

Salvation—The Purpose of God

(Salvation was not an afterthought with God as a result of the fall of man. A brief study of some of the basic attributes of God proves this. The salvation of man was in the mind and purpose of God from all eternity.)

It is unthinkable that someone would set out to do something and not have a purpose behind it. How much more unthinkable to believe that God determined to create the world and ordain salvation without a purpose? It is often portrayed that God created the universe but because of the fall of man He adapted a new plan so that man might retrieve himself from his fallen condition. In developing such a scheme one either forgets the nature of God or he willingly refuses to believe God to be Who He is. The Scriptures plainly teach that God has many attributes and some of these attributes reside solely in Him. Let us consider three of them at this time: omniscience; omnipotence; and, omnipresence.

Omniscience is that God knows all things. This does not mean that God knows everything that is going on at one time. No. It is greater than that. God knows everything that has happened, everything that is happening, and everything that will happen. The Psalmist said, “Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, Thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compassed my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue but, lo, O Lord, Thou knowest it altogether,” Psalm 139:2-4. Note well, God not only knows when we sit or lie down but He knows when we get up. God not only knows when we say a thing, but He knows what we think and that before we think a thing. When we compile this with every human being (and even all the angelic host—both good and bad) that have been in the past and shall be in the future, that is exponentially profound, to say the least because both the saved and the unsaved will continue to think in eternity. That is a lot of knowledge! That is God! However, that is not all. God not only knows all events and thoughts of the whole creation, but God also knows everything that could happen that does not happen. God knows all contingencies. In I Samuel chapter twenty-three, David saved the city of Keilah from the Philistines. King Saul discovered that David was in Keilah and planned to go destroy the city and capture David. When David discovered the plan of Saul, he asked the Lord if the city of Keilah would turn David over to Saul and the Lord told David, “They will deliver thee up,” I Samuel 23:12. David left the city and escaped the hand of Saul. Therefore, we see that God not only knows everything that happens, but He know every possibility or as before stated—God knows all contingencies. Obviously, to any Bible reader, such examples and scriptural references can be multiplied to verify this truth. There are many good books on the attributes of God that one can purchase to broaden his mind concerning them.

The second attribute we previously mentioned is the omnipotence of God. This means that God has all power. As Arthur W. Pink said, “He who cannot do what he will and perform all his pleasure cannot be God.” *The Attributes of God*, p. 50. God displayed His power in creation. Obviously, no one saw the creation but we do see the evidence of that power as we study the creation as it now is. The Scriptures declare, “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse,” Romans 1:20. There are many things in creation that are invisible of which some are gravity, electricity, the mind, life, and other like things. Also, there are new discoveries continually of things which God made that were previously unknown. Many passages from the Holy Scriptures can be produced to verify the omnipotence, but we will supply only a few. One classic passage is found in Daniel 4:35: “And all the inhabitants of the earth *are* reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and *among* the inhabitants of the earth: none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?” Even in a previous verse it is declared “that the

most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whosoever he will,” Daniel 4:32. God declared by the prophet Isaiah regarding delivering Israel from Babylon of His power: “I, *even I, am* the Lord; and beside me *there is* no savior. I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when *there was* no strange *god* among you: therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I *am* God. Yea, before the day *was* I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it? Thus saith the Lord, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; ... I *am* the Lord, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King. Thus saith the Lord, which maketh a way in the sea, and a path in the mighty waters; ... I, *even I, am* he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins,” Isaiah 43:11-15, 25. Just as God has power to save and deliver Israel in the days of ancient Babylon, Christ equally saved everyone for whom He died. Jesus stated that He (the Good Shepherd) laid down His life for the sheep and that He had the power to not only lay down His life, but that He would take it up again, John 10:11-18. Romans 4:25 tells us that Christ was raised again for our justification; therefore, He had the power to justify everyone for whom He died. He did not make salvation possible; He saved. Obviously, this attribute could be expanded but we will limit our space regarding this subject at this time and move on to the next attribute previously mentioned.

The attribute of omnipresence is one that is equally profound. Like all of the attributes of God, there is no limit to the presence of God. He is always everywhere present at all time. Just as God is all-knowing (omniscience) and all-powerful (omnipotent), He has these attributes presently always. There is no yesterday, today, or tomorrow with God; with Him everything is one eternal now. When Moses asked the Lord what His name was, the reply was I AM THAT I AM and the Lord further stated, “Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you,” Exodus 3:14. This simply means that there is no change in God and that He is presently now what He has presently always been and presently what He will always be. This means that what God determined in eternity to accomplish in creation, the power and knowledge resided in Him to do that. Equally, what resided in Him at that time is the same that resided in Him when Christ was on the cross and will be the same that resides in Him forever in eternity future. There is no change with God.

With a brief understanding of these three attributes (omniscience; omnipotence; and, omnipresence), it would be foolish to think that before creation God had no idea what He was going to do or what would happen after creation. Sad to say, but modern Christianity seems to think that God created the world and when man sinned in the garden that He needed to set up a way for man to be saved. It is further believed by many that under the Old Testament salvation was accomplished by keeping the law of God and under the New Testament because of the death of Christ man is saved by some kind of grace based on a common understand of natural faith. These are false ideas as seen from having a proper understanding of the three attributes previously mentioned. God not only had a plan and purpose for creation in eternity, but He equally had a plan and purpose regarding the salvation of man at that time, too, and that plan never changes.

In the first chapter of Ephesians Paul wrote concerning the glorious works of God in salvation. In verse nine it says, “Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.” Then in verse eleven declares, “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” Again, “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,” II Timothy 1:9. Obviously, many passages can be supplied regarding God having a purpose in eternity, but that He had a purpose about salvation as well. This purpose was not some general plan for salvation. It was specific. Listen to another passage from the Word of God: “And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac; (For *the children* being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according

to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger,” Romans 9:10-12. Even Jesus made it plain that the reason for His coming into the world was to redeem those that His Father had given Him, John 6:35-40.

Yes, God had a plan, a purpose for creation and the salvation of man before the world was. This purpose of God is according to His omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence. Equally, all of the attributes are in harmony with each other in accomplishing His purpose.

In closing, allow me to quote again the definition given in a previous podcast regarding salvation:

Salvation is that all-inclusive word summing up all spiritual blessings bestowed by God on His elect people in Christ through the Holy Spirit. This wonderful word denotes perpetual deliverance beginning in the mind of God and experienced in the believer’s life. Its highest claim is victory over sin, sorrow, and death. Its glorious and final reality is eternal life with Christ Jesus our Lord. This is common salvation; that is, it is common or it belongs to all the elect of God. Jude 3.

Farewell until our next lesson.