

WHAT IS IT, AND WHEN AND HOW?

DEAR SIR: Please explain in your next issue the following sentence in the March WATCH TOWER, page 6, middle of second column, viz: „Those *reckoned* saved now, as though they had already received the perfect human life, are privileged to *relinquish their claim* and title to it, presenting it as a sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable to him when offered in the acceptable time. And being thus sacrificed with Christ,” &c. This relinquishing their claim to salvation, and being sacrificed with Christ, *What is it, and when and how?*

Dear Sister: It affords us pleasure to endeavor to make still plainer the point referred to. Former ideas of *salvation* were so vague and indefinite that when now we speak as the Apostle did of a „common” or general salvation, and of a special one, many are confused. The central thought in *salvation* used to be to us, as with most Christians it yet is—*an escape from everlasting torture*. But now we have learned that salvation is an *escape from death*, and that it will be fully accomplished by a resurrection. And we find that while *salvation* has been purchased for ALL MEN by the precious sacrifice of Jesus, and that consequently all men will be saved out of death [which includes a release from all present imperfections of body and mind], yet we find that there is a *special salvation* to be shared only by the *few*, and that the salvation [Resurrection] of these is called a *chief* or *first* resurrection, and that it is attainable *only by a class*, who, during this Gospel age follow the example set by Jesus in the beginning of the age—who suffer distress and reproach during this age for Christ’s sake.

To come more particularly to your questions: What is this special salvation? we answer it is a *salvation from death*, and in that respect like the „common” salvation; but it is more, for while mankind in general get back „*that which was lost*” (Luke 19:10), viz.: *human* nature (a fleshly image of the *divine*) in all its beauty and perfection of mind and body, and a right as such to live forever, these esteemed worthy of this *chief* resurrection, this *special* salvation, will receive everlasting life as new creatures of the *divine* nature. Thus it is seen that salvation to both is from *death* and to *everlasting life*, but life as *human* beings to one class, and as *divine* beings to the other.

To answer your second question: *When* may this *chief* salvation be obtained? we answer, In the Gospel age. The invitation to run the race for the prize of our *high* calling was never made before the gospel age began. In fact Jesus was the first one to run the race. He was the first or fore-

runner, and we seek to follow in his footsteps, as he hath set us an example. This is the age in which as a FAVOR some are *called* to „fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ,” and to enter into his glory, which is to *follow* when the sufferings are all *filled up*. Since, then, this age fills up or completes the sufferings of Christ, a share in which is the *condition* on which the new nature is bestowed, it follows that the attainment of *divine* glory is limited to the Gospel age. Now is the ACCEPTABLE year [or time] of the Lord, *i.e.*, whoever during this time, while the sacrificing is in progress, presents himself a sacrifice to God, will be ACCEPTABLE provided he is one of those „called”; and none are called but those who are JUSTIFIED by faith in Jesus as a propitiation or satisfaction for their sins.

That only *justified* believers in Christ are acceptable sacrifices, and that only such are „called” or invited to become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ” by suffering with him (Rom. 8:17; 1 Pet. 2:20,21), is proved by many plain statements, and forcibly illustrated in the typical circumstance of Abraham calling a bride and joint-heir for his son. That is unquestionably an illustration for the calling of the Gospel Church as a chaste virgin (2 Cor. 11:2), to be the Bride, help-meet, and joint-heir with the true Isaac—Jesus. It has before been shown that Eliezer, the servant sent to select her, typified the Holy Spirit of God by which the Church is „called” and „led” to her journey’s end. But the point to which we now call attention, is the particularity of Abraham about the class of people from whom this bride of Isaac was to be selected. The servant might not go *anywhere*—”Thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites ... but go unto my country, and unto my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.” The teaching of this is clear—sinners (typified by Canaanites) are not called to be the Bride of Christ, no, the invitation is sent to those who are by justification esteemed to be related to God. In a word, it is those who by faith in the ransom have become justified as human beings—these are invited to a still closer relationship, to become joint-heirs.

Your third question is: *How* may this *chief* salvation be obtained? We answer: it can only be obtained by the *sacrifice* of the human nature. It must be „worked out,” „run for” and „fought for;” we must suffer with Christ *if* we would reign with him. We must give up, surrender, sacrifice, the human nature and its rights and hopes purchased for us by our Redeemer, if in *exchange* we would have existence of the *same* duration, everlasting, but on a higher plane of existence, the divine nature. Though we must work it out and sacrifice to obtain it, yet when it is remembered that the human nature as we inherited it through Adam was *forfeited* and that the *justified* human nature which we exchange was a *free-gift* of God through Jesus, then it would be but proper to esteem that divine nature which we get in exchange for its sacrifice—as a GIFT also.

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— April And May, 1884 —