

So Great a Salvation
Part Two

Sunday January 14th, 2007

1). Heb 2:1 ¶ *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? 5 ¶ For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.*

a). We had seen from our study last week that the ‘so great a salvation’ spoken of in our scripture does not refer to the salvation we presently possess, the salvation of our spirit, the free gift of eternal life, but to that salvation to be inherited in the last times – the salvation of our souls.

2). We also noted in our study that when Christ and His coheirs take the scepter of rulership in respect of the earth from Satan and his fallen angels at the start of the Millennial Kingdom that this will be the first time that created beings – referring to the coheirs – other than angels will rule within the universal Kingdom of God.

3). We had also noted last week that angels, because of their individual creation, are referred to as sons of God.

a). We saw this in Job - Job 1:6 ¶ *Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.*

b). Where Satan, a son of God, along with other messianic angels, also sons of God appear before the Lord to report on the provinces over which they have jurisdiction on God’s behalf.

c). We can also see this in - Job 38:7 *When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?*

d). Here we see a reference to the laying of the foundation of the earth when the ‘morning stars’, a particular classification of angels, and all the other sons of God shouted for joy.

e). And we will also remember the events of - Ge 6:4 ¶ *There were giants on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men and they bore children to them.*

f). Where we see fallen angels cohabiting with the daughters of men.

4). What we need to note here is that being a son of God is the result of a specific creation, and it is this creation alone that denotes a son of God.

a). Satan remains a son of God even after his rebellion, and remains a son of God even today, and will remain a son of God through the ages of eternity in the Lake of Fire – his classification as a son is based entirely on his creation – nothing else has any bearing on it.

5). The same is also true for Adam – being specifically created, he is a son of God - Lu 3:38 *the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.*

a). Adam was a son of God before the fall, and was still a son of God after the fall – his Sonship is based on his creation.

6). And again the same is true for the nation of Israel - Isa 43:1 ¶ *But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel:*

a). Isa 43:6 *I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not keep them back!' Bring My sons from afar, And My daughters from the ends of the earth- 7 Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."*

b). Ex 4:22 *"Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is My son, My firstborn.*

7). It is very clear to see that being a son of God necessitates a creation by God.

a). And as this is the pattern that has been set at the beginning, it must hold true even for Christians – and it does.

b). Redemption does not make us a son of God, but a subsequent act of creation on God's part.

c). There can be no act of creation without there first having been redemption of course.

d). As a result of the redemption of our spirit – our having passed from death into life, God then places us 'in Christ', a creative act that makes us as a son - 2Co 5:17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

8). Satan and the other messianic angels, sons of God, were created to rule. Adam, a son of God, was created to rule. Israel, a son of God, was created to rule and Christians, in Christ, sons of God, have been created to rule.

a). Only sons can rule within God's universal Kingdom.

b). This is how things were arranged in respect to angels and how they will continue.

9). However, we will remember from our opening scripture that God has not placed the world to come in subjection to angels.

a). We know that Man, a completely unique being created in the image and likeness of God, was created to rule in the age to come in the stead of angels. A rule to take place from the heavens over the earth.

b). Heb 2:5 ¶ *For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels. 6 But one testified in a certain place, saying: "What is man that You are mindful of him, Or the son of man that You take care of him? 7 You have made him a little lower than the angels; You have crowned him with glory and honor, And set him over the works of Your hands. 8 You have put all things in subjection under his feet." For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. 9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. 10 ¶ For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

10). With the creation of Man, because He is now dealing with an entirely new being, we see God adding something more to the principle of sons ruling. Within the human realm it is not just sons, but firstborn sons who are to rule. And within this rule there is also to be a marriage relationship. But for our purposes today we will concentrate on the firstborn.

a). This is why much is made in scripture in respect of the incarnation of Christ being not only God's Son, but His only begotten, His firstborn.

b). There has never been a time when Christ did not exist and occupy the position of God's Son, being coequal with Him.

c). But there has existed a time when Christ was not God's firstborn Son within the human realm.

d). And to rule within the human realm, because of that which God had specified in respect of this, Christ had to become God's firstborn Son.

e). Lu 1:31 *"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. 32 "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."*

e). Joh 1:18 *No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.*

f). Heb 1:6 *But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: "Let all the angels of God worship Him."*

g). Col 1:5 *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.*

h). Re 1:5 *and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.*

11). Heb 1:1 ¶ *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;*

a). God spoke in times past by the prophets and in these last days He has spoken by His Son – in both instances it is God who has done the speaking – and what He has spoken about is the coming 7th Day, the Millennial kingdom of Christ. What follows in Hebrews Chapter 1 are seven Messianic quotations from the OT referencing this fact.

b). In particular let us look at that quoted from Psalm 2 - Heb 1:5 *For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"?*

c). We could better understand this as saying ‘for this day – the 7th Day – to allow this day to be brought to pass – You were begotten, becoming more than My Son, becoming my Firstborn Son.

d). In order for the events of the 7th Day to be accomplished, the removal of Satan and his fallen angels, the complete overthrow of Gentile world power, order being brought out of chaos it was essential for Christ to become God’s Firstborn, enabling Him to take the scepter.

12). If the fulfillment of Christ’s incarnation is seen in the Millennial Kingdom, then the purpose for His incarnation must also be seen in that typified in days 1 through 6 in Genesis Chapter 1.

a). And so it is, from making possible the free gift of salvation by grace through faith seen on day one, through events surrounding the salvation of the soul in days 2 – 6.

b). For the ‘so great a salvation’ to be possible it was necessary for Christ to be born in the likeness of sinful flesh, becoming God’s Firstborn. For Him, for a little while to be lower than the angels – under the authority of the fallen angels whom He had created. And for His death and shed blood as the sinless sacrifice at Calvary.

c). Without the second Person of the Trinity doing this there would be no redemption for Man – spirit, soul or body.

13). Clearly God can have only one Begotten Son as His firstborn, but within the Divine economy He is able to adopt those who are already sons into the position of firstborn, allowing those thus adopted to rule within the human realm alongside the only begotten.

14). Israel, in time past was adopted as a firstborn son – we will remember our scripture from - Ex 4:22 *"Then you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD: "Israel is My son, My firstborn.*

a). And note this from - Ro 9:4 *who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises;*

15). At a time yet future, God will adopt another firstborn son – the Church.

a). This adoption into the position of a firstborn son is neither the work of the redemption of our spirit, or God’s creative act of placing us in Christ (although it is not possible apart from these) but is subsequent to them, based on our faithful obedience resulting in the salvation of our soul.

b). Ro 8:17 ¶ *and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

c). To be a joint heir with Christ necessitates us being a firstborn son as Christ is, and we can clearly see the condition that is placed upon that – ‘if we suffer with Him’.

d). If this condition is met then we will be adopted as a first born son and glorified together with Him. And as we saw last week the covering of glory predicates rulership and is synonymous with the redemption of the body - Ro 8:23 *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.*

i/ Ga 4:5 *to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

ii/ Eph 1:5 *having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,*

e). The adoption, the redemption of the body, becoming a joint heir are all encompassed within the phrase ‘the salvation of the soul’ – no wonder it is ‘so great a salvation’

16). Now, only those who are sons can receive the adoption into a firstborn status, and because we are ‘in Christ’ and therefore a new creation, we are, because of creation, sons.

a). However within scripture God makes a distinction between those ‘sons’, because of whose present actions He regards as just children and those ‘sons’, who, because of their present actions He regards as sons who will receive the adoption.

b). We can perhaps best see this through scripture.

c). To back up into Romans Chapter 8 again - Ro 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 ¶ and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.*

(Teach this)

d). We can see clearly in our scripture here the juxtaposition of life and death in relation to the flesh and the spirit with those Christians being presently led by the spirit referred to as ‘sons of God’. Leading us in v15 into adoption.

e). v16 – 17 make the distinction between children and joint heirs, with those who will be joint heirs looking to the glory that will be revealed in them.

f). Then in v 19 we have the material creation eagerly waiting for the revealing of the sons of God – the sons being led by the Spirit in v14. And with the revealing of sons comes the adoption into a firstborn status with the regality that follows.

17). Then in - Heb 12:5 *And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; 6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." 7 If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.*

a). Chastening – Greek word – *paideia* = child training

b). Here in Hebrews we see reference to the ‘child training’ that God at present gives to those that He currently views as His sons – with the adoption in view.

c). All Christians who partake of this training are viewed as ‘sons’, cf. v 7, and those who don’t through rejection, unfaithfulness, living according to the flesh – are seen as illegitimate sons – those who are sons because of creation, but never move beyond immaturity.

d). This is exactly what Jesus is referring to in - Mt 18:1 ¶ *At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2 Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, 3 and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children,[receiving child training] you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child[allowing himself to be trained by his heavenly Father] is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.*

e). And continuing in Hebrews - Heb 12:9 *Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? 10 For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. 12 Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, 13 and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.*

f). And did you notice the reason for the heavenly child training? ‘For our profit’ – ‘that we may be partakers of His holiness’ – and if we compare this with Matthew 18 we can see that this is all related to positions of authority in the coming Kingdom –positions only given to firstborn sons – those receiving the salvation of their souls having submitted to child training - and if we compare it with Romans 8 it is about being presently led by the Spirit, putting to death the deeds of the flesh, submitting to child training,

thereby becoming a joint heir with Christ, receiving the salvation of the soul, being adopted as a firstborn son and ruling with Him in the coming Kingdom.

g). These are all various facets of the same thing.

18). Now that brought about by 'so great a salvation', the salvation of the soul, does not end with the Millennial Kingdom.

a). If we go back to - Heb 1:1 ¶ *God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;*

b). Let us notice this time that Christ has been appointed 'heir of all things' and that Christ is the One through whom the Father made the worlds, literally 'the ages'.

c). God the Father has constructed the ages, eternity past, the present age, the age to come and eternity future around the person and work of His Son.

d). And that connected with the person and work of the Son does not conclude with - Ps 2:8 *Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel."*

e). Although scripture says very little concerning the ages of eternity future, we know that these ages have been constructed around the Son, His person and His work, and that God's plans and purposes for these ages are already complete awaiting manifestation only.

f). Let us notice events at the end of the Millennial Kingdom – 2Pe 3:10 *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 ¶ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

a). 1Co 15:24 *Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.*

b). Re 21:1 ¶ *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."*

c). Re 22:1 ¶ *And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.*

19). God's design for the rulership of this earth has been a rule from the heavens over the earth and this is the only way this rule may take place.

a). However, at the end of the Millennial Kingdom the present heavens and the earth are completely destroyed followed by a resultant change.

b). The New Jerusalem transfers from the heavens to be located on the new earth.

c). God Himself relocates from the 'farthest recesses of the North' to the new earth to tabernacle with men.

d). And rather than His own throne in the heavens, Christ's throne becomes one with God's throne – 'the throne of God and of the Lamb' – and from this joint throne in its new location universal rule will take place.

e). Those who have received 'so great a salvation', who have sat with Christ as joint heirs on Christ's throne in the heavens will now sit with Him on the throne of God and of the Lamb in the New Jerusalem on the new earth, participating with Him in the rule of the universe.

f). A change in angelic rule over the present earth may well portend a change in angelic rulership throughout the universe.

g). No wonder the salvation of the soul is 'so great a salvation'

20). And finally let us consider this – man has been created for a little while, a little lower than the angels - Heb 2:7 *You have made him a little lower than the angels;*

a). Yet those very angels who were created to rule over the earth, those who have not rebelled with Satan, have been assigned to minister on behalf of those Christians who by their present actions will inherit salvation

Heb 1:14 *Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*

b). Ministry that is with a view to bringing successfully to completion events surrounding the salvation of the soul, thereby revealing an entirely new order of sons, firstborn sons, who will wear the crowns they presently wear and occupy the positions of rulership they once occupied.

c). At the conclusion of their ministry to the heirs of salvation, following the judgments and determinations of the Judgment Seat when the new order of sons is revealed we see these same angels - Re 4:9 *Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."*

d). Just how great do you suppose 'so great a salvation' is?

e). And just how appalling in the eyes of God would it be and how costly for us if we should neglect 'so great a salvation'?

21). Let me encourage us all today to ever keep this salvation uppermost in all we do.

22). With all we have learned in the last two weeks perhaps Christ's words would be even more poignant - Mr 8:36 *"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"*