthew 9:6 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. . . ."
Then he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home."

Matthew 9:7 And the man got up and went home.

Matthew 9:8 When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

- ***Component of salvation -- righteousness***

The second component of salvation is righteousness, which is the meeting of the design specifications completely. This will never happen while we are still breathing, but is guaranteed for the time when we see Him, for we shall be like Him.

Matthew 5:48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

- ***Awsome holiness***

This specification is nothing less than the righteousness and holiness of God. Anything which is in the least corrupt or imperfect cannot exist in the presence of God. At the end of time the corrupt and imperfect creation can no longer exist and flees away and dissolves as God sits in judgment on the throne.

Revelation 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

- ***Totally new***

Revelation 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.

2 Peter 3:13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

Mankind and the old creation are so hopelessly flawed and corrupt that no repair is possible. Only an entirely new humanity and creation will meet the stringent specifications of the holiness of God.

- ***God is the only one who can do this***

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

2 Corinthians 5:19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

No amount of self effort can obtain forgiveness from God nor the required renewal necessary to stand in his presence forever. It is a gift of God or better said **the** gift of God through Jesus Christ.

- ***Why God does this***

Ephesians 2:8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God

God's Riches At Christ's Expense

God Gives us his salvation only on the basis of grace. God's gives unmerited favor and it is not through any effort on our part. The only requirement to receive this free gift is faith.

- ***Why faith?***

There are many criteria upon which God could have based salvation, but there is only one that is universal. I cannot think of any criteria such as height, strength, intelligence, birth, pleasant personality, or nationality, and the list could go on and on, where upon eligibility for salvation might be based.

Luke 18:15 People were also bringing babies to Jesus to have him touch them. When the disciples saw this, they rebuked them.

Luke 18:16 But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

Luke 18:17 I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

Everyone can trust and believe no matter what their station in life may be. Jesus tells us that our faith must be simple and trusting like that of a child.

- ***Cannot please God without faith***

More important than the fact that every human being on this planet has the ability to believe and indeed is not able to live at all without faith. God tells us outright that without faith impossible to please him.

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

• ***It is impossible to live without faith***

For example, in the realm of driving we have faith in our automobiles, other drivers, roads, bridges, and maps etc. In our homes we have faith that when we flip the switch, a lights will come on and when we turn the faucet to get water expect to get a drink and are unpleasantly surprised when they don't deliver on the promise . Are we at least as the expectant for God to keep his promises as we are of the promise of a light switch or a water faucet? The switch or faucet are promises by fallible human technology, but the promises in the Bible are given to us by the God of perfection and holiness.

• ***Gift of eternal life transcends time***

This gift of eternal life goes beyond the limits of time, but is much more than an endless time. It is a whole new kind of life -- freedom from fear right now for example and finally a safe place in a realm we cannot even imagine in our wildest dreams.

1 Corinthians 2:9 However, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him

Eternal life is not only knowing about God, but knowing God in a most intimate way not necessarily having anything at all to do with time.

John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent