

Zahakiel: Let's begin. Pastor, please offer an opening prayer.

Pastor Chick: Dear Father in Heaven. Thank You for the many blessings of the past week and for the Rest that You give for each day's passing. On this high day, we both rest and examine our souls for Your glory's sake. May our convocation be refreshed by Your Spirit to Your glory, in Yahshua's holy name, Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

Elyna: Amen.

Nattie: Amen

Naraiel: Amen

Barb: Amen

Zahakiel: Amen

daphna dee: Amen

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Lucan: Amen

Zahakiel: Happy Sabbath, and Blessed New Moon to everyone. This week, I have been thinking about the concept of salvation – specifically, salvation as taught by the Church of Christ in this last generation. As I mentally reviewed our many past studies over the years, a theme that emerges quite frequently is the idea that our Father in Heaven tends to do things in “threes.” Accordingly, this study is called “Salvation in Threes.”

What is it about the Gospel, and the Word in general, that occurs in threes? These things should immediately come to mind: the Three Angels of Revelation 14 that bear the Gospel message to mankind, the Divine Witnesses of the Father and Son and Their Holy Spirit, the three steps to conversion (Repentance, Faith, and Baptism), the three “Seals” or earthly witnesses (Blood, Water and Spirit), the three components of a human being created in the image of Yahweh (body, mind and spirit), and so on. There are other sets of threes we have not yet examined in detail in the context of this pattern, and perhaps we will someday, such as the three “abiding” or enduring virtues that Paul mentions: Faith, Hope and Love. (1Cor 13:13)

Tonight, however, I want to talk about three “times” as they relate to salvation. And this is something we have spoken about briefly in the past, but it may be new light to some who may see how it fits into the patterns of three that I have indicated here.

At several points in the Bible, an individual asks, “What must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30, and see Acts 2:37) What is not really asked at any point, at least not directly, is “What does it mean to be saved?” The world has no concept of “salvation” at all. The worldly Christian has a faulty concept, seeing it through the lens of the flesh, as a release from the threat of destruction and the indefinite continuation of a life like this one.

The genuine Christian, however, has a far more meaningful and complete view of what it means to be “saved,” and it is on one hand simple enough for a child to comprehend, but on the other complex enough to be the subject of study by redeemed minds in the

ceaseless ages of eternity. Salvation is multi-faceted, because it is a state of human existence, and human beings are, themselves, multi-faceted.

As I have mentioned, many of our previous studies have involved examining an idea from three perspectives, or in three parts, and in the past we have also spoken of salvation as a function of time and experience. Specifically, there is a "past" salvation, a "present" salvation, and a "future" salvation, all of which are supported by the Scriptures.

The Bible explains salvation as an event that we have already experienced as the born-again believer, reading, "...Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of Yah, 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 Yahshua before the world began." (2Tim 1:8, 9)

Again, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Yahshua the Messiah, our Saviour" (Titus 3:5, 6)

These are two witnesses, both written by Paul, about the "completed" nature of salvation. This is significant for a couple reasons, and I will share them with you shortly. There is a third witness as well, and this one bears wording that we find to be of great significance as CSDAs:

"Giving thanks unto the Father [...] who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son:" (Col 1:12, 13)

Whenever you see has, had, or hath before a verb, this is called the "past perfect" tense, and indicates without any ambiguity that the action being discussed has already been completed. He "hath saved" us; thus the Bible indicates this is an action already performed.

Next, we read of salvation as an ongoing process, as here: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." (1Cor 1:18)

While that word, "saved," appears to be past tense, in Paul's original wording it is actually present. It should perhaps best be translated into English as "being saved," and this is exactly how the NKJV renders it: "but to us who are being saved..." The same thing happens in Paul's next letter to the Corinthians. We read, "For we are unto Yah a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish." (2Cor 2:15) Here "are saved" is the same phrase as before, and would accurately read, "in them that are being saved," as it is translated in most English versions of that passage.

Finally, we read of salvation as an upcoming experience, as here, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." (Mat 24:13)

"Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." (Rom 5:9)

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Mat 24:22)

Note how perfectly well each of these tenses lines up with our three essential components. This third, last kind of salvation, of the future, is the glorification of the body. It occurs at the "end," when Christ returns. It is salvation from "wrath," which is the lake of fire and the result of the final judgment. It is explicitly indicated to be the redemption of the "flesh" in that last verse from Matthew.

The present, ongoing salvation, is that of the sanctification of the mind. Paul is again quite direct when he directs of the present experience of the Christian, "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of Yah." (Rom 12:2)

The salvation of the past, this is of the Spirit. When one is born again, they are born "of the Spirit." (John 3:5) They have a "new Spirit" given to them when self dies; in fact, we read, "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." (Ezek. 11:19)

Ezekiel is not using the word "flesh" as Paul does; here he is speaking spiritually... a new "heart," which is not the physical heart, is now warm, soft, and flexible, as flesh is when compared to stone. This is a change in the "inward parts," that does not directly alter the body.

Interestingly enough, it is only the Bride of Christ that can speak of all three times concerning salvation without discomfort. Those such as the once-saved-always-saved form of Christianity declare that once the spirit is saved, the body's condition as it relates to sin of secondary (if any) importance. Legalists and the works-based believers will say we must discipline the flesh, but cannot say, "I am saved," because at any moment (they fear) they may fall once again into the power of temptation. Many nominal Christians do not believe in disciplining the mind at all, because until Christ returns, they are powerless to make any changes to their thoughts.

Salvation will always elude any who deny any part of the whole man, the whole vessel for Yah's glory that He has formed in His image. We cannot deny the past salvation of the spirit (which is conversion that follows repentance,) the present salvation of the mind (which is sanctification that is made effectual through "faith wrought with [our] works" – James 2:22), or the future salvation of the body (which is glorification symbolized by baptism; receiving a "new body" to replace the old sinful flesh – Rom 6:4, 6).

The view of salvation as a "past" event is described most clearly and consistently by Paul, and I indicated earlier that this is significant... the "when" is most significant. The epistles that Paul wrote to his sons in the faith, Timothy and Titus, are the books in which Paul

speaks of salvation as this completed act of Yahweh. They were also the ones written in the latter part of his life, in at least one case near the end of his life, after he had already established the churches over which he appointed these two as overseers. We might reasonably conclude, therefore, that this is Paul at his most "mature" understanding of the Gospel, and it is here that he emphasizes this aspect of salvation.

He says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course; I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." (2Tim 4:7, 8)

Why is this question of time significant? It is because Paul's most mature Christian witness, the one he arrives at after a lifetime of teaching the Gospel, raising up churches, opposing enemies of the faith, and training young pastors, is in every essential element the CSDA testimony of the last generation. It represents the "Faith of Yahshua" as it is to be understood aright. It represents experience with divinity, and a care associated with both confidence and wording that results in a truly invincible testimony. It is a certain, quiet confidence in one's destiny that arises through faith and through the spirit of prophecy.

Yes, it is important that we see salvation as a future event, because this is described in the Bible as the "hope that is in you." (1Pet 3:15)

It is also important that we see salvation as a current event, because this is the basis behind Paul's exhortation to "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves." (2Cor 13:5)

But when it comes to the witness we bear... well, what is a "witness?" If we are called into a court and asked to give a testimony, that is, to "bear witness," of what shall we speak? We cannot speak of future events, even if we hope for them. We cannot speak of present events, because we are just then observing them. No... a "witness" is specifically a testimony of something we have already experienced, perceived, and encountered. When the Scriptures say to us, "O taste and see that Yahweh is good," (Psa. 34:8) and when Yahshua said to John the Baptist's disciples, "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see," (Mat 11:4) the message is clear.

Come and see, and gain knowledge...then you will be able to "go and show."
You will be able to bear witness, because you have already seen the thing to which you are testifying. Our witness, then, is about the salvation we have already experienced.

Most significantly for our global audience of men and women who need the Good News about the Father and Son, it is important that we represent salvation as a completed, perfect experience that we have already undergone, because while we await salvation of the future (which involves the Body), and while we experience salvation of the present (which is the renewing of the Mind), what the sin-sick soul needs is a "Rock" on which he can find sure rest. What it needs is the "loud cry" that says, "The promises

of Yah are 'Yea and Amen,' and whatsoever gifts He gives to you, they are available for you already, and from the foundation of the world."

Remember, Adam died in the "day" that he ate the fruit. (Gen 2:17) His body did not die, nor did his mind in that day...but he did experience death, and he was separated from His Father in this way, that they were no longer of one Spirit.

In Christ, we are restored in the very order that the fall followed. First, we are saved in receiving the new Spirit...before sanctification, and certainly before the body sees glory, we are born again, we receive a new Spirit. The old man is dead; we reckon the body dead and the mind transformed...and in the day we accept Christ, we receive salvation.

Now, we know what false teachers have done with this...they have said, "Once we are saved in the spirit, there is nothing more we need to do. The mind is subject to the spirit, and the body is not important, or the flesh itself becomes holy."

They are not balanced...they do not see how the spirit without the body is not a human being, redeemed or otherwise, any more than a body without a spirit is a living being. It is perhaps for this purpose, because of the potential for misunderstanding, that Seventh Day Adventists have been somewhat hesitant to declare salvation in this manner. Nevertheless, "the grace of Yah that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." (Titus 2:11)

We have confidence, we have boldness... "Great is my boldness of speech toward you," the apostle proclaims, (2Cor 7:4) because the more Paul learned of the Gospel, the closer his writings came to the message we bear to the world this day...

We have the Spirit of Prophecy, not merely in books written over a century ago...but a living Witness in our own spirits, declaring to the world through us, "I have run the race. I have kept the faith." The Spirit is not "puffed up," as it is written. The world can only understand it as pride, but it is not arrogance...it is acknowledging the certainty of a promise from the Father, the perfect, unfailing promise, and following that promise to its only possible conclusion.

While acknowledging free will, and while acknowledging that probation has not yet closed for humanity, we declare with perfect confidence, "I sin not. I do always those things that please my Father. Because my life is bound up in Christ, I can no more commit unrighteousness than He can, for His divine nature has become my own." This is just what Paul meant when saying, "I have finished my course."

When the world heard Christ speak, they said, "We never saw it on this fashion." His enemies hated Him for His trust in the Father, a perfect, unwavering certainty that put their own speculations and suppositions to shame. If the world does not react to our witness in the same way then it is not the same witness that Christ bore. It is not the same faith that Yahshua had, if the world does not think us too bold. What He has said, we say. What reactions He received, we receive.

Traditionally, Adventists are "careful" in saying, "I have been saved by the grace of God," as I've mentioned. "You cannot say that," they protest, "for Ellen White said we should not declare yourself saved." Well, every word is important, and nothing is to be cast aside, but time and place are to be considered...and clearly, if Ellen White were alive today, she would be learning how to be translated...and she would be learning it right along with us, tonight and in the nights to come.

It is a "big" thought; nevertheless, it is true. Is this a bold statement? Certainly. Would it make mainstream Adventists uncomfortable? Undoubtedly. But this is the sign of the truth for the last generation:

First, it must be shown from the Scriptures, which we can certainly do, and second, it must make those who are not yet born again uncomfortable. The Gospel in this generation, as in every generation, must testify against those who are still waiting for something: the Sunday Law, the Latter Rain, another prophet to arise, more "understanding" so they can learn how to cease from sin...anything to delay the simple, trusting acceptance of what Christ is offering, death to the already-doomed self and then life forever after. They must hear the witness that says, "I am not waiting. I have been born again."

Our Gospel says to them, "I have been saved. I am being saved. I shall be saved. And my testimony is of the Savior who has already accepted me as His own. "I am, today, one who has been (has been!) saved by grace... and for you, the decision to embrace this last grand message is now... for today, even today, is the acceptable Day of Salvation."

Let all hear what the Spirit says to the Church, and what the Church then says to the world.

Are there any questions or comments on tonight's study?

Elyna: Amen!

Adriel777: Amen

Zahakiel: If there are not, then I'll ask Bro. Luke to offer a closing prayer.

Lucan: Dear heavenly Father. We thank you for the salvation that you have, are, and will work on our behalf. We thank you for the new birth of the Spirit, through which we are your children in spirit and in truth. As we grow in understanding into the fullness of Christ, we are thankful for the times of refreshing and of cleansing you have appointed. As we prepare for the redemption of our bodies and the earth at your soon return, may your Spirit continue to guide our examinations and outreach. In Yahshua's name we pray, amen.

Zahakiel: Amen.

Pastor Chick: Amen.

Adriel777: Amen

Peter_Jr_18: Amen.

Nattie: Amen.

daphna dee: Amen

Barb: Amen

Elyna: Amen