

Lesson Five – Salvation vs. Destruction

Day One – Salvation of Israel, Part I

Day Two – Salvation of Israel, Part II

Day Three – Salvation of Israel, Part III

Day Four – Jesus the Christ

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Within the mindset of Christianity today, the words *salvation* and/or *saved* generally have one single connotation – deliverance from an eternity in hell. There are varying thoughts on the subject of salvation within this limited view, such as whether or not a person is *actually* saved if they claim to be, and whether or not a Christian can lose their salvation once they've received it. But just as we have learned so far by studying what we thought were simple words like *life* and *death*, the Scriptural definition of salvation is not to be understood so narrowly. Furthermore, in studying words like *salvation*, we need to be careful not to let our present understandings hinge on what we may have learned from the words of men; in other words, we must view all doctrine through the lens of Scripture and *Scripture alone*.

There is very little taught, per se, in the definition of the word *salvation*; therefore, it will be absolutely crucial to define the word by its context. We'll need to understand the word by answering such questions as, "What is a person saved *from*, and *when*?" And most significantly, "How is he/she saved?"

And in order to understand *salvation* in its fullest scope it is important to first understand *life* and *death* as it pertains to the structure of the ages. It is also necessary to always keep in mind man's *created purpose* and the *purpose for man's redemption* – both of which are the same – *to rule*. We must also know and understand *the tripartite nature of man*. We have studied all of this and I hope you will remember these building blocks as we continue to move along in this study.

Review is an absolute necessity, and I encourage you to constantly look back through the previous Lessons to help in your comprehension. I will also, when feasible, write short summations in order to aid in your studies. However, please do not count on *my* words to tell *you* what you've learned! That is only partially helpful since the goal of this study is to get you to rely on what the Scriptures – *and only the Scriptures* – say. So again I encourage you to read *all* the Scriptures prayerfully and thoughtfully.

Let's begin!

Day One – Salvation of Israel, Part I

Before we delve into the definition of *salvation*, let's make sure that we view the *source* of salvation accurately. We must view this in the very same way as we view justification –

Psalm 62:1-2 (A Psalm of David.)

1 My soul waits in silence for God only; from Him is my salvation. 2 He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken.

Psalm 146:3

Do not trust in princes, in mortal man, in whom there is no salvation.

From Whom is salvation?

Why are we not to trust in man (*which would include ourselves*)?

God is indeed the only One Who can save man – at *any* time and in *any* way. Man **cannot** do it for himself.

With that in place, let's now begin defining the words “salvation” (noun) and “save” (verb), both in Hebrew and in Greek, using the Strong's Lexicon. Please remember that the definitions we find are man-made definitions and are *not* God-inspired; however, they are still helpful as tools to guide us through our study of the Scriptures. We will begin with these definitions, but will follow them up with precise study of the Scriptures, utilizing both content and context.

Please look up the following words in your Appendix, and write down the definitions for the following words.

1. salvation (Heb. 03444) -
2. salvation (Heb. 03468) -
3. save (Heb. 02421) -
4. salvation (Heb. 08668) -

5. salvation (Gr. 4991) -

6. save (Gr. 4982) -

From these definitions alone, what is the overall picture you get of the words “salvation” and “save”?

Salvation simply means to be freed, rescued, or delivered *from* something.

Now before we search the Scriptures to find the details of salvation (who, what, where, when, and why), at this point in your understanding what do you suppose mankind needs to be saved from? (Now before you answer *hell*, keep in mind what you’ve learned concerning life and death and man’s created purpose. It is not so much a deliverance from a *place*, but rather deliverance from a *condition*.)

I hope you answered that man needs to be *saved* (delivered, rescued, freed) from death; i.e. his status of *being separated from God*. Remember that ever since Adam sinned man is born into this world *dead* (death being the wages of sin) and he/she must receive life pertaining to all of the three parts of his being. When man has been *saved* from death, *all three parts*, man will be in a position to rule, having been fully redeemed and therefore delivered back into the position for which he was created. This is God’s plan and purpose for man. We’ll call this the “macro-view” of salvation.

Keeping in mind this macro-view of salvation, we will now need to develop a few “micro-views” in order to understand how God uses the concept of salvation in all the various ways throughout the Scriptures. For instance, we will see that the Old Testament portrays Israel as being saved, then *still needing* salvation, *getting* salvation, and *still yet to receive* salvation. We will also see that the New Testament portrays the Christian as *already having been* saved and *possessing* salvation, *in the process of being* saved, and *still yet to be* saved. As we comprehend these varying pictures of salvation, we would need to understand that mankind needs to be *entirely* saved from his separated status from God; he needs to be restored to his originally created purpose, *to rule*. (While this may be confusing on the outset, my hope is that by the end of next week’s Lesson you will have a good grasp of the overall scope.)

To begin this multi-faceted scope of salvation, we’ll start by briefly studying the experiences of Israel throughout their almost 2,000-year history as presented in the Scriptures. Last week we looked at the birth of the nation of Israel through the events of the first Passover as God, through Moses, brought them all out of bondage to slavery in Egypt. We studied this event in connection with the concepts of life and death and

judgment, paying particular attention to the judgment through the death of the first-born and God's provision of a substitutionary sacrifice as a means of deliverance from bondage.

It is essential that we understand the nation of Israel's purpose while we study their history, so let's go back to the initial promises God made to Abraham, and the accompanying details that He swore to accomplish through Abraham and his descendants (specifically only through Isaac and Jacob).¹⁰

God's promises to Abraham are stated progressively throughout Genesis chapters 12 through 22; they are concisely summed up in the following verses –

Genesis 12:1-3

1 Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, to the land which I will show you; 2 And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; 3 And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

Genesis 17:7-8

7 "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. 8 And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

Genesis 22:17-18

17 ...indeed I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your seed shall possess the gate of their enemies. 18 And in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

In Genesis 12:1 God tells Abram (later called Abraham) to leave his country, his relatives, and his father's house. What does God want to show Abram?

According to Genesis 12:2, what does God say He will do for Abram?

In particular, what is stated in Genesis 12:3b?

¹⁰ While it is important to grasp the whole concept of God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, I will only touch on this briefly in this study. If you need further instruction or review I recommend that you read Lesson Five in UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE – BIBLICAL SURVEY. The study is available at www.cornerstonejacksonville.org/resources and www.cornerstonelosgatos.com/BibleStudies.php.)

God states that He will establish an everlasting covenant between Himself and Abraham and with his descendants after him *throughout their generations*. Essentially, what is this covenant about (Gen. 17:7-8)?

In Genesis 22:17-18, what does God promise He will do for Abraham?

In particular, God states that Abraham's descendants would "possess the gate of their enemies." This term may sound ambiguous to our Western ears, but the phrase itself literally means that Abraham's descendants would *rule* and *have governmental control over* their enemies. This is not an insignificant promise.

Further revelation in Genesis tells us that these promises would come specifically through Isaac, the son of promise (cf. Gen. 26:1-5), through *his* son Jacob (cf. Gen. 28:11-15), and through Jacob's twelve sons (who, through their descendants, made up the twelve tribes of Israel). The initial growth of this Nation – from 70 adult males to over 600,000 adult males – occurred while they were sojourning and eventually enslaved in Egypt. God delivered the whole Nation, through Moses, from the bonds of captivity and slavery through mighty judgments, culminating in a tenth judgment that resulted in the deaths of all of the firstborn. Each Hebrew household that escaped this judgment did so by using God's provision of a substitutionary sacrificial death of a lamb.

This Passover was so important that God commanded the nation of Israel to keep this event as an ordinance in order to pass on the details to every subsequent generation –

Exodus 12:24

"And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever.

Exodus 12:42

It is a night to be observed for the LORD for having brought them out from the land of Egypt; this night is for the LORD, to be observed by all the sons of Israel throughout their generations.

Further in the Book of Deuteronomy we see a reminder of this event being given to the second generation out of Egypt. The first generation, you'll remember, failed to believe in God's promises as they stood on the precipice of entering their land, and consequently they all wandered in the wilderness and *died* in the wilderness (except for two, Joshua and Caleb) over the course of forty years, never having entered the Promised Land. This second generation was then given the same opportunity that their fathers rejected. God told Moses to speak these words to them –

Deuteronomy 7:6-8

6 "For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. 7 The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a

mighty hand, and redeemed [06299] you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

In v. 8, the Lord states why He brought the nation of Israel out of Egypt. What does He say?

What oath is He referring to in v. 8? Be specific. (You may want to review the promises given to Abraham.)

The word for “redeemed” found in v. 8 is the Hebrew word *padah* (06299). Look up its definition in your Appendix and write it down below.

Using this definition, please rewrite v. 8 in your own words.

With a mighty hand, God *redeemed* the nation of Israel. He *ransomed* them, *released* them, *delivered* them from the house of slavery and from the hand of the king of Egypt. In other words, God *saved* them. This was Israel's *initial salvation*, the birth of the Nation. From that point onward they were in a position to be led by God to a particular destination, for a specific purpose –

Exodus 19:4-6

4 “You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. 5 Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.”

Why did God save (*deliver, rescue, free*) the nation of Israel?

Let's stop here for today. We'll pick right back up at this spot tomorrow. See you then!

Day Two – Salvation of Israel, Part II

We are covering a lot of information, I know! But what a blessing it is to be the recipient of God's awesome Word and to have this wonderful opportunity to get to know Him better through it! Be sure to begin your day in prayer, and perhaps offer a praise of thanksgiving to our Creator for the preservation of His Word.

As we studied yesterday, the nation of Israel's initial salvation *was for a purpose*. They were redeemed/saved/delivered from bondage in order to become a holy nation, a kingdom of priests, and God's own possession among all the peoples. This purpose, however, cannot be understood apart from the promises that were given to Abraham concerning this Nation made up of his descendants. God promised to make these descendants a great Nation, *through whom He would bless all of the families of the earth as this Nation dwelled in a specific land, while they governed over all other nations*. And God promised to dwell among them, bringing all of these blessings to pass.

Israel's creation and purpose must also be understood within the bigger picture of *mankind's* creation and purpose (Gen. 1:26, 28). All the concepts we have been dealing with are about mankind being created to rule, his fall and the subsequent entrance of sin and death, and God's work of redemption to bring man out of a place of death, into life, so as to restore man back into the position for which he was created. *Time* is about this; *life and death* are about this; and *salvation* is about this. So when we try to address issues such as salvation within these pictures, we need to realize that it is simply not as cut and dry as we may have once thought, that "God saves us from an eternity in hell." It goes way beyond such simple thoughts.

However, let's answer the question that begs asking before we go any further (for it is this matter that seems to be a point of confusion for many), "Was the nation of Israel 'saved'?" In the way that we may have once understood this word "saved," the question may be posed as, "Was the nation of Israel (please note that we're talking about those individuals comprising the Nation, those that the Lord deals with in the Old Testament from the time of the redemption out of Egypt to the time of Christ's crucifixion) ... *was that nation of Israel* in possession of a salvation that delivered them from eternal separation from God?" After studying the past two Lessons, we could also ask the question like this, "Was the nation of Israel dealt with throughout the Old Testament spiritually alive?"

Before we answer that question, let's consider what we've learned so far. Salvation simply has to do with a deliverance from something, and man, upon his/her birth into this world, is born completely and totally dead, in bondage to sin. At this point, the only thing that man needs deliverance from is *this condition of death and the resultant judgment concerning it*. When any person in this condition accepts God's provision on their behalf – the death and shed blood of the substitutionary sacrifice *that God provides*, they become alive and pass out of the judgment of *forever and ever* separation. This impacts their spirit, bringing about their spiritual birth, giving them spiritual understanding and spiritual life. In other words, their spirit is made alive, being *saved from death/separation*.

Deliverance out of a spiritually dead state into a spiritually alive state is *always* the initial work of God in an individual's life. *Always*. It is salvation from eternal (*forever and ever*) death into eternal (*forever and ever*) life. It is always granted *by grace through faith* in the work of Another. In Israel's case, it was granted through their faith in – *belief in* – the provision of the passover lamb, which signified God's work on their behalf. The *means* of this salvation (death and shed blood), and the *end* of this salvation (forever and ever life) is always the same. The *means* and the *end* do not change from one Testament to the other,

from one people group to another. (Read this paragraph a few times to make sure that you fully understand what is being said.)

We absolutely must remember these things when considering Israel's initial salvation on the night of Passover in Egypt, because this would subsequently be an individual's means of initial salvation *throughout the remainder of the Old Testament time*, even up to the death of Jesus, *God's Passover Lamb*. This was the reason for the annually celebrated Feast of Passover. It pointed *directly to Jesus' sacrificial, substitutionary death*, in complete fulfillment of the picture.

Having reviewed all of that, in order to answer the question, "Was the nation of Israel as seen throughout the Old Testament *saved*?" we need to simply answer the following questions:

1. Had the nation of Israel been given a substitutionary, sacrificial provision of death and shed blood, *by God*, in which they could each individually believe?

Yes, on that night of Passover, and annually from that night forward in remembrance, Israel had been given a substitutionary, sacrificial provision.

2. Did the nation of Israel, *to whom God spoke*, have the capacity for spiritual understanding?

Yes, the nation of Israel had spiritual understanding (again, please remember that we're talking about the individuals comprising that Nation that God deals with in the Old Testament). Since its inception this Nation was continuously in and out of God's will, but all the time they were *hearing* and *knowing* what it was that God was speaking to them. They had spiritual discernment and understanding, which has nothing to do with *whether they obeyed or not*. When a person is born dead, according to the image and likeness of Adam, he or she is *separated from God*. Such a person cannot operate in the spiritual realm for their whole being is *dead*. In order for any person to be in a position to commune with God and perceive anything spiritual, they would need to be alive *spiritually*.¹¹

But that's just one piece of the puzzle, isn't it? The nation of Israel, though possessing spiritual life and the capacity to understand spiritual things, has yet to fully achieve *the ultimate purpose* for their initial redemption, which is to dwell in the land that God promised them, within a theocracy, bringing blessings to

¹¹ Just to make sure that you understand the point being made, not everyone who was biologically a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob can be considered "spiritually alive" simply based on their genetic history and the availability of a provision. The point to be grasped is that each individual within the nation of Israel *had that opportunity* to believe in what God had done. If an individual did not believe, then they would **not** be considered to be part of the nation that God addressed with His commands, judgments, and blessings. They would not be within the scope of spiritual activity and would simply not be addressed at all.

all the families of the earth and governing over all of their enemies. Even though they were completely and totally delivered from slavery, *their purpose for that deliverance has yet to be fully achieved.*

(Please note that the nation of Israel *did* possess the land and dwell within a theocracy *for a time*, but that period was marred by disobedience; because of that, the Nation never fully achieved the full scope of God's promises. God did indeed dwell with the nation of Israel, but after Israel's compounded disobedience God removed His glory from amongst the people [cf. Ezek.10-11]. This first covenant, *regulated by the Law*, was to be in place until God made the new covenant with Israel, described by Jeremiah in the following passage –

Jeremiah 31:31-34

31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

This new covenant with Israel spoken of by Jeremiah [with further commentary given in Hebrews 8:7-10:18] is still to come.)

Now that we know that the individuals comprising the nation of Israel did indeed possess spiritual life, let's now consider the Nation's repetitive cycle of deliverance/disobedience and repentance/deliverance as seen throughout the Old Testament. This will add more to the full scope of the picture of salvation.

One of the first uses of the word *salvation* in the Bible occurs in the Book of Exodus at a point in the story where the newly born nation of Israel had just been redeemed out of Egypt in order to be taken to the land that was promised to them by God. After being safely removed from Egypt, the only things that jeopardized their journey to their Promised Land were the Red Sea, which was blocking their path, and their ensuing former captors. Here is what Moses said to them –

Exodus 14:13

But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of the LORD which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever.

God then opened up the Red Sea to allow the recently saved nation of Israel to pass through. Then when they were safely upon the eastern shore, God closed up the Sea, allowing it to swallow up all of Israel's pursuing enemies –

Exodus 14:30

Thus the LORD saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore.

After Israel's *initial salvation* from Egypt, what was the nation of Israel *saved* from as they passed through the Red Sea?

Who *saved* them?

How did God *save* them?

The nation of Israel *was saved* from the enemies who chased them *after* they were *saved* from bondage. Did you catch that? *They were saved from their enemies after they were saved from bondage.* And these events occurred at *different* times.

This newly saved Nation was to journey *out* of Egypt in order to be taken *to* the land promised to their forefathers, for the specific purpose of being established within a theocracy *in the land*, wherein God's blessings would flow to all nations *through* the nation of Israel, as was promised to Abraham. And let's not forget the promise that God gave to Abraham that his descendants would *rule over their enemies*. Hence God's focus on *delivering them, saving them* from their enemies –

Deuteronomy 12:10 (Moses speaking to the second generation)

"When you cross the Jordan and live in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from all your enemies around you so that you live in security..."

What was the nation of Israel to receive while living in the land? How would they live?

Being in this land (and everything that it entailed) was the Nation's redeemed *purpose*. And this establishment in the land was to be a blessing to Israel as well as the other nations of the earth. Read the following passage, paying close attention to what God had said would happen to Israel once they were in the Promised Land. He promised them awesome blessings –

Deuteronomy 28:1-14 (Spoken to the second generation)

1 "Now it shall be, if you will diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. 2 And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you will obey the LORD your God. 3 Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. 4 Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock. 5 Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. 6 Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out."

7 "The LORD will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they shall come out against you one way and shall flee before you seven ways. 8 The LORD will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you. 9 The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you will keep the

commandments of the LORD your God, and walk in His ways. 10 So all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of you.

11 And the LORD will make you abound in prosperity, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your beast and in the produce of your ground, in the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you. 12 The LORD will open for you His good storehouse, the heavens, to give rain to your land in its season and to bless all the work of your hand; and you shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

13 And the LORD shall make you the head and not the tail, and you only shall be above, and you shall not be underneath, if you will listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I charge you today, to observe them carefully, 14 and do not turn aside from any of the words which I command you today, to the right or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

Briefly write out what God said He would do for Israel.

What did God require in return from Israel (vv. 1, 9, 13, 14)?

This entire scenario was *conditional* and would only come to pass *if they would obey God's voice*. God had previously stated to the nation of Israel some very specific consequences for disobedience –

Leviticus 26:13-17

13 “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so that you should not be their slaves, and I broke the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect. 14 But if you do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments, 15 if, instead, you reject My statutes, and if your soul abhors My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, and so break My covenant [the Mosaic covenant], 16 I, in turn, will do this to you: I will appoint over you a sudden terror, consumption and fever that shall waste away the eyes and cause the soul to pine away; also, you shall sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies shall eat it up. 17 And I will set My face against you so that you shall be struck down before your enemies; and those who hate you shall rule over you, and you shall flee when no one is pursuing you.

What did God say that He would do to the nation of Israel if they rejected His statutes and didn't carry out all of His commandments (vv. 16 and 17)?

In particular, what does the second half of v. 17 say?

Simply stated, God expected (and still expects) obedience from His redeemed people. And if Israel did not obey God's voice, He would allow them to be struck down by their enemies – which were, in essence, every other nation – and be *ruled over* by these enemies. These were very harsh consequences considering that Israel was supposed to rule over *them*, not the other way around. And if the Nation found themselves in this condition of disobedience, *as God's redeemed people*, God expected the Nation to repent and return to Him in order that He could deliver them – and *save them* – according to His initial promises to Abraham.

Let's continue with the passage from Leviticus –

Leviticus 26:40-42

40 “If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me – 41 I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies – or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity, 42 then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land.

What does God say that He will do for the nation of Israel if they confess their iniquities committed against Him and humble their hearts (v. 42)?

What is the covenant that is being referred to?

What does God mean by saying He will remember the covenant and remember the land? What would that mean for Israel? Give details if you can.

This restoration of Israel would, in essence, be God *saving them* from the very recompense He meted out to them as a consequence for their disobedience. And this is exactly what we see throughout their history, a repetitive cycle of disobedience leading to judgment, followed by their repentance and God's deliverance. But the latter never lasted very long, for they would fall into wickedness again, starting the cycle all over again. So instead of Israel becoming the head of all nations, bringing blessings to all the families of the earth, the Nation *as a firstborn son of God* became a disobedient and stubborn son to God, *not* performing God's will as He had set forth. They did indeed occupy the land for a period of time, but never did they experience complete rest and deliverance from all of their enemies, being fully blessed and fully blessing others. The nation of Israel received a just recompense for their disobedience in exact accordance with God's stated Word.

We'll continue with these thoughts tomorrow.

Day Three – The Salvation of Israel, Part III

Before you begin today, remember to lift your heart up to God and allow Him to minister to you during your study time. If you feel any prompting in any particular direction, listen to His leading and take the time to follow Him.

We are going to pick right up from where we left off yesterday, so you may want to do a quick review if you feel it necessary. Briefly stated, we've seen that Israel's ongoing salvation – from their enemies and from the consequences of their disobedience (precipitated by repentance, of course) – had nothing to do with their initial salvation or any type of deliverance from "hell," but everything to do with their *restoration* to the purpose for which they were created, which was to rule with God, bringing blessings to all the nations and having peace and safety from all their enemies.

The following Psalm gives a history lesson of the Jewish people, with their many failures in living up to what God had intended for them. We can see that God never gives up on His promises; *on the contrary*, He will bring to pass every Word that He speaks. But He is merciful, forgiving, and patient with His people and He shows that patience throughout the pages of the Old Testament. Let's study this particular passage, written by an Israelite who sees clearly where his people have been, and who diligently hopes for where they will yet be.

Psalms 106:1-48

1 Praise the LORD! Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting. 2 Who can speak of the mighty deeds of the LORD, or can show forth all His praise? 3 How blessed are those who keep justice, who practice righteousness at all times! 4 Remember me, O LORD, in Thy favor toward Thy people; visit me with Thy salvation, 5 that I may see the prosperity of Thy chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, that I may glory with Thine inheritance.

According to v. 3, who is "blessed"?

What is this writer calling out for (v. 4)?

According to v. 5, why does he want to be visited by “Thy salvation”?

Continuing in the passage –

6 We have sinned like our fathers, we have committed iniquity, we have behaved wickedly. 7 Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Thy wonders; they did not remember Thine abundant kindnesses, but rebelled by the sea, at the Red Sea. 8 Nevertheless He saved them for the sake of His name, that He might make His power known. 9 Thus He rebuked the Red Sea and it dried up; and He led them through the deeps, as through the wilderness. 10 So He saved them from the hand of the one who hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. 11 And the waters covered their adversaries; not one of them was left. 12 Then they believed His words; they sang His praise.

This writer comments on the events of the first generation. What does he say they did wrong (vv. 6 and 7)?

Nevertheless, God *saved* them anyway. Though they had already been saved out of slavery by the death and shed blood of the paschal lambs in Egypt, what did He save them from thereafter (v. 10)? To which event is this referencing?

And because of God’s act of salvation, what did they believe (v. 12)?

So why did God save them (v. 8)? And did this have anything to do with their initial redemption?

Israel being saved from their enemies had *nothing* to do with their initial salvation (except that their initial salvation had to happen *first*) but *everything* to do with accomplishing *the purpose* for their redemption.

Continuing –

13 They quickly forgot His works; they did not wait for His counsel, 14 but craved intensely in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. 15 So He gave them their request, but sent a wasting disease among them. 16 When they became envious of Moses in the camp, and of Aaron, the holy one of the LORD, 17 the earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and engulfed the company of Abiram. 18 And a fire blazed up in their company; the flame consumed the wicked. 19 They made a calf in Horeb, and worshiped a molten image. 20

Thus they exchanged their glory for the image of an ox that eats grass. 21 They forgot God their Savior, who had done great things in Egypt, 22 wonders in the land of Ham, and awesome things by the Red Sea. 23 Therefore He said that He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen one stood in the breach before Him, to turn away His wrath from destroying them.

They quickly forgot God's works, and they did not wait for His counsel. Instead, what did they do (v. 14)?

This is the same generation that was saved out of bondage in Egypt; the same generation that escaped the judgment that day. However, they forgot God's works and engaged in *wicked* behavior. What does v. 21 say?

They forgot their Savior. And because of this, what did God want to do (v.23)?

What/who interceded for them, to turn God's wrath away from destroying them?

Continuing –

24 Then they despised the pleasant land; they did not believe in His word, 25 but grumbled in their tents; they did not listen to the voice of the LORD. 26 Therefore He swore to them, that He would cast them down in the wilderness, 27 and that He would cast their seed among the nations, and scatter them in the lands. 28 They joined themselves also to Baal-peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead. 29 Thus they provoked Him to anger with their deeds; and the plague broke out among them. 30 Then Phinehas stood up and interposed; and so the plague was stayed. 31 And it was reckoned to him for righteousness, to all generations forever.

According to vv. 24 and 25, what did the first generation of Israel then do?

And because of that, what did the Lord swear to do (v. 26-27)

Again we see Israel's failure and the Lord's resultant anger aimed at destroying them for their disobedience. But once again God's anger was stayed due to the intercession of a faithful man, Phinehas.

Continuing –

32 They also provoked Him to wrath at the waters of Meribah, so that it went hard with Moses on their account; 33 Because they were rebellious against His Spirit, He spoke rashly with his lips. 34 They did not destroy the peoples, as the LORD commanded them, 35 but they mingled with the nations, and learned their practices, 36 and served their idols, which became a snare to them. 37 They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons, 38 and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with the blood. 39 Thus they became unclean in their practices, and played the harlot in their deeds. 40 Therefore the anger of the LORD was kindled against His people, and He abhorred His inheritance. 41 Then He gave them into the hand of the nations; and those who hated them ruled over them. 42 Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were subdued under their power.

The Nation continued their cycle of disobedience, bringing it to such a level of wickedness that God again intervened and brought about a judgment. What did the Nation do that so angered the Lord?

Because of these actions, what did God do (vv. 41 and 42)?

Continuing –

43 Many times He would deliver them; they, however, were rebellious in their counsel, and so sank down in their iniquity. 44 Nevertheless He looked upon their distress, when He heard their cry; 45 and He remembered His covenant for their sake, and relented according to the greatness of His lovingkindness. 46 He also made them objects of compassion in the presence of all their captors.

This is amazing, isn't it? Even though *God Himself* delivered/saved the nation of Israel from their enemies time and time again (and then saved them from the judgment that rightfully came to them due to their wickedness), they were "rebellious in their counsel." *Nevertheless*, what did God do, and most importantly, *when* did He do it (v. 44)?

What did God remember?

It's all about the covenant, the oath made to Abraham that his descendants would possess that gates of their enemies and dwell securely in a land with God at their head, bringing blessing to all the nations.

And so the writer of this Psalm ends with this cry on behalf of his people, *God's* people –

47 Save us, O LORD our God, and gather us from among the nations, to give thanks to Thy holy name, and glory in Thy praise. 48 Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting even to everlasting. And let all the people say, "Amen." Praise the LORD!

This Psalm is simply a reiteration of the historical account of Israel from Moses' day to David's day, and in it we can clearly see a recurring theme throughout the Old Testament. Through the mouths of prophets God repeatedly told Israel that they needed to *repent*, and *when they did*, He would in turn *save them from their sins* and *their enemies*, into whose hands God had placed them due to their disobedience. Again and again the nation of Israel was told to repent of their behavior, and start obeying God again in order that God's will could be accomplished through them as He had originally stated in the covenant He made with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Israel would listen for a while, then repent for a while, and then obey God for a while...and then back into lawlessness and wickedness they would fall.

Throughout it all, however, God remained faithful and true to His promises. And it is amid this cycle of disobedience and repentance that we see the entrance of *the Savior, the Deliverer, Jesus the Messiah*. We'll be discussing this tomorrow.

See you then.

Day Four – Jesus the Christ

I hope that some pieces are starting to come together for you, and that by putting these pieces together you are able to better connect the dots within the Scriptures that give the overall perfect picture of God's will for us. It's an awesome picture, isn't it?

You'll remember that the word "salvation" means simply *to be freed or delivered*, and as we study this word we must derive from the context *who* is delivered from *what*, remembering all the while the purpose for mankind's creation and the reason for mankind's redemption. At this point please make sure that you clearly understand Israel's initial salvation from bondage in Egypt, which was completely and totally accomplished by God alone. And remember that Israel had been saved out of Egypt for the purpose of being placed in the land of promise within a theocracy, as the head of all the nations, as was promised to Abraham and his descendants. The Nation's deliverance into this land, with the promised subsequent rest from their enemies, was to be effected by God, *but it was conditioned upon the Nation's behaviors*. God clearly stated that if they disobeyed, He would dole out a just recompense. Yet, He also clearly stated that if they would but repent of their disobedient behaviors He would forgive them. As we know, Israel failed to follow through with obedience (precipitated by repentance) to the conditions that were set forth by the Word of the Lord.

After centuries of cyclical obedience followed by disobedience and resultant judgment, followed by repentance and deliverance, the kingdom and nation of Israel was divided. For centuries the Nation consisted of two separate kingdoms (Northern – Israel, Southern – Judah) until they were both, at separate times, eventually overrun and captured by their enemies in what began a long period of subjection under Gentile rule.

Now the stage was set for the entrance of the Messiah.

Let's briefly study who Jesus is and why He came.¹² The name Jesus literally means, "Jehovah (God) saves," which also states His purpose. Israel, we know, was God's chosen Nation and they had a purpose to which they never fully attained. Throughout their history God would save the Nation from the hands of their enemies, but would eventually hand them over again due to Israel's unabashed disobedience. All the while, the prophets of the Lord spoke to the Nation of the One Deliverer, the One Savior who would bring all of God's promises to pass for Israel. The Nation was waiting for this Promised One.

Let's begin by reading some foundational Scriptures that pointed to the coming of this Promised One. We could look at many, *many* Old Testament Scriptures that speak of Messiah's first coming, but here are just a few that draw the big picture of expectation on Israel's behalf –

II Samuel 7:12-14

[The prophet Nathan speaking the words of the Lord to King David] **12 "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me..."**

II Samuel 7:18-19

18 Then David the king went in and sat before the LORD, and he said, "Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me this far? 19 And yet this was insignificant in Thine eyes, O Lord GOD, for Thou hast spoken also of the house of Thy servant concerning the distant future."

What is David told about his descendant? Be specific.

This Son of David would have a kingdom that would last *forever*. This *Son* of David would also be the *Son* of God. The nation of Israel expected this Coming One to establish Israel in her rightful place as the head of the nations, ruling over all other nations in the ultimate fulfillment of their intended purpose as set forth in the promises made to their forefathers.

Specifically in v. 19, what did David understand about *the timing* of this descendant?

¹² There is a whole mini-study in the UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE series devoted to this subject. It is titled JESUS THE MESSIAH and is available on the aforementioned websites. While I am only covering a brief overview of the Messiah, you can certainly study this at length using the study book as a tool.

Hold on to these thoughts as we continue. Let's now read the following familiar passage –

Isaiah 9:6-7

6 “For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.”

Notice that v. 7 brings the prophecy of this “Son” right back to the throne of David, as was mentioned in II Samuel chapter seven. What does Isaiah say about this son who will be given to the nation of Israel?

Just from this passage you can imagine that Israel should have been expecting the ultimate kingdom when this One came – a kingdom of peace and righteousness and justice where Israel would dwell securely and permanently, with no end to the increase in this perfect government.

And of utmost importance, the nation of Israel expected that this One, this King, would *save* them –

Luke 2:11

...for today in the city of David there has been born for you [Israel] a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Matthew 1:21

"And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins."

Who would Jesus save and what would Jesus save them from?

This Son who was to be born to Israel would *save them from their sins*. And wasn't it *the sins* that they kept committing that were preventing them from their being established in the land within a theocracy as was promised?

Now let's read what Zacharias proclaimed immediately after the birth of his son, John (the Baptist). Zacharias was told by an angel that his son would be the messenger spoken about by the prophet Isaiah (cf. Isa. 40:3-5) who would prepare the way of the Promised One (the Messiah or Christ). Read through this passage a couple of times before answering the questions that follow.

Luke 1:67-79

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: 68 “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, 69 and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant—70 as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old—71 salvation

FROM OUR ENEMIES, And FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US; 72 to show mercy toward our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant, 73 the oath which He swore to Abraham our father, 74 to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, 75 in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.

76 “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS; 77 to give to His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins, 78 because of the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise from on high shall visit us, 79 TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

Zacharias was surely excited about what the birth of his son meant for his people. According to v. 76, what did Zacharias understand about his son?

According to vv. 68 and 69, what did Zacharias believe concerning what God was ready to do for Israel?

According to Zacharias, the Lord “has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old.” Why is there a connection to the house of David? (Remember II Samuel 7:12-14.)

Verse 71 tells us what they would be *saved from*. Please rewrite the verse.

Then in v. 72, Zacharias brings it all back to the “holy covenant, the oath which He swore to Abraham our father...” What was the gist of the Abrahamic covenant and how does what Zacharias said fit into it? (Reference p. 92 if necessary.)

Verses 74 and 75 bear a striking resemblance to the Isaiah passage we just looked at (Isa. 9:7). What are the similarities?

Did you notice in v. 77 that John the Baptist would give the Lord’s people the “*knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins*” to prepare them for the Lord’s arrival? This phrase may sound benign, or it may not make sense to you in light of what we have just studied, so let’s break it down –

- John the Baptist would give Israel (a spiritually aware people, therefore in possession of spiritual life)...
- the knowledge of (the comprehension of, an awareness of)...
- salvation (that which they were waiting for, that which they needed from God, in order to be delivered from their enemies who were ruling over them; the salvation that Messiah would bring)...
- BY the forgiveness of sins (this salvation would be received by repenting and having their sins forgiven).

And what was John the Baptist’s message? Let’s read it –

Matthew 3:1-2, 6

1 Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 2 "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

6...and they were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, as they confessed their sins.

John was telling the individuals comprising the nation of Israel to *repent*. Why did he tell them to repent (v. 2)?

I apologize for sounding like a broken record at this point, but it is crucial for you to keep in mind what you have learned concerning the saved status of this people to whom Jesus came! *They possessed spiritual life.* Their problem was **not** that they were eternally “dead” (separated); on the contrary, they were in fact eternally saved, but in such a disobedient state that they were following after *their flesh* and not *the spirit*. That is why John the Baptist came with a message of *repentance*; that is why Jesus came with a message of *repentance*. The individuals making up this nation of Israel needed to repent in order for God to bring about their deliverance – their salvation – in exact accordance with Abraham’s promises.

So John the Baptist surely was preparing a people for the Lord, wasn’t he? He was proclaiming that they needed to repent of and confess their sins, and by doing so they would indeed be forgiven. This was done so that when the Lord came (the Promised *Son of David* and *Son of God*), He could bring salvation to Israel – *salvation from their sins* (Matt. 1:21). And as a result of their being cleansed from their sins, salvation would come in the form of *deliverance from their enemies and from those who ruled over them*. This was all in accord with Abraham’s promises that his descendants would dwell securely in a land, within a theocracy, receiving the blessings of the Lord and, in turn, blessing the surrounding Gentile nations. (This is extremely important to grasp, so re-read the last two paragraphs a few times if necessary.)

But this message that John brought was quite particular. This kingdom being offered by John, and then by the One born King of the Jews, was “the kingdom of heaven” (literally, the kingdom of *the heavens*.)¹³ You’ll remember from Lesson One that this kingdom of the heavens is currently being ruled by Satan and his angels (cf. Eph. 6:12), but will, in that coming age, be ruled by Christ and His co-heirs (cf. Heb. 2:5-8; Rom. 8:17). This was the kingdom that could have been Israel’s at this point had they repented from their sins and believed in their Savior, Jesus the Messiah. This Jesus was the One Who would save them from their enemies and establish them in the kingdom.

But as we have seen, Israel’s spiritual condition had remained unchanged for centuries, and it was no different when Jesus arrived on the scene. The Prophet Isaiah had described the Nation as follows –

Isaiah 1:2-7

2 Listen, O heavens, and hear, O earth; for the LORD speaks, "Sons I have reared and brought up, but they have revolted against Me. 3 An ox knows its owner, and a donkey its master's manger, but Israel does not know, My people do not understand. 4 Alas, sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly! They have abandoned the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they have turned away from Him. 5 Where will you be stricken again, as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. 6 From the sole of the foot even to the head there is nothing sound in it, only bruises, welts, and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, nor softened with oil. 7 Your land is desolate, your cities are burned with fire, your fields – strangers are devouring them in your presence; it is desolation, as overthrown by strangers.

¹³ While the Old Testament prophets did indeed deal primarily with the earthly portion of the kingdom, it must be remembered that the heavenly portion of the kingdom can be seen throughout the pages of the Old Testament as well. Remember that Abraham was promised descendants “as the sand on the seashore” (earthly) and “as the stars in the heavens” (heavenly). This heavenly portion of the kingdom can be seen in types and pictures as well (e.g. Jacob’s ladder, the rights of primogeniture, the present system of rulership seen in Daniel chapter 9, and much more). The kingdom of the heavens has to do with mysteries which were fully opened up in the New Testament. We will spend a bit more time on this in Lessons Six and Seven.

The nation of Israel was *so* sick, *so* disobedient, and *so* far from the Lord that they desperately needed to turn around (i.e. *repent*) and get back on track. They needed cleansing; they needed healing. Jesus came to them offering healing, salvation, and deliverance –

Matthew 13:15

....FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I SHOULD HEAL THEM.

Matthew 4:17

From that time Jesus began to preach and say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Luke 13:5

"I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

Matthew 15:24

But He answered and said, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Israel, though, did not choose this salvation nor did they accept their King. They not only exhibited a *lack of repentance*, but they chose to put to death the Son of David, the Son of God, the One who came offering salvation – *salvation* from their sins, *deliverance* from Gentile power, and *entrance into the kingdom*.

John 19:14-16

14 Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" 15 They therefore cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." 16 So he then delivered Him to them to be crucified.

We'll study more on this tomorrow.

Day Five – Salvation Sent to the Church

We studied yesterday that the nation of Israel had made a corporate choice. As a Nation they chose to put to death their King, the Greater Son of David. Although many individuals within the Nation did *not* participate in this choice (instead they believed in Jesus as their Messiah), the outcome was that the nation of Israel *as a whole* did not receive salvation from their enemies, a restoration and fulfillment of the covenants made to Abraham and to Moses.

However, their loss was our gain. Paul says it this way –

Romans 11:11-15

11 I say then, they [Israel, speaking of their rejection of their Messiah] did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. 12 Now if their transgression be riches for the world and their failure be riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! 13 But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14 if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. 15

For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?

By Israel's transgression, what came to the Gentiles (v. 11)?

Why did this salvation come to the Gentiles (v.11b)?

What could this jealousy have done for Paul's fellow countrymen, the Jews (vv. 14 and 15)?

This salvation that came to the Gentiles was to move Israel to jealousy, and if Israel had gotten jealous and repented (doing exactly what they should have done when directed so by John the Baptist and then Jesus), then they would have been *saved* (v. 14) and received *life* (v. 15). Salvation and life *in this context* has to do with the nation of Israel achieving their purpose for creation and getting back into fellowship with God.

If Israel as a whole had repented at the urging of Christ's messengers, *even after killing the Christ*, they would have been accepted – *delivered, saved* – in exact accordance with the words God had already spoken (cf. Lev. 26:40-42). Paul delivers a lengthy discourse to the men of Israel in an attempt to get them to repent and believe in the message they had rejected –

Acts 13:16-39

16 And Paul stood up, and motioning with his hand, he said, "Men of Israel, and you who fear God, listen: 17 the God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt, and with an uplifted arm He led them out from it. 18 And for a period of about forty years He put up with them in the wilderness. 19 And when He had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, He distributed their land as an inheritance--all of which took about four hundred and fifty years. 20 And after these things He gave them judges until Samuel the prophet."

To whom is Paul speaking (v.16)?

Would these be men with the capacity for spiritual understanding?

The issues that Paul was dealing with had nothing to do with the salvation which they already possessed. Therefore, do the issues being dealt with regarding Israel's repentance have anything to do with *forever and ever* (our concept of eternity)?

Notice that Paul's emphasis is on their forefathers' deliverance out of slavery in Egypt for the purpose of their placement in the land as an inheritance – *the very reason they were redeemed in the first place*.

Continuing –

21 “And then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for forty years. 22 And after He had removed him, He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, ‘I HAVE FOUND DAVID the son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MY HEART, who will do all My will.’ 23 From the offspring of this man, according to promise, God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, 24 after John had proclaimed before His coming a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.”

Paul is now specifically focusing on the removal of the first king of Israel, Saul, and the establishment of the second king, David. He then transitions directly to Jesus, whom he calls Israel’s Savior (v. 23). What is the promise he refers to in v. 23 and how does it connect with Israel needing a Savior?

Continuing with Paul’s speech in Acts chapter thirteen –

25 "And while John was completing his course, he kept saying, 'What do you suppose that I am? I am not He. But behold, one is coming after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.' 26 Brethren, sons of Abraham's family, and those among you who fear God, to us the word of this salvation is sent out. 27 For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him. 28 And though they found no ground for putting Him to death, they asked Pilate that He be executed. 29 And when they had carried out all that was written concerning Him, they took Him down from the cross and laid Him in a tomb.

30 But God raised Him from the dead; 31 and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His witnesses to the people. 32 And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, 33 that God has fulfilled this promise to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'THOU ART MY SON; TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN THEE.' 34 And as for the fact that He raised Him up from the dead, no more to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: 'I WILL GIVE YOU THE HOLY and SURE blessings OF DAVID.' 35 Therefore He also says in another Psalm, 'THOU WILT NOT ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.' 36 For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep, and was laid among his fathers, and underwent decay; 37 but He whom God raised did not undergo decay.

38 Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, 39 and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.

Paul's speech to the nation of Israel is in exact keeping with God's intended purpose for Israel from the beginning. What does Paul say in v. 26?

Since this is being addressed to the "sons of Abraham's family," what exactly is "the word of this salvation" that is being sent out?

Paul states that this "good news" (v. 32) of the promise made to the fathers, the "word of this salvation," is being sent out and preached to the nation of Israel so that they would recognize that this Jesus *they killed* was the One that they were waiting for. This Jesus was raised from the dead; this Jesus appeared to many over a period of many days, and these people are now His witnesses concerning His resurrection. This Jesus was the fulfillment of the promises made to David; this Jesus was the One who would deliver them, save them, and set them up as the head of the nations, with God *in the flesh* as their King, as was promised to their forefathers.

Stephen made the same plea to the Nation in Acts chapter seven, as did Peter in Acts chapter three.

In v. 38 Paul sums it up in much the same way as did John the Baptist: forgiveness of sins is available through Jesus the Christ. What does Paul say in v. 39?

Paul clearly states that those who would believe that Jesus *was who He said He was* would be freed – *delivered, saved, given life*. He goes on to say that this type of freedom having to do with the "good news" of the promise made to the fathers (v. 32)," and the "holy and sure blessings of David (v. 34)" was *unable* to be realized through the Law of Moses (v. 39). Hence the coming of the Promised One, God Himself, who was (and still is) the fulfillment of, and not the abolishment of, the Law and the Prophets (cf. Matt 5:17).

But Israel again continued to reject the message which was given to them from the many witnesses and messengers within the Book of Acts. The message to the nation of Israel regarding their repenting was silenced with their complete and total rejection as a whole, which occurred sometime just before the year 70 A.D. As Paul clearly states it –

Acts 28:27-29

27 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES; OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD

HEAL THEM.'" 28 "Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also listen."

29 And when he had spoken these words, the Jews departed, having a great dispute among themselves.

The salvation of God was now going to the Gentiles; Israel had been set aside because of the hardness of their hearts. And as a result, we know historically that God did not “save” Israel but instead handed them over to their enemies in a horrific – and *seemingly* final – manner when Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed in 70 A.D. (But Israel’s story is not over!)

We’re going to end right here. Next week we will pick up at this point and continue to look at exactly what “this salvation” is that has been sent to the Gentiles.

See you next week.

