

God's Salvation

To a world that is continually perishing in sin, God offers salvation in all its simplicity. "LOOK UNTO ME, and be ye SAVED" (Isa. 45:22), says God the Saviour. Can anything be more simple than looking at a person? Even a child knows to look. No one needs special maturity or education to look. Why did God make salvation so simple?

The obvious immediate answer is that God loves you and me. The Bible says that "God is love" (1 John 4:8). The God of love looks upon the suffering humanity with compassion. He has simplified salvation to the extent of making it understandable and available to all. The God of the Bible wants every human being to understand three fundamental truths.

Firstly, the LOSTNESS of mankind. Every human being is born in a lost condition. The Lord Jesus spoke three parables in Luke 15 to emphasize the lost-ness of man. In the first story, a man had hundred sheep and he lost one of them in the wilderness. In the second, a woman lost a silver coin. In the third, a father lost his son. All the three stories have something to teach us. Like the sheep we are owned by God. Like the coin we are precious to Him. Like the son we are related to God. Disobedience, rebellion marred our lives. By choosing the dangerous path of independence, we shut out God to open the door for all evils. Had not the shepherd gone in search of the sheep, the sheep would have been lost in the wilderness. Had not the woman sought the coin, the precious silver coin would have lost its value. Had not the father received the son, the wayward boy would have been lost in poverty and hunger. Every sinner has lost his way. He is groping in darkness. Spiritual blindness is the direct result of sin. A blind man walking in a dark slippery road, heads towards destruction. Salvation and restoration must come from outside himself. God must rescue us from our lost condition. The good news is that Jesus Christ has come seeking for every lost person. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

Secondly, the LAW of God. All of us are born into a world created and governed by God. His material and moral laws are intended for the safety and well being of a" those who live on this planet earth. God has explicitly stated His laws. By choosing to break the Law, we do not break the Law but our own lives. This is exactly what has happened to the whole mankind. The laws of God reveal the character of God. In the Bible, Exodus 20 gives us the basic Ten Commandments. Based on these, many laws had been added. Someone came out with this count, that there are 2713 commandments in the Old, and 1050 in the New Testament. These commandments condemn every man and every woman of every age. No man has ever lived up to the standards set by God. God gave us His laws not because we could keep them. With a fallen, sinful nature God knew our inability. Yet the laws were made and published to show the utter lost-ness of man. Had it not been for the Law, we would never know our lost-ness. The Scripture says that "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom.3: 20). Thus the primary work of the Law is revelation, not recovery. Law diagnoses our case without delivering us. Law shows our condition but not the cure. Yet it fulfils the important function of making us aware of what we are in the sight of God. Law not only shows our condition but also the awaiting condemnation. God's righteous anger is reserved for every rebel. God being just and

righteous cannot overlook or condone sin. Law could not offer life to the dead sinner. It could not lift him from his fallen condition. Law could not love or pity the sinner. God's law is intended to awaken us to our danger. At the end of life's road, beyond the grave every man and woman must stand before God to be judged. The Bible says, "... it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb.9: 27). The Bible also says that "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecc.12: 14).

Thirdly, the LOVE of God. Against the backdrop of man's lost-ness and God's Law, is revealed the wonderful love of God. God loves mankind and sent Jesus Christ to show it. God asks, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?", and answers it Himself, "For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth" (Ezek. 18:23,32). God sent Jesus to be our Substitute and our Sin bearer. This is the story of Good Friday. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor.5: 21). "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" (1Pet.3: 18). The story of Christ and the cross is the most moving love story in the world. Christ suffered the most cruel death on the cross for each one of us. It was an act of supreme love. Through the cross God offers forgiveness of sins, freedom from fear and every bondage, and fellowship with Himself. All these offers come to us not because we asked for them. The Bible says that God "commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom.5:8).

Deliverance comes by simply looking at the Saviour and believing in our hearts what He accomplished for us. We-are not required to contribute anything for our salvation. Christ has done it all. We are invited to accept the offer. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" says the Lord Jesus (Matt. 11: 28). "...him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37), is God's great assurance. God's salvation is simple and free. It cost Jesus His very blood, life and reputation. He laid down His life willingly for us all. He offers a life of peace, victory and fullness; "come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa.55: 1).