



God's Two Distinct Salvations

**Berean Series
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Public Address

When considering our subject, it may be asked why there should be two salvations provided by God for His human family. Most people who think of themselves as Christians believe that all good people go to heaven when they die, and all other people, they think, have no hope of salvation. Most people think it is now or never in this life for salvation.

Let us first of all examine what the Bible says about the hope of a heavenly salvation for Christians, those who really accept the Lord as their Saviour and follow in the steps of Jesus. On the last night of our Lord Jesus' life on earth, He gave a wonderful assurance to His faithful Apostles that He was going away to heaven to prepare a place for them, and for all true Christians who finish the earthly way in full faith and trust in Him.

We will turn to John 14:1-3, which the Lord spoke to His disciples on that last night of His earthly life, after He had given them the Memorial Supper. The lovely fourteenth to seventeenth chapters of John were given to them on that same night, before the extreme experience in the Garden of Gethsemane, His mock trial and ultimately His death on the

cross. The opening verses of John 14 read — “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” There are many places of abode, but yet there was no place for Jesus and His Bride in heaven. He was going to prepare a place for them, despite the “many mansions” in “my Father’s house.” He had to prepare a place for them because they were a New Creation. The Lord Jesus was the first of this New Creation, when He was begotten of the holy spirit at Jordan. So this prepared place was going to be available so His faithful ones could be installed with Him in heaven. This group began to be chosen only at our Lord’s first advent and after.

On that important last night of Jesus’ earthly life, He informed His Apostles that He must leave them. Peter’s reaction to this information is most helpful to us, and we note our Lord’s words to His little band of disciples — “Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto

you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards" — John 13:33-36. Peter, like us, did not know his own weakness at that time. He wished to follow the Lord to heaven right then. But in a few hours, he denied Jesus three times. Yet before his denial of his Master, Jesus said "**thou shalt follow me afterwards.**" How loving was our dear Lord to Peter, and to us in our mistakes!

Jesus' further words to Peter are also helpful to us, as we have them in Luke 22 from verse 28 — "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." Peter needed converting before he was ready for heaven. He

needed training, preparing for the prepared place. But Jesus, knowing that his heart was true and right, prayed for him, that his faith fail not. Like Peter, we need our Lord's intercession and forgiveness, and the prayers and forgiveness of one another.

After Peter was converted and receiving the Lord's blessing after Pentecost, he writes so beautifully about the place Christ went away to prepare even for Peter who denied Him, and all who prove faithful followers, as recorded in 1 Pet.1:3-5 — "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Christ had gone away to prepare a place for Peter. Christ had prayed for Peter, that his faith fail not. He went away to prepare a place for everybody else like Peter. "Reserved in heaven for you," Peter said — for those who walk in the steps of the Master as Peter did after he was converted. "Reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto

salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Everyone who enters into the prepared place enters to reign with Christ a thousand years, and we shall see the great purpose for that in a moment.

Other texts confirm this heavenly salvation for those who not only truly believe on the Lord, but who trust Him fully. It is necessary to note that the followers of the Master are not carried to heaven on flowery beds of ease; we are in our apprenticeship, shall we say, our training for this wonderful heavenly prepared place. In Phil. 1:29 we read — "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." That is to prove our training, when we are kept by the power of God, that we allow ourselves to be kept, to allow God to work in us to will and do in us His good will.

Col. 1:12,13 also confirms this wonderful heavenly calling, as follows — "Giving thanks until the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." As we allow God to work in us, to do His good will and pleasure, to respond to His training, like Peter who responded so beautifully, it is our privilege

to co-operate with the Lord now in preparation for the wonderful prepared place in heaven for those who are proved worthy of that inheritance.

It is necessary, of course, to see that all hope of the heavenly calling is based on the acceptance of Christ as our Saviour, and the yielding of our whole being to God in full consecration. The outline of this procedure is depicted so helpfully for us in Romans 3 from verse 23. Paul was much used of God, and teaches us beautifully in this passage of Scripture — “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.” God looks at all those who are thus justified through the perfection of Christ, not imputing their sins to them.

We would like to quote one more text which clearly shows the heavenly salvation for all faithful followers of the Gospel Age. It is in John 14:19, which Jesus spoke on this same

last night of His earthly life. Our Lord was trying to condition His disciples for the time when He must leave them. He had been telling them over and over again that He would go. It never seemed to register with them that He would leave them. How could they grasp it at that time? He had been with them for 3½ years, teaching and blessing them with His truth. Now he is telling them — “Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye (shall) see me: because I live, ye shall live also.” He knew that the Father would raise Him from death, because of His faithfulness. They would go to that wonderful prepared place and be with Him. But — “henceforth the world seeth me no more.” The world of mankind will never see Jesus again, but His disciples would follow Him afterwards.

Now we have the important question — Is salvation possible for the world of mankind, who do not become Christians? The majority of mankind have never heard the name of Jesus, the name everyone must hear and know and accept to have life on any plane of existence. According to the creeds of the churches, those who do not become Christians have no hope of salvation. But we hope to show from the Bible that the love of God embraces each and every member of the human family.

In Genesis 2:7 we have a very plain explanation of the creation of the first human being, Adam, as follows — “The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” God did not breathe into his nostrils a soul, but the union of the body and breath of life created a living being. The New Testament, of course, confirms the Old Testament respecting this important truth. In 1 Cor. 15:45-47 we have Paul’s teaching in regard to mankind’s creation and salvation, as follows — “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the **earth, earthy**: the second man is the Lord from heaven.” Man is absolutely of the earth. The only beings who will ever be of the spirit nature are those, beginning at Pentecost, who are spirit-begotten. If Adam had been obedient in the Garden of Eden he would have remained perfect and lived forever. So in the wonderful years of Christ’s kingdom, Garden of Eden conditions will exist right throughout the earth, and all the obedient of mankind will live forever. Satan’s first lie was — “Thou

shalt not surely die” — Gen. 3:4. But death, absolute death, was the penalty for sin. Mankind would have remained forever dead if God had not provided a Saviour. Christ gave Himself a ransom for all, paying the penalty for man so he could be raised up out of death. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” — John 3:16. The majority of mankind have never heard the name of Jesus, but they will have such an opportunity, in due time. That is what the wonderful kingdom time is for — a thousand years set aside to give mankind an opportunity of knowing about the great sacrifice Christ provided for them, and if they are obedient, they will gain everlasting life. To make salvation possible Christ had to die, to provide the ransom-price.

We would like to read some verses relating to the period after the Flood, to see the continuity of God’s promise concerning the earth. When we speak of the end of the world, we mean the end of a dispensation. In Genesis 8:20-22 we read how Noah, having the spirit of God in his heart, prepared the Ark for the salvation of himself and his family, eight persons. After the waters had subsided we read — “And Noah builded an altar unto the

LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease." With reference to "while the earth remaineth", we read — "The earth abideth for ever" — Eccles. 1:4. Mankind will ultimately be perfect, to God's praise. In the intervening years the human family populated the earth. The verses in Genesis assure us that the earth will continue, to the praise of God and the benefit of the whole human family for all time.

Following the Flood in Noah's day, God dealt extensively with Abram, who was afterwards called Abraham. In Genesis 12 God caused Abram to go to a place he did not know anything about, and in Gen. 13:14-17 we have a wonderful promise, which reads — "And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and east-

ward and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that If a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.” Then in Gen. 15:18 we read — “In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

Later, Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son Isaac. God tested his faith right to the last, and then said — “Lay not thine hand upon the lad.” Genesis 22:15-18 follows — “And the angel of the LORD called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and they seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.” We note particularly the two seeds in this promise to Abraham, as

the “stars of heaven” and the “sand upon the sea shore.”

We are helped in our understanding of these two seeds by Gal. 3:16,29. Here again the New Testament explains what is meant by the Old Testament, and the verses read — “Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Here we have explained Christ the Head, and the Church which is His Body — Abraham’s spiritual seed which will be the means of blessing all the families of the earth. There will be Garden of Eden conditions throughout the earth — paradise restored. In fact the prophets tell us that the world will be like the Garden of Eden, and that nothing shall hurt nor destroy in all God’s holy mountain, or kingdom — Isa. 11:9.

There are some interesting verses in Acts 7:2-5. The plan of God is outlined here beautifully. Verse 2 tells us of Abraham having been in Mesopotamia. From verse 3 we read that God said to him — “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt

in Charran: and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he would give it to him for a possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child." Abraham was under the death sentence, and he died. But he is coming back to receive God's promise in the resurrection day. He could not keep on living; he was under condemnation as well as everybody else, but he accepted the inheritance by faith. In John 8 our Lord, speaking to the Jews who claimed that they had Abraham for their father, said that if they were Abraham's children they would do the works of Abraham. Verse 56 — "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." Abraham saw by faith the time of Christ's kingdom, the outcome of His sacrifice to redeem all the families of the earth. Abraham rejoiced to see Christ's kingdom day. So much so, he obeyed God and would have sacrificed his son if God required it.

In John II we have the story of the time when Jesus was away from Bethany when Lazarus took sick. Jesus did not return and cure the sickness, but allowed Lazarus to die. In verse 4, when Jesus heard the message from

the sisters of Lazarus, He said — “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.” When our Lord eventually reached Bethany He conversed with Martha. She said — “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” Jesus said to her — “I am the resurrection and the life.” He proceeded to restore Lazarus to life then, to illustrate the fact that every human being would be raised from the dead in God’s due time. Lazarus had been dead for four days. It does not matter to the Lord whether it is four days, four years, four hundred or four thousand years, it would be performed by the power of God. Do we understand these lovely truths from God’s Holy Word? Martha did not understand all God’s plan, but she did know through Jesus’ teachings that Lazarus had not gone to heaven when he died. Lazarus died again, for his was a temporary resurrection — an illustration of the power of God in the hands of Christ. Lazarus being restored to his sisters pictured all the families of the earth coming back from the grave. Jesus’ words — “I am the resurrection and the life” — meant that He had the power of God to restore Lazarus to life after four days. In the resurrection day Christ will be the second

Adam, and the Church will be the second Eve. God's power will operate through them to bring all mankind back from the death condition. Jesus' words in John 5:28,29 read — "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." God promises a prepared place, in heaven, for "those who have done good." All the remainder of mankind — "those who have done evil" — will be raised by Christ and the Church to judgment — not to damnation, as the Authorised Version indicates. This is the time when Christ will be "the resurrection and the life" for every human being who has ever lived.

In the first chapter of Revelation we have described our risen Lord, who ascended to the Heavenly Father to prepare a place for His Church, giving the revelation message to the Apostle John on Patmos. In verse 18 He said — "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Then Psalm 16:10, speaking prophetically of our Lord, as though He is speaking to His Heavenly Father, says — "Thou wilt not leave

my soul in hell." He was raised from the Bible hell on the third day, and has the keys of hell and of death. When mankind come back to life in the resurrection day they will not be perfect, but will need to have the processes of death eliminated. They will be raised to life with the same character and disposition as they had when they went into death. The spirit of God will enable people to obey, and with Satan bound it will be easy to obey. But if any are rebellious under those favourable conditions, and still wish to continue in sin, having a free will to do so, God will not allow them to live. However, "When the Lord's judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." — Isa. 26:11.

Paul tells us of this resurrection day in Acts 17:31. He gave a wonderful sermon on Mars' hill, in which he said — "God hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." This is the Man Christ Jesus, now at the Father's right hand, who will initiate this wonderful judgment in righteousness for all the world of mankind.

The helpful prophecies of the Old Testament really mean what is recorded. There is

a lovely prophecy in Ezekiel 37 concerning Israel and the whole world of mankind. From verse 11 the LORD is speaking by His spirit through Ezekiel, who had been shown the valley of dry bones in vision, as follows — “Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.” Verse 25 — “And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children’s children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever.” Verse 28 — “And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.”

Nobody can deny these lovely Scriptures telling us about the restoration of Israel, and then the restoration of all of mankind. Can we see, then, God's great love in providing TWO DISTINCT SALVATIONS, because the heavenly and earthly are quite distinct. Yet it is one kingdom, of two parts, heavenly and earthly. Two distinct salvations for the restoration of God's human family, all through the sacrifice of His dear Son.

Two distinct salvations are also shown in 1 Cor. 15:21-23, which reads — "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 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 (heavenly salvation): afterward they that are Christ's at his presence (earthly salvation)." Also verses 24-26 as follows — "Then the end, (after the kingdom age) when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

In Revelation 14 we have a picture of the heavenly inheritance, showing our Lord and

His Church on the mount Zion in glory. From verse 1 we read — “I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their haps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women (or impure churches); for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.”

A further passage relating to salvation on the earth is found in Revelation 21:1,3-5, and reads — “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea (no more restless masses of humanity). And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be

his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.”

So there will be two distinct salvations for humanity, to the praise of God. We give thanks to Almighty God who provided this Plan for His human creation, sending His only begotten Son that all might have life — that some might have life more abundantly in heaven, and all the remainder life eternal on the restored earth.

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