

SCRIPTURAL USAGE OF THE TERM SALVATION

HIGHER CRITICS and Evolutionists have much trouble in their endeavor to hide from the common people the fact that their theories are diametrically opposed to all the teachings of the Scripture respecting human salvation. These latter-day philosophers do not like to be called "infidels," "unbelievers," but prefer to take their texts from the Bible in their weekly endeavor to undermine faith. If Evolution theories were true, the word "salvation" would be wholly inappropriate. If mankind have been climbing upward for six thousand years, out of monkeyhood into perfect manhood, and if they are gradually to become angels by processes of evolution, then the word "salvation" is altogether out of place when applied to them. They should rather be let alone in their glorious upward progress. They would need no Savior, or Redeemer; for according to this theory, mankind never was lost – never fell from perfection.

But the Bible proposition is the very reverse of the Evolution theory. The Scripture teaches that man was created perfect and holy, in the moral likeness of His Maker. It declares that when on trial to determine whether or not his life and favors might be continued to him everlastingly, Adam sinned and was sentenced to death. It tells that through Jesus, God has made a provision for the recovery of mankind out of the sin and death condition into which he fell; that the work of Jesus primarily is that of the satisfaction of Justice; that He died, the Just for the unjust, and that sinners are to be reconciled to God through the death of His Son. The Bible teaches that this redemptive process, this salvation of mankind from sin and death, has already begun in that Christ has already given His life a Ransom-price, and has been exalted and declared to be the Savior, the Life-giver of the world.

But the world has not yet been saved. It lies in the Wicked One. Satan is still the "Prince of this world." Sin and death reign. The world has only the Divine promise which was given to Abraham, but of

which the majority of mankind do not even know. That promise, however, is *sure* – that eventually all the families of the earth shall be blessed by Messiah; and that to effect this salvation Messiah in due time will set up a glorious reign of righteousness, the Kingdom of God under the whole heavens. It shall rule; it shall conquer; it shall destroy sin, death and everything opposed to Divine righteousness and to the best interests of mankind. Thus eventually the knowledge of the Lord shall be made to fill the whole earth (Isa. 11:9), and every knee shall bow and every tongue confess the Lord. (Isa. 45:23.) Thus shall come the glorious opportunity for salvation through the knowledge of the Lord, and of His will – Jer. 31:34.

Those who desire to do God's will shall be assisted by the Redeemer, thus to cultivate a righteous character. That assistance will include an uplifting *out of*, or saving *from*, sin and death and all the terrible associations of mental, moral and physical imperfection. That salvation will be *to* life, health and strength – mental, moral and physical. The earth also shall be saved – recovered from the Divine sentence, or "curse." No longer will thorns and thistles cause sweat of face; but the earth shall yield her increase and be styled, "The garden of the Lord." (Zech. 8:12; Isa. 51:3.) The earth is God's footstool, which He will make glorious. – Isa. 60:13. [R5078 : page 250]

But that salvation of man and of his earthly home and future dominion is preceded by another phase, or kind, of salvation. Before dealing with the world, God elects, calls, draws, instructs a saintly class. These by faith may now speak of themselves as saved, although their salvation will not really be accomplished until they share in the First Resurrection. Now they *reckon* themselves as passed from death unto life, as New Creatures, brethren of Christ, children of God. Into all this glorious condition the saintly ones will enter with their resurrection change, experiencing a transfer from human nature and conditions to spirit (heavenly) nature and conditions.

Thus, eventually, there will be two classes of saved ones – two classes saved out of the sin and death conditions which now prevail:

(1) The Church changed from earthly to divine nature. – I Cor. 15:51-54.

(2) The willing and obedient of the world, who, during the thousand years of Messiah's glorious reign, will be gradually changed, not to a different nature, but from the *imperfection* to the *perfection* of human nature. – Acts 3:19-21.

Meantime all the wilfully wicked, disobedient or rebellious will be utterly destroyed in the "Second Death," "as natural brute beasts." – 2 Pet. 2:12.

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