

## A DAY OF SALVATION

Is today the only day of salvation? Most people who profess to believe in the Bible, believe that today is the only day of salvation. But is this true? Is today, the only day of salvation?

Believe it or not the Bible shows that the time between Adam and the return of Christ is not the only time when salvation is offered to humanity.

However, most who believe that today is the only day of salvation quote what the apostle Paul said to the Corinthians to support this false belief. The apostle Paul said:

"For he says, In an acceptable time I heard you, and in a day of salvation I helped you, Behold now is the acceptable time! Behold now is the day of salvation" (2.Cor.6:2 Para.).

From Paul's statement, it seems that indeed now is the only day of salvation; however, with a small amount of study it can easily be shown that he did not intend to say that today is the only day of salvation, but actually said something very different.

The problem with the belief that today is the only day of salvation, is that, this belief is not comparable with what the Bible says that the prophets, Jesus Christ, and the apostles taught about the Sovereign God's plan to offer the opportunity of salvation to all of mankind.

Most of professing Christianity believe that there are only two categories of people on earth: the saved who are assured heavenly bliss and the lost who are to be tormented forever in an everlasting hell-fire. Is today the only day of salvation? Have God the Father and Jesus Christ been trying to save all of humanity from the time of Adam to this present day?

The Biblical answer may surprise you, because it is not what is taught preached in most churches today.

Many worry that if their loved ones do not accept Christ in this life, they will loose out on salvation. Many grieve over their dead relatives, because they

think these loved ones are going to burn in a hell-fire for all of eternity, because they never acknowledged Christ as their Savior.

If it were true that this is the only day of salvation, the vast majority of mankind is lost without hope, because most have never heard of Jesus Christ's name and the method of salvation and most never will until Christ returns to establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

The Bible clearly says that there is only one name through which a person can be saved and that there is only one method by which one can receive salvation; therefore, it seems logical that if one is to be saved from eternal death for the violation of God's law, one must have an opportunity to know and understand the things concerning Christ's name and the method of salvation.

Despite the tremendous missionary and evangelistic efforts throughout history, most of humanity has never heard God's true message of salvation. Even in this age just before the return of Christ, many millions and perhaps billions will neither hear nor understand the awesome truth about salvation.

However, this is not 'the' only day of salvation, it is only 'a' day of salvation.

At the Festival of Pentecost in 30 A.D., the apostle Peter said to a large crowd of people concerning the process that one must follow in order to obtain an eternal agreement with The Sovereign Father.

The apostle Peter said this: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." See Acts 2:38-39.

Peter also said to this crowd of people:

"Be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom God raised from the dead, even by him does this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders,

which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" ( Acts 4:10-12 KJV).

The Bible states that the only way to receive salvation is through the Messiah and his sacrifice. However, how will people—past, present, and future—who have never even heard of Christ or his sacrifice obtain salvation?

Does God have another method of salvation that does not involve a person accepting Christ as their savior, repenting of sin, being baptized, and receiving the holy spirit? Is there another method to obtain salvation beside the one clearly specified in the Bible? See Mk.16:16; Lk.13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; Rom.8:7-18.

The answer is no! There is no alternate method of obtaining salvation except the one clearly stated in the Bible. There is only one method by which one can obtain salvation, and that way is through Jesus Christ. The simple truth is that billions of people have not yet had their opportunity for salvation.

Jesus spoke the truth when he said, "For the Son of man [Christ] is come to save that which was lost" (Matt.8:11 KJV; Lk.19:10).

The problem is not with what Jesus said, it is with what most think he said. Most believe that Jesus meant that he came to save all of humanity at that time; however, he did not say this. He only stated that it was his reason for coming.

### **The Parables and Conversion**

Many believe the reason that Jesus spoke in parables was to make his meaning clear; however, this was not what he said. He said that he spoke in parables to conceal information that could lead people to salvation:

One day after Jesus had been speaking to a group of people, his twelve disciples asked him why he spoke to the people in parables? Jesus told them:

"To you has been given to know the mystery of the

Kingdom of God. But to these outside, all things are being given in parables, that seeing they may see and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand, lest they should be converted, and sins be forgiven to them" (Mk.4:10-12 Para.). See also Isa.6:8-10; Matt.13:10-15; Lk.8:10; Jn.12:37-40; Acts 28:25-27.

The word 'mystery' in this passage is translated from the Greek word 'mysterion', which means 'mystery' or 'secret'. Jesus clearly said that those outside of his group were not permitted to understand the secret plan of God that would lead them to salvation.

The apostle Paul spoke to the Colossians about this same mystery and he told them that it was only revealed to the saints, he said:

"Now I rejoice in my sufferings on your behalf, and I fill up in my flesh the things lacking of the afflictions of Christ, on behalf of his body, which is the church; of which I became a minister, according to the administration of God given to me for you to fulfill the word of God, the mystery having been hidden from the ages, and from the generations, but is now revealed to his saints [the elect of God]; to whom God desired to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the nations which is Christ in you the hope of glory" (Col.1:24-27 Para.). See Rom.16:25-26; Eph.1:8-9; 1.Tim.3:9.

### **WHY THE SECRECY?**

But why would this information that leads a person to salvation be kept secret and why is it only revealed to The Sovereign Father's earthly children?

Although the mystery of salvation has been preached since the time of Adam, only a very few have been allowed to understand its secrets, and for very good reasons. God the Father and Jesus Christ love their human creation much more than most people can begin to comprehend. It is this love and concern for each individual that prevents God the Father from offering salvation to all of humanity before the establishment of his kingdom on earth.

God the Father and Jesus Christ want everyone to become a part of the God family; they want everyone to obtain salvation:

Paul told Timothy that it was God's purpose for all people to be saved from eternal death, and come to the knowledge of his truth" (1.Tim.2:4 KJV).

The apostle Peter said much the same thing in his second letter. He said: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2.Pet.3:9 KJV). See also Psa.136:1-16.

The love and concern for people, is the reason that God the Father and Jesus Christ have formulated a plan that will afford each individual the optimum opportunity for success. The Father knows the potential and character of each individual and in which phase of his plan to offer them the opportunity for salvation. In order for each person to have the best possible conditions for success in obtaining salvation, they must be allowed to live in a time and environment in which they can succeed if they so desire.

### **The Gospel Preached for a Witness**

Jesus said the Gospel was to be preached only as a witness; he said nothing about trying to convert all of humanity during this present age. Jesus said:

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations: and then shall the end come" (Matt.24:14 KJV).

The end that is spoken of here is the end of human rule on this earth. With the end of human rule, begins a New Age in which the Kingdom of God will reign supreme on earth with Jesus Christ as its ruler.

Today, many people are called and exposed to the opportunity for salvation, yet those who are called are very few in comparison to the earth's population. Moreover, among those who are called, few are chosen to participate in the first resurrection:

Jesus said: "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, but few chosen" (Matt.20:16; 22:14 KJV).

The overall plan of God for salvation has not changed from the foundation of the world. Part of this plan is that humans must come into conformity with his law. A fundamental teaching of both the Old and the New Testaments is that one must obey his law before being granted salvation.

### **IS GOD FAIR AND JUST?**

God says that we must understand his way of life and obey his instructions to live forever (Matt.19:16-17; 28:20). But, how can people understand or obey if they have never heard the Word of God? It is obvious that they cannot understand unless they are taught (Rom.10:13-15). Therefore, it is logical to ask whether or not God is fair and just in his dealings with mankind?

Somehow, many have the impression that God is unfair and that he gets pleasure out of the suffering and death of humans. Nothing could be farther from the truth. This misunderstanding comes from a false teaching about God and a lack of knowledge concerning his plan for humanity.

God the Father and his son Jesus Christ are the epitome of love and kindness. They have enormous love for humanity.

John said, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that through him it might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17 KJV).

Would God be fair or just if he consigned people to eternal life or eternal death without allowing them the freedom to make this decision for themselves? Of course not!

Why would the Sovereign God create beings with the ability to think, reason, and choose, and then not allow them to choose their own destiny? If God wanted automatons, he would have created man

with instinct and predictable responses to stimuli, which is what he did with the rest of his physical creation. But, God does not want automatons in his family. He wants to share eternity with thinking, reasoning beings who have righteous character.

Speaking through the prophet Ezekiel about his fairness to national Israel the Creator God said:

"Yet you say, The way of the Lord is not fair. Hear now, O house of Israel. Is my way not fair? Are your ways not unfair? When a righteous one turns from his righteousness and does injustice, and dies in them; he shall die for his injustice which he has done. And when the wicked turns from his wickedness that he has done, and does justice and righteousness, he shall keep his soul alive. Because he considers and turns from all his transgressions that he has done, surely he shall live; he shall not die. Yet the house of Israel says, The way of the Lord is not fair. Are my ways not fair, O house of Israel? Is it not your ways that are not fair?" (Ezk.18:25-29 Para.).

God also said, "Cast away your transgressions from you by which you have transgressed in them; and make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit; for why will you die, O house of Israel? For I do not have pleasure in the death of him who dies, declares the Lord. So turn and live" (Ezk.18:31-32 Para.).

God says that he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, because it is his earnest desire for all human beings to have eternal life:

The Sovereign Father and his Son have a master plan for humanity. It is only after the completion of God's wrath and during the rule of Jesus Christ that all humans will come to fully understand and appreciate the awesome grandeur of this plan and the opportunity that they have been offered to become a son of God the Father and enter his Family and Kingdom.

The Sovereign Father's awesome plan for the salvation humanity has mostly been a mystery since the demise and disappearance of the early church.

But today, just before Christ returns to conquer and rule the earth this awesome mystery it is again being revealed to mankind.

In the millennia of eternity past, a plan unfolded that is more fascinating and engrossing than any science fiction story or real life saga that has ever been told. That plan involves every person who has lived, is now living, or is yet to be born.

With the creation of humans, the Sovereign God embarked upon the greatest and grandest of all his creations; he is creating beings just like himself; and his intent is to share with them, all he has created or will ever create throughout eternity.

Herein is a great truth of the Sovereign Father's good news message. The Father and Christ have always loved mankind, who are all sinners, and it is because of, and through their great love for mankind that we have hope for salvation:

In the gospel of John, we read:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (Jn.3:16-17 KJV). See Mk.16:16; Rom.5:6-10; 8:7-18; Jms.4:4; 1.Jn.4:9-10.

There is only one Sovereign God who is above all else that exists and he is the one who allowed the Creator God to come to earth and sacrifice himself for humanity. When the decision was made concerning the method through which humanity would be able to have their violation of the law of God forgiven and receive redemption and salvation, there were only two immortal beings in existence—the Sovereign God and the Creator God.

The decision to allow the Creator God to divest himself of his immortality and become human not only placed the Creator's future existence in great jeopardy, but it also had a tremendous impact upon the Sovereign God's future. If the Creator had failed in his mission, he would have died and ceased to exist forever, and the Sovereign God would have

lost his closest friend and companion. The Father would have been the only immortal spirit being in existence. He would have had no one like himself with whom to share eternity. The Sovereign God's decision to allow the Creator to attempt to save humanity was a selfless act and shows a love of awesome proportions for humanity.

Human words or emotion cannot begin to adequately express the grace, mercy, compassion, and love that God the Father and Jesus Christ have for humanity. And words cannot adequately describe the price that the Father and his Son were willing to pay for our redemption and salvation.

Death was to be the cessation of our existence; never again would we experience the pleasures of life, smell the fragrance of a flower, feel the sun and wind on our face; never again would we see a beautiful sunset or hear the voice of a loved one. We were destined to return to the basic physical elements from which we are composed.

Before the Creator God came to earth as a man to deliver his Father's good news message, each and every individual that had ever existed, or would ever exist was under the curse of eternal death that was inherited from the first two humans as a result of their poor judgment and rebellion against God.

The Creator God who became the Messiah said: "Look to me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa.45:22 KJV).

The message from the Sovereign God through the Messiah to mankind is about the fantastic future in store for anyone who will heed the instructions given in his good news message.

However, most of what people hear about the Sovereign God's message, is focused solely on Jesus Christ, and as a result, millions do not believe what Christ taught concerning how to obtain salvation. They only believe certain things about him and do not understand the message that he brought about salvation and the Kingdom of God.

Because most of professing Christianity have been greatly deceived, concerning the Sovereign God's good news message, they simply do not believe what Jesus Christ said or the early church taught concerning the process of salvation and therefore many are the victims of a false conversion that does not lead to eternal life.

## **To Become an Immortal**

God the Father offers much more than eternal life to those he calls to salvation during this age. The angels have eternal life and are sustained by God's life-giving power, and yet they can be destroyed if they disobey him. The quality of life God offers to the elect during this gospel age of salvation is immortal life, which can never be destroyed.

The quality of life promised by the Father is comparable to that which he himself has. God is a spirit-being who inherently possesses the highest form of life: immortality on the divine plane of existence. Immortal life springs forth from itself and is not dependent on any other source to sustain it, because it is self-sustaining:

It is abundantly clear from studying the Bible that God the Father intends to share immortality with those he calls to repentance, baptism, and conversion prior to the first resurrection. It is the acquisition of immortality that allows a person to pass beyond this physical existence into the Family of God as a son of God.

If you want to know what the Bible actually says about immortal life and how to obtain it, get a copy of my book "How to Become Immortal."

Although immortality represents the highest reward that is granted for faithfulness to God, there are many more rewards. The reward for being righteous is not to float around heaven playing harp music for eternity. God the Father and Jesus Christ have something far more spectacular in store for those who are found worthy to take part in the first resurrection.

The following list contains some of these rewards:

- Becoming an immortal spirit-being
- Becoming a son of God
- Becoming a joint-heir with Christ
- Becoming a co-ruler with Christ
- Becoming a King and a Priest
- Inheriting the Kingdom of God
- Inheriting all things

These are only a few of the awesome rewards that are promised to those the Father calls to salvation through his message of the good news.

Speaking of a future judgement, Jesus said:

"Do not marvel at this: for an hour is coming, in which all those in the tombs will hear his voice, And they will come out, the ones having done good into a resurrection of life; and the ones having practiced evil into a resurrection of judgment" (Jn.5:28-29 KJV).

Many assume this verse shows that there is only one specific time and one specific resurrection in which all of humanity will be judged by God. And because there is a single final judgment, all must have their opportunity for salvation during this lifetime. However, this is not what Jesus said. He said that there will be an appointed time when all those in the grave will be judged for the way they have lived.

Some also assume that because Jesus clearly divides these people into two distinct categories—good and evil—that there are only two categories of people who will be resurrected. In the context of John 5:28-29, the word used for 'judgment' is the Greek word 'krisis', which refers to the condemnation of those who habitually practice evil. However, Jesus was speaking to the Jews who were well versed in the law of God, which clearly defines the difference between good and evil.

## **A DAY OF SALVATION**

The prophet Isaiah spoke of a time when each individual will have their opportunity for salvation, and he referred to it as an acceptable time:

Here's what Isaiah said:

"This says the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard you, and in a day of salvation have I helped you: . . ." (Isa.49:8 KJV).

The word 'acceptable' is translated from a Hebrew word, which basically means 'pleasure', 'delight', or 'favor.' It also has the following nuances in meaning: 'favor' or 'good will' of God, 'delight' or 'acceptance' of an individual in a religious sense, and 'desire,' or 'pleasure' in the specific sense of 'will,' as in the 'will of God'.

Isaiah was inspired to use this specific Hebrew word because it conveys more than just an appointment of time. It also conveys the tremendous depth of God's concern, desire, and pleasure in granting the opportunity of son-ship to humanity.

Today is not the only day of salvation. It is 'a' day of salvation for those the Father is calling to an opportunity of salvation during this age. See Isa.49:8; 1.Pet.4:17.

## **An Acceptable Time**

Concerning the opportunity for salvation, the apostle Paul quoted the prophecy given by Isaiah to the Corinthians, and said, "For he says, 'In an acceptable time I heard you, and in a day of salvation I helped you', Behold now is the acceptable time! "Behold now is the [a] day of salvation" (2.Cor.6:2). See also 1.Pet.4:17.

When the proper article in front of the word 'day' is used in the translation of this text, its meaning becomes clear. Paul is saying that it is 'a' day of salvation, not 'the' only day of salvation. If the translators of the King James version of the Bible had used the article 'a' instead of 'the' in this text, their translation would have been in conformity with Isaiah's original prophecy.

When Paul quoted Isaiah to the Corinthian Church, he did so in order to remind them that this was their opportunity for salvation. It was the time of salvation for the elect of the church at Corinth and

others whom God the Father was calling to salvation at that time. It certainly was not a day of salvation for all people.

## **THE CALL TO SALVATION**

An important point to note is that it is God the Father who determines who he will call to salvation during this age.

God only calls those he wants to use for a specific purpose in this age:

Jesus said twice that, No man could come to him, except the Father who sent him draws that person to him. You can read this for yourself in John chapter 6 verses 44 and 65.

Jesus Christ does not determine who is to be called to salvation during this age; only God the Father makes this determination:

Peter said on the festival of Pentecost "For the promise is to you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). See also Rom.8:26-30; 1.Cor.1:9,23-28; Eph.1:5-9; 1.Thes.5:23-24; 2.Tim.1:8-9; Heb.9:14-15.

Peter was speaking of God the Father who is doing the calling.

And in Acts chapter 2, verse 47 the writer says this about the events that followed Peter and the other apostle's preaching: "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).

The scriptural record of the early church clearly shows a selective calling to the opportunity of salvation. It clearly shows that only those who should be saved are called to salvation. But what about those who were not called in the past, or are not being called at this present time? If this is the only day of salvation as many believe, all of those not called do not have an opportunity for salvation.

## **THE RESURRECTIONS**

In the Book of Revelation, we find the statement, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished, this is the first resurrection" (Rev.20:5 KJV). Logic tells us that if there is a first resurrection, there must be a second. A diligent study of the Bible will reveal that there are a number of different resurrections of the dead.

### **Article Offer**

If you want to know more about what the Bible says about the many resurrections that are to occur as God works out his plan of salvation for humanity, get a copy of my studies about the various resurrections.

In his infinite wisdom, the Eternal God has designed his plan for mankind very carefully in order to give every person an opportunity to have eternal life. The vast majority of people who have lived throughout history have died without hearing or understanding God's plan.

The comforting truth is that the majority of mankind is neither saved nor lost. Most people simply have not been given an opportunity for salvation:

The popular belief concerning a single resurrection for all humanity has no merit. The plan of God for the salvation of humanity is far more complex and fair than commonly believed.

God is fair, loving, merciful, and true to his promises. He has designed a plan that will give all of humanity an opportunity for salvation. There is no doubt that each individual will have an opportunity to obey God's code of righteous conduct. The only question is when each individual will be given this opportunity?

### **Conclusions**

The scriptures concerning the requirements for salvation cannot be reconciled with the facts of history or the rest of the Bible if God the Father and

Jesus Christ have been trying to save all of humanity from the time of Adam to this present age. But, because God is not trying to do this before the establishment of his kingdom on earth, the scriptures can be understood to mean what they say. If God were trying to save mankind now, he would save them! God's plan for the salvation of humanity is right on schedule; no human or evil spirit can stop God from fulfilling his purpose for mankind.

God has not been calling all of mankind to salvation since the time of Adam or the advent of the Messiah, because he knows the vast majority of people will not do what is required to repent and live according to his law. However, he will, at the proper time and during the right sequence of events, present this opportunity to all who have not been called to salvation.

Paul told the Corinthians, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming" (1.Cor.15:22-23 KJV).

Everyone will someday have the opportunity to fulfill this scripture, but not all at the same time. Every individual who has ever lived and died will have that opportunity.

Surprising as it seems, this is not the only day of salvation for humanity, it is only the day of salvation for those called to salvation in this age.

I see that my time is up, if you want to know more about what the Bible says about the Sovereign God's awesome plan for the salvation of humanity or the other subjects that I have briefly touched on in this in this broadcast, Write to me at the at the address given in the following announcement. Until next time this is Bud Cocherell for Bible Research .org

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