

## GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

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### *About the author...*

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## Introduction

The Bible begins with God. *"In the beginning God"* (Genesis 1:1). God created man (Genesis 1:26-27) and placed him in the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it (Genesis 2:16). Man violated God's law (Genesis 3:1-6). Sin entered the world. Did God have a plan whereby man might be forgiven? What was that Plan?

In this study let's consider: (1) God's Plan of Salvation Was in His Mind before the World Began; (2) God's Plan of Salvation was Promised; (3) God's Plan of Salvation was Prophesied; (4) God's Plan of Salvation was Revealed by the Spirit through the Apostles and Prophets; (5) God's Plan of Salvation Clearly Reveals the Conditions of Salvation; and (6) God's Plan of Salvation Clearly Reveals the Church is the Saved.

### **God's Plan of Salvation Was in His Mind Before The World Began**

*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Romans 8:28-30).*

*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will (Ephesians 1:4-5).*

*Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour*

*Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Timothy 1:8-10).*

*Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you (1 Peter 1:18-20).*

God, even in eternity, set before himself the entire plan for the redemption of the souls of men. God's purpose is not determined by man, or by his merits; God's purpose is after the "counsel of his will" (Ephesians 1:11). God's purpose is an eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ before the world was, before time eternal (Ephesians 3:11; 1 Peter 1:18-20).

### God's Plan of Salvation Was Promised

God made his first promise in the Garden of Eden. *"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee" (Genesis 3:16).* This was the first indication that one should be born of a woman apart from the natural begetting by a man.

Centuries passed but God's promise was still in mind when he selected Shem and his seed (Genesis 10). Twenty centuries or more after the promise in Eden God called Abraham and promised him that *"in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 12:3).* He later renewed the promise saying, *"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:18).* Later God said, *"In Isaac shall thy seed be called" (Genesis 21:12).* God chose Jacob instead of Esau and said, *"In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 28:14).* Jacob had twelve sons, but it was to Judah that God announced the following: *"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come" (Genesis 49:10).*

Six hundred and fifty years after Jacob's death, David wanted to build a house for God (which God did not allow), but God promised David to set up his seed after him (1 Samuel 7:11-17). This promise to David is repeated in the Psalms. *"I have made a covenant with my chosen. I have sworn unto David my servant: Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations" (Psalms 89:3-4).* Three hundred years later Isaiah combined the promise made in Eden with the promise made to David and declared that the one to come should be born of a virgin. *"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).*

*And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us (Matthew 1:21-23).*

In Paul's letter to the Galatians he affirmed that Christ fulfilled the promise made to Abraham.

*And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.... 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 (Galatians 3:8, 16).*

Therefore, in Jesus Christ is realized the fulfillment of the promise to the three in the garden, to Abraham, to Isaac and Jacob, to Judah, to David and to Israel through the prophets. He is the fulfillment of God's promise and the fulfillment of His purpose. (Hailey 34)

### God's Plan of Salvation Was Prophesied

Six hundred years before Christ was born Isaiah prophesied that the Lord's house (the church, 1 Timothy 3:15) would be established in Jerusalem.

*And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem (Isaiah 2:2-3).*

Daniel's explanation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream revealed four great world empires (Daniel 2). The prophet then said,

*And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (Daniel 2:44).*

This prophecy was fulfilled in the days of the fourth great empire, the Roman, when God established his kingdom under the reign of Jesus Christ. The kingdom foreseen by Daniel would never be destroyed and the Hebrews had "*received a kingdom that cannot be shaken*" (Hebrews 12:28).

Zechariah foretold the entrance of the king into Jerusalem (Zechariah 9:9; cf. Matthew 21:4-5). He foretold a kingdom of peace (Zechariah 9:10) and that the shepherd (Jesus) would be sold by Judas for thirty pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:12-13). He also foretold the fact that they would look on him whom they had pierced (Zechariah 12:10; cf. John 19:37) and of the fountain that through his death should be opened for sin and uncleanness (Zechariah 13:1).

Peter stated that the prophets prophesied of this salvation.

*Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls. Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow (1 Peter 1:9-11).*

*Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Peter 1:20-21).*

### **God's Plan of Salvation Was Revealed by the Spirit Through the Apostles and Prophets**

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth. *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:13).*

The Holy Spirit revealed the mystery (that which had not previously been revealed) to Paul.

*Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual (2 Corinthians 2:6-13).*

*Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him (Ephesians 1:8-10).*

*For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to youward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,*

*Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel (Ephesians 3:1-6).*

The apostle Peter testifies to the revelation of God's plan of salvation.

*Unto whom it was revealed, that no unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into (1 Peter 1:12).*

### **God's Plan of Salvation Clearly Reveals the Conditions of Salvation**

*"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11).* God wants all men to be saved. *"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:4).* But man must meet the conditions which God has set forth in order to procure this salvation unto himself.

First, one must hear the Word of God.

*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world (Romans 10:13-18).*

Second, belief in Jesus Christ is essential to salvation. *"And I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24).* *"And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31).*

Third, repentance is an essential part of salvation. *"I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3,5).* *"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).* God *"commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30).*

Fourth, one must confess his faith in Christ as the son of God, *"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans*

10:10). Before his baptism the eunuch said, *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"* (Acts 8:37).

Fifth, baptism into Christ is essential for the remission of sins. *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"* (Mark 16:16). *"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"* (Acts 2:38). *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"* (Galatians 3:26-27).

Sixth, one must be faithful to the end of the journey. *"Be thou faithful unto death (even dying for your faith), and I will give thee a crown of life"* (Revelation 2:10).

### **God's Plan of Salvation Clearly Reveals That the Church Is the Saved**

The church was in God's eternal purpose. *"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Ephesians 3:10-11). The Lord promised to build his church and did build it (Matthew 16:13-19). The Lord has one body which is the church. *"But now are they many members, but one body"* (1 Corinthians 12:20). *"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all"* (Ephesians 1:22-23). *"There is one body"* (Ephesians 4:4). *"And he is the head of the body, the church"* (Colossians 1:18).

The Lord reconciles both Jew and Gentile in the one body.

*For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace* (Ephesians 2:14-16).

Those that obey the gospel are added to the church (to that saved group of people). *"And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved"* (Acts 2:47).

### **Conclusion**

God's plan of salvation was in his eternal purpose, was promised, was prophesied, was revealed, clearly sets forth the conditions of salvation, and shows the church to be the saved.

Jesus Christ is the way (John 14:6). There can be no other way. There can be no other gospel (Galatians 1:6-9). God warns against adding to or taking from his word (Revelation 22:18-19).

### **Works Cited**

Hailey, Homer. *From Creation to the Day of Eternity (God's Great Plan for Man's Redemption)*. Las Vegas, Nevada: Nevada Pub. (1982).