

THE SALVATION OF GOD

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Text: Revelation 13:8

The scripture says, “Abraham believed God...” and with those words man’s journey of faith began.

Note as we look at the truths of the Word of God how that God's plan of salvation has always been in effect because He has always been leading us toward the fulfillment of His will. From before the foundation of the world to the establishment of His eternal kingdom God continues to bring humanity into the fulfillment of His will.

I. THE PROMISE OF GOD’S SALVATION *PRECEDED* THE FALL.

A. To God, the cross of Christ has always been.

It was a reality before creation when the Word, the second person of the trinity said He would come to earth and die for the sins of humanity.

“At this point Christ had not died yet—historically—but He had in God’s reality.”

B. God counted the atonement as “done” before creation was.

1 Peter 1:20-21 tells us that, “He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who

raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.” NIV

We need to understand that “God’s salvation took place outside of time.”

We might ask how this could be? But we must also ask ourselves, when we want to isolate all of God’s actions to historical time, “What meaning does time have to a timeless God?

II. THE PROMISE OF GOD’S SALVATION PERVADES THE SCRIPTURE.

A. The words of the priest and prophets spoke of the coming sacrifice but their sacrificed lambs spoke of the present reality.

Nowhere in scripture does it say that people in the Old Testament had to wait for salvation. In fact, salvation has always been a present reality because the working of regeneration by the Holy Spirit has always been in effect. Nor was there the absence of grace in the Old Testament.

David prayed in Psalm 51:1-2, “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

And in verse 10-12, “Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

To say that people in the O.T. went to paradise without being regenerated calls into question all of scriptural salvation. To say that salvation was only possible from the time of the New Testament is to say that unregenerate people wrote scripture, performed miracles and spoke for God in the Old Testament times. This, of course, could not be.

B. Salvation has always been possible because the Old Testament saints counted the sacrifice as “done.”

Note several important facts about the means of procuring salvation in the Old and New Testament.

1. The means of obtaining salvation in the O.T. and N.T. are the same: the atoning sacrifice of Christ.
2. The objectives to be realized in salvation are the same: freedom from sin and all that it implies.
3. The persons to benefit from salvation in the O.T. and N.T. are the same: the whole world.
4. The condition on which salvation is received is the same in both O.T. and N.T.: Faith
5. The Agents by which salvation is applied is the same for the O.T. and the N.T.: The Word of God and the Holy Spirit.

There is even evidence that people had their names written in the Lambs Book of Life in both the Old and New Testaments.

Note Exodus 32:32-33. “But now, please forgive their sin—but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written.” The LORD replied to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me I will blot out of my book.”

Compare that with Revelation 3:5, “He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels.”

III. THE PROMISE OF GOD’S SALVATION *PROCURES* THE VICTORY.

A. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ assures us of true salvation.

Peter wrote of our present forgiveness in 1 Peter 1:18-19, “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.” NIV

B. The cross, coupled with the resurrection, provides our hope of glory.

Jesus said in John 17:24, “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.” NIV

The incarnation, life, death and resurrection was the completed revelation of this plan.

CONCLUSION

The significance of these truths can only be completely understood when we see the true motive for the contrary teaching that no one was saved until Pentecost. Dispensationalist developed their doctrine and arguments from a philosophical foundation. They have taught that there was no salvation possible until Pentecost in order to disprove Pentecostal's belief in the significance of Acts 2.

Finally, we see the significance of these truths for those of the Pentecostal faith. Knowing that the working of the Holy Spirit continues as a part of God's continuing plan, we see that the "gift of the Spirit at Pentecost was shown to be a prophetic gift, signally the mission to all nations, and providing the power for the task" of establishing the church and winning the world.

Notes

Compare Jeremiah 9:25-26 "The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will punish all who are circumcised only in the flesh--Egypt, Judah, Edom, Ammon, Moab and all who live in the desert in distant places. For all these nations are really uncircumcised, and even the whole house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart."

With Romans 2:28-29 “A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.”