

Sunday August 12th 2007
The Full Scope of Salvation – Part One
The Context

1). Isa 46:9 *Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'*

a). Our scripture here from Isaiah is particularly significant for us as we begin to consider the full scope of salvation as God makes perfectly clear that He has declared the end of His plans and purposes for Man, which will of necessity include salvation, from the beginning of His revelation to Man.

b). With this in mind we will realize that the term we know as salvation does not exist in a vacuum, nor is it some after thought or means of damage control, but rather an integral part of God's ultimate purpose.

c). If we would understand the purpose of God we would be able to place salvation within that context and this should remove any confusion we would have surrounding it.

d). Placed within its context, the full scope of salvation and the purpose for that salvation are plain to see.

e). Remove it from context and the whole doctrine of salvation becomes at best nebulous and at worse distorted.

f). Isa 40:21 *Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?*

2). So then if it has been told us from the beginning, and we should have understanding from the foundations of the earth – let us start in that very place, the beginning, and establish the context in which we may have understanding of the full scope of salvation.

3). Ge 1:1 ¶ *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*

a). The creation of the heavens and the earth at the beginning of God's revelation to man is clearly not an arbitrary event or a random act – no, it is with purpose and reason within God's plans for the eternal ages.

b). And this would be good for us to remember – although God's revelation through His word concentrates almost exclusively on a specific portion of time – the 7 thousand years from Adam to the conclusion of the Millennial Kingdom – and on two specific areas – the heavens and the earth.

God's plans for this specific time and specific location were set in eternity past and must be seen within His plans extending into eternity future and of necessity would be universal in scope - 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. 2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. 5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.*

c). Now as we look at the opening words of all of scripture we see that God, the Hebrew plural noun 'Elohim' participates in the creation of the heavens and the earth. In other words all three parts of the trinity were involved in this – both the creation and the purpose for the creation.

4). We would note that when God speaks of 'the heavens', He is referring to the invisible heavens connected with the earth from which rulership over the earth takes place - Da 4:26*the heavens do rule.*

i/ And not the heavens in the expanse of the universe beyond.

a). And it is interesting to see that it is the heavens, the place of rulership that is created first.

5). So let us spend a moment looking at God's own commentary on the means of creation - Joh 1:1 ¶ *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.*

a). And again, speaking of Christ - Heb 1:10 *And: "You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. (Psalm 102)*

b). Eph 3:9 *and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God **who created all things through Jesus Christ;***

c). All things have been created through Christ Jesus.

6). And now let us note these verses in respect of the purpose for the creation of the heavens and the earth –

a). Col 1:16 *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. **All things were created through Him and for Him.** 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.*

b). Heb 2:10 ¶ *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.*

c). Heb 1:2b.....*whom He has appointed heir of all things, **through whom also He made the worlds**;*[literally, ‘the ages’]

d). Please see that all things have been created for Him – for Christ. And that He, Christ, has been appointed heir of all things, and that Christ is the One through whom God made the worlds, literally the ages.

E). God the Father then has constructed the ages, eternity past, this present age, the age to come – the Millennial Kingdom, and eternity future around the person and work of His Son – for whom all things have been created.

7). From the beginning of creation, in fact planned from somewhere in the ages of eternity past, all things were created through God’s Son and for God’s Son.

a). If we remember that the heavens, the place from which rulership takes place was created first, and if we remember our scripture from Colossians 1 speaking of thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, all of which again speak of rulership, we will realize that it has always been God’s purpose that His Son would ultimately exercise authority at a particular point in time over this specific province within God’s universal Kingdom.

b). With the risk of becoming repetitive, please keep in mind that this is and remains God’s plan from the beginning.

8). And I guess at this point the obvious question we would ask is, ‘Why didn’t God just do it?’ And the answer to this question is found as we once again compare scripture with scripture in respect of the beginning of creation

a). Mt 25:34 *"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, **inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:***

b). Heb 4:3 *For we who have believed do enter that rest, as He has said: "So I swore in My wrath, "They shall not enter My rest,"" **although the works were finished from the foundation of the world.***

c). Re 13:8 *All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of **the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.***

9). So what do we see here?

a). We see the Kingdom of Christ, the rule over the earth that God had purposed for His Son from eternity past, being given as an inheritance to Man – and that this inheritance was planned for Man, ‘from the foundation of the world’ – even before man as a created being existed.

b). We see in our Hebrews scripture that God’s works, all that was necessary for the fulfillment of His purpose for His Son and Man, with respect to rulership over the earth, were complete and absolute before the heavens and the earth were created – in effect then, from eternity past.

c). And we see in Revelation Christ as a Lamb offered as a sacrifice, also in God’s economy, from the foundation of the world – although the event itself was not manifest in time until some 4000 years after the restoration of the ruined creation, and an unspecified length of time from the original creation of the heavens and the earth.

d). We can understand then that from, ‘In the beginning’, with regards to the rulership of this earth God has always intended that Man would rule with His Son for a period of 1000 years.

i/ 2Ti 1:8 *Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,*

ii/ Tit 1:1 ¶ *Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, 2 in hope of eternal[Age lasting] life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,*

iii/ 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. 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). From our scripture here in Hebrews it is quite clear that God has set Man over the works of His hands and that God has put all things – remember the all things from Colossians Chapter 1 – under Man’s feet. Yet we do not see all things put under Man.

a). Neither at any time in the past or indeed in the present has this scenario existed – if it remains God’s purpose, which it does, and if it has not happened yet, which it hasn’t – then it must remain yet future, which it does.

b). Keeping all this in mind it seems fairly obvious that the completion of God’s plans and purposes, as they relate to this earth, would not be instantaneous, but would rather follow form and process – a process, the reasons for which we may not grasp with our finite minds, but a process nonetheless that is perfect to bring about God’s purpose.

c). And this would inevitably lead us to Satan, the beautifully created angelic being who was given jurisdiction over the original creation, who continued to hold that scepter of rulership, even in his fallen condition, even though rejected by God as ruler, even to this present day.

i/ Joh 14:30 *"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.*

ii/ 2Co 4:4 *whose minds the god of this age has blinded,*

iii/ Eph 6:11 *Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

11). Now we know that some time in eternity past Satan and a third of the angels given to him rebelled against God - Isa 14:13 *For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides*

of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'

a). This rebellion was about rulership and as a result of this rebellion the material creation of Genesis 1:1, the province given into Satan's charge, became ruined - Ge 1:2 *The earth became without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep.*

b). Then in the process that follows God spends six days restoring the ruined material creation, so as to establish it in preparation for an entirely new set of rulers who would be created for that specific purpose.

c). Ge 1:9 ¶ *Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.*

d). And here on the third day we have the earth coming from beneath the waters, coming from the place of death in order to provide the environment for fruitfulness and rulership. And it is from this earth, taken from the place of death, that God makes Man, who is ultimately to hold the scepter of rulership as a coheir with God's Son - Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."*

i/ Ge 2:7 *And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground,*

12). However, we need to note that although God created Man with the specifically stated purpose of having dominion, and although, as we have seen, this is God's intention from eternity past, we have also seen in our scripture from Hebrews 2:7 that man was made a little lower than the angels.

a). In the image and likeness of God , yes

b). But in respect of rulership over the earth, below the authority of the ruling fallen angels.

c). Before the authority set in place before the foundation of the world can be realized, Man must prove himself worthy to replace the incumbent ruler.

d). And following the pattern that has already been set, this is a process brought about by the work of the Spirit over a time frame pictured in the six days of work given to the restoration of the material creation, culminating in a seventh day of rest.

e). For man to attain the position for which he was created, and be elevated 'above the angels' – seen in the 7th Day – his experience must parallel that seen in days 1 through 6 in Genesis Chapter 1 – there is no other way.

13). In his position of being a little lower than the angels, not holding the scepter of rulership, Man falls – the Woman having been deceived by Satan into acting outside of God's word.

a). This is of course the beginning of the human race's involvement with sin, but this is not the first instances of sin within this one province of God's universal kingdom – Satan had been there first - Eze 28:15 *You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you.*

i/ And in respect of sin we should note that sin is that which is contrary to God's word.

ii/ The works of the flesh that we see in Galatians 5 are the manifestation of disobedience – we must be careful not to focus on the manifestation rather than the root cause – otherwise we could deceive ourselves.

iii/ Remember God's perspective on what is evil - Heb 3:12 *Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;*

b). The consequence for Man of this sin is made plain - Gen 2:17 *"but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."*

c). Adam died spiritually that day, requiring action on God's part to deal with that death.

d). Now here is something interesting to consider – the earth from which Adam was made died, so to speak and was raised to fruitfulness by the power of the Spirit.

e). Christ is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world – in other words to effect God the Father's plans and purposes in respect of rulership, Christ had to die in the flesh.

f). Now we know of Adam that he is - Ro 5:14.....*a type of Him who was to come.*

g). This being so, would it be entirely unreasonable to conclude that Adam had to die also in order that the plans and purposes of God the Father could be realized?

i/ Joh 12:24 *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.*

h). If this is so, then salvation can never be seen as God's response to a sneak attack by His enemy, rather the attack by the enemy is in complete harmony with God's stated purpose and salvation is integral to that purpose.

i). This means that Satan's rebellion, the creation of man, the fall of man and the need for redemption are all part of the process to bring about the fulfillment of God's plans and purposes for the ages – all of which are for His Son, and by extension, His Son's coheirs.

j). I believe it was Martin Luther who said that the Devil is God's Devil – and this would be true. God is the sovereign ruler of the universe and no created being can act outside of the scope of His dominion, or can escape being subject to it - Ps 103:19 ¶ *The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all. 20 Bless the LORD, you His angels, Who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word. 21 Bless the LORD, all you His hosts, You ministers of His, who do His pleasure. 22 Bless the LORD, all His works, In all places of His dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul!*

14). This is not the way to explain this, but I am struggling for words that would do so – Adam's death, made Christ's death possible within the boundaries of time.

a). And in the events leading up to and following that death, we see sin in relation to mankind dealt with - Isa 53:3 *He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.*

4 ¶ *Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*

b). 2Co 5:21 *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

c). God the Son became sin for us, experienced the separation from God the Father that is the wages of sin and paid for us the price of redemption. The death of the firstborn in Him has made possible our transfer from the things surrounding the present system of rulership under Satan into the realm of things associated with the coming kingdom of Christ - 1Pe 2:9 *But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

d). And this, just as with day one in Genesis can only be achieved by a sovereign act of God.

15). Salvation then must be seen within the context of God's plans and purposes, set in eternity past, being worked out in time past, present and future, leading into the endless ages of eternity future.

a). Salvation is a tool necessary, as it were, for the establishment of perfect order in this province of His kingdom and into the universal kingdom beyond.

b). Salvation must follow the process given in the 6 days of Genesis 1 in order to find its ultimate conclusion in the 7th Day, the Millennial Kingdom, the fulfillment of God's purpose by and for His Son with respect to the rulership of the earth.

i/ Re 11:15 *Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"*

ii/ Re 19:7 *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."*

c). Salvation cannot be separated from the reason for man's creation and Man's creation cannot be separated from God's plans and purposes and it is within this context that we will continue to study next week – if the Lord permits.