

## THE MIRACLE OF SALVATION

Mt. 19:25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? 26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

**The miracle of salvation** .... Do miracles happen today? Is it plausible to believe that God works miracles even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? By now, you will have picked up on my scepticism of things charismatic and pseudo-Pentecostal but I believe that God still works miracles in these days. I do believe, - and I know it is the testimony of some of us in here tonight that God still works miraculously. The medical staff told Pearl I would be seriously debilitated for the rest of my life as a result of my viral meningitis; I believe God worked a miracle in my healing.

But an even greater miracle than anything to do with illness or the like is the miracle God worked in order to achieve my salvation. The miracle of salvation is the greatest act of God's grace that has ever been worked towards mankind. Let's think of it ...

### SIN'S LEGACY

- \* At no time in eternity or at no time since the creation of this world was God under any obligation to save anyone. That sounds an awful hard statement ... but that is the bare fact. God did not *owe* us salvation.
- \* Sin divided our first parents from God and denied them the privilege of His presence.
- \* This legacy that arose out of disobedience passed down through the generations, and sinners became more practised in sin and the sinfulness and the fallenness of their human condition shut out any possibility of returning to God by their own means.
- \* When Adam was exiled from the Garden of Eden the angels were posted at the gate and the way was no longer possible for him to enter into that paradise again.
- \* That was **sin's legacy** that barred him from the Garden of Eden.
- \* That is brought to our attention from the opening chapters of the Bible. God would have been completely within His rights if He would have stopped right there, 'brought down the curtain' on His creation, destroyed it all, and returned to Heaven.
- \* But, following **sin's legacy**, what did God do?

## GOD'S CHOICE

- \* Many hundreds of years later, after the children of Israel had left the land of Egypt and were travelling through the wilderness God met with them and spoke to their leader Moses; the consequences of that conversation continues to have consequences that stretches across the world, even of today.
- \* In the days of Moses there were many great nations; there were the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and God told Moses that these were **seven nations greater and mightier than thou** (Deut. 7:1).
- \* But what do we know about the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites? Very little, compared to what we do know about Israel.
- \* Why is that? What did God accept Israel over all the other nations?
  - \* Had the children of Israel proved, as they travelled through the wilderness, that they could be of better use to God for His purposes? No, they hadn't; they had proved the opposite, - their rebelliousness even in the face of God's goodness.
  - \* Did God look down the 'telescope' of the ages and see that this nation would turn out good and that therefore it would serve His purposes to have a special relationship with them? No, because He knew that century after century the nation of Israel would produce opposition and rebellion to Him and His Word.
    - \* Indeed, it was the nation of Israel that crucified His Son!
- \* Why then did God set apart this nation - the people of Israel - to be His own special 'darling' in a way that did not apply to any other people? **Dt. 7:7 The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: 8 But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.**

- \* Throughout the various stages of their history God kept a faithful remnant, - a scarlet thread, - as by grace which continued in faithfulness unto His Name.
  - \* He kept that thread through the apostasy that preceded the captivity in Babylon, and He kept them through Babylon and afterwards.
- \* And, from out of that remnant, reserved by grace, the Bible tells us, [Is. 11:1 there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.](#)
- \* Throughout the period of sin committed by the children of Israel in the Old Testament God kept faithful this remnant out of which Jesus was born.
- \* We as Christians owe our heritage to the faithfulness to God upheld by this remnant that God kept unto Himself from out of these people.
- \* Despite all the sin of that nation God – through grace – kept unto Himself a people faithful and loyal to His Name.
- \* Now, who gets the glory for that? Isaiah was one of those faithful men of God who preached God’s Word regardless of the opposition, ought he to get the glory? Malachi? Jeremiah? Isaiah? Ought they to get some portion of the glory?
- \* Let me tell you about Jeremiah. God said to him, [1:5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.](#)
- \* Now ... who gets the glory? God gets the glory! God put it into the heart of Jeremiah to serve Him ... even when he was in his mother’s womb.
- \* Paul wrote something similar? [Gal. 1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen.](#)
- \* But why did God choose Israel out of all those other nations? ... simply because, - for no other reason than this, - He loved them!
- \* **Sin’s legacy, God’s choice ...**

### **GOD’S PREROGATIVE**

- \* ... But could He not have loved them all? Why couldn’t He have loved the larger nations? Why did He have to reject any of them? ... I don’t know. I wouldn’t even make a guess!

- \* The beautiful thing about God is that His thoughts are not my thoughts, neither are His ways my ways. He is away and above anything I could ever work out.
- \* I don't know why He chose Israel ... but He did. I could come along and say to God, "God, you weren't fair in choosing Israel. In fact, God, you were wrong making any choice at all, - you should have left it up to them!"
- \* But, you see, it was **God's prerogative** to choose whoever He liked!
- \* He was under no obligation to any nation ... for none of them would have given Him a second thought.
- \* Have you ever considered why God turned His attention to you? that with regard to *you* God chooses ...
  - \* He chose, - it was in His plan, - that you would be born in a land where you would be well privileged.
    - \* Imagine being born in a Muslim country, or in Asia, or in darkest Africa where you would never have heard the Gospel ... but God planned it that you would be born here.
  - \* For some of us He planned it that we would be born of Christian parents and introduced to faithful Biblical teaching from an early age.
  - \* He planned it that you would be brought into circumstances in which you would hear the Gospel; there are many others in Kirkcaldy who have never had the spiritual privilege you have had.
- \* None of this is fluke, or luck, or good chance, or good fortune ... because there is no such thing! It is what we call the Sovereign Grace of our Almighty God. That with which He bless us and which we did not deserve. The Bible tells us, [I Jn. 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.](#)
- \* He is my Heavenly Father and I am His son, and I haven't met a child yet who has been able to choose his earthly father; in the same way, it was my Heavenly Father Who chose to love me; the Bible says, [I Jn. 4: 19 We love him, because he first loved us.](#)

#### THE SINNER'S ONLY PLEA

- \* What does being a sinner mean? It means being in total and absolute opposition to God.

- \* It means being *dead* in sin, - as dead as Lazarus was, lying in the tomb before Jesus called to him. And being dead means totally unable.
  - \* If anyone else would have called “Lazarus” Lazarus would not have heard; only the voice of Jesus lifted Him out of death.
- \* Go out into the street and tell the first person you meet they are a sinner and Jesus died on the cross to take away sin ... and they would be insulted, they wouldn’t listen.
- \* It’s not natural to think along these lines. It’s not natural to give all the credit to God, - from start to finish, - ... but it’s Biblical!
- \* I want to give you my word of testimony, about what happened on 29<sup>th</sup> January, 1970, when I was only 11 years of age.
- \* I was sitting in a Faith Mission children’s meeting and God showed to me, – child and all as I was, - that He had worked out my salvation ... from beginning to end.
- \* Looking back on it now I realise I would *never* have come to God if He hadn’t come to me first and drawn me unto Himself.
- \* I would never have been interested. Why’s that? Because of my sin ... the Bible tells me sin is a barrier and it keeps me from God.
- \* Sin would never allow me to bow before Him; it would never have put it into my mind to be saved, - *sin is in opposition to God!* ... and that’s that!
- \* But *Jesus saves!* And when He sets out to save nothing can hold Him back. That is **the sinner’s only plea.**

## HUMAN FRAILTY

- \* How many of the disciples chose to follow Jesus? None of them, - Jesus chose *them* ... all twelve of them.
  - \* How many of them do you think would have chosen Him?
- \* Yes, there were others who came to Jesus, [Lk. 9:57](#) *And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. 59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. 60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. 61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house.*

- \* They thought they could fill the requirements to be a follower of Jesus ... but they hadn't been called, and they soon left Him.
- \* There was another group of 'disciples' and Jesus was speaking along similar lines to what we are thinking about this evening; He told His listeners, [Jn. 6: 44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.](#) He left them in no doubt that their salvation was all of God, - nothing of man, [Jn. 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.](#)
- \* But they didn't want to hear this, - they wanted to think there was something they could do to contribute towards their salvation, - and Jesus didn't lighten up on His message, [v. 65 no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.](#)
- \* The Bible tells us, [v.66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.](#)
- \* It is not a popular Gospel ... that *Jesus saves* apart from any help of ours, - but it is God's Gospel, and anything that is of God is not popular to the ears of the world.
- \* I dare not flinch from preaching this great Biblical truth, - I love it; I can't say I understand it all with the natural mind but it is what God in His Word says and I've got to believe Him and that is why I preach it.

**JESUS SAVES!** I'm so proud of my Saviour that He loved me and drew me unto Himself.

- \* My whole time will be taken up in Heaven with praising Him that He touched me by His Saving Grace.
- \* Despite my sin He took a hold of me as I was squirming about in the filthy mire of the pit, - He got His hands dirty when He reached down and lifted me up; at Calvary He bore all my sin, - He planned it even before I was born.
- \* I do not believe in a Gospel that has anything of me in it, but I believe in the Gospel that Jesus Christ did everything that was needed to be done in order to save me.
- \* *I'm saved, and He saved me.* He showed me what I needed to do and He, - by the working of the Holy Spirit, - breathed into me the new life to do it ... and I was born again of my Heavenly Father.
- \* [Mt. 19:25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? 26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. ... That is the miracle of God's salvation!](#)