

THE SALVATION OF GOD AND SATAN'S COMPROMISES.

WE little realize the greatness and extent of God's salvation. It is not merely a salvation from wrath, but a salvation from sin's power. It includes clean deliverance out of the world, as well as bringing the believer into the heavenly places in Christ. It includes the past, the present and the future, and is only complete as to the body when the Lord returns. But oh, how blessed to know that all is of grace (the free favour of God), not of works lest any man should boast, (Eph. ii. 8). As to the body we are saved by hope, (Rom. viii. 24), but He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident (2 Cor. v. 5-6). We are to be as certain of the future as of the past and present; we have boldness even in view of the day of judgment, because as Christ is, so are we in this world (1 John iv. 17).

Having said so much I desire to say a few words on two parts of this great salvation:—First, as to the blood of Christ, sheltering the believer from God's wrath and judgment; secondly, as to the death and resurrection of Christ delivering from sin's power, and bringing clean out of the world with all that we possess. I take as an illustration Israel's history in Egypt (Exodus i. xv.). The generation of Israelites at the time of which I am speaking was born in Egypt, under the power and dominion of a king who knew not Joseph (Exodus i. 6-8). This king oppressed them like a tyrant, wanted to throw all their male children into the river, and put the grown men under taskmasters to build for him store cities. In this state the children of Israel groaned

and sighed under bitter bondage and cried to the Lord (Exodus ii. 23-25).

Now, my reader, let me ask you, does not this picture to you the state in which you and I were born. We were born, not like Adam in the beautiful garden of Paradise, but outside the garden—exiles from God—in a world that hates Christ and hates His people, yea, where Satan rules; in fact we were born under the power and dominion of sin, that rules over us like a tyrant. Have you ever sighed and groaned under this bondage? Have you ever cried to God for deliverance? Alas, sinner, if you have not, you are fast asleep in your sins; slowly the serpent is winding his coils around you, whilst fascinating you with his terrible wiles; and sooner or later the death stroke will descend, and, alas, if you should awake for the first time in hell!

But, to return. Besides being born under the dominion of Pharaoh, the Israelites were sinners as much as the Egyptians. Moses was raised up by a miracle as a saviour of the people. He was drawn out of the water by Pharaoh's daughter, and adopted as her son. Thus he was a fit type of the risen Jesus raised out of death to be the Deliverer of His people (Exodus ii. 1-10). Having been rejected the first time (ver. 11-15), he flees into Midian, meets Jehovah in the wilderness, who makes Himself known to him, and sends him back into Egypt to reveal His Name to the people, and to deliver them. But in what condition does he find them? They were idolaters as the Egyptians (Ezekiel xx. 5-10; Exodus iii., iv., vi. 1-9).

And what is your condition, my reader? You are not only born in sin and under the power of Satan, but you are guilty because of the commission of a multitude of known sins, against conscience, against the law of God; having had also the Gospel of Christ preached to you, you reject it.

Oh, how terrible is man's condition! Born in sin, committing sins without number, with the full knowledge of the day of judgment coming, and when the true Moses comes and tells of deliverance, the eyes are veiled, and there is no understanding the message (Ex. vi. 9; Mark xii. 6-8).

Pharaoh refuses to let the people go, and plague after plague is sent. But as each judgment is removed his heart is hardened more than ever. But at last he must give way, and Israel must be delivered. The question now comes in, how is this to take place? Israel is as guilty as the Egyptians. Jehovah is righteous and cannot pass over sin. If Egypt must lose her first-born by the sword of the destroying angel, so must Israel. Else Jehovah is not righteous. But Moses is again summoned into His presence. The word is (Exodus xii.), Let each family take a lamb, kill it, take of the blood and sprinkle it on the lintel and door-posts of their houses. Then Jehovah says, When I see the blood I will pass over you, and will not suffer the destroyer to come near you. And so the lamb was killed, the blood was sprinkled, the Israelites got under shelter, Jehovah saw the blood and passed over them, and thus they were saved from the wrath and judgment of the destroying angel (Exodus xii. 12, 13.)

Sinner, are you thus saved? Have you, as a poor guilty creature, seen God's lamb slain for you? Have you seen His blood carried into the very presence of God? and have you, by the acceptance of that blood, got under its shelter, so that now you know from God's own word that you are passed over, that you are saved from wrath and judgment, through that Christ?

This is the first part of God's salvation. The sinner finds in the blood of Christ the full answer to his guilt. God's justice is satisfied; yea, His righteousness now is declared in forgiving and

justifying the vilest sinner who believes in Jesus. (See Rom. iii. 23-26).

The blood of the passover lamb set Israel right with Jehovah. He could now act righteously for them in delivering them out of Egypt. It is remarkable that the word *salvation* is not used till Exodus xiv. 13. Israel is not fully saved till brought out of Egypt. The blood indeed had saved them from their guilt and averted the righteous judgment of God, but Pharaoh still ruled over them, and they were still in Egypt—the land under God's judgment. The passage of the Red Sea completed their deliverance. The question now was, not how to be right with Jehovah, but how to be delivered from the condition in which they were born. The Red Sea is the answer to this. When they got to its shore, the dark waters shut them in in front, Pharaoh pursued them behind, and they had nowhere to look to but to Jehovah as their Deliverer. The latter by opening a passage clean through, saved them. They passed on dry land right through the waters: themselves, their wives, their children and their cattle, and stood on dry ground on the other side of the Red Sea. Pharaoh and his hosts were destroyed, and Israel sung the song of salvation (Exod. xiv., xv.)

Now this completes the picture of a sinner's salvation. Besides being guilty, he is under the power of sin. Sin has entered into the world, and death by sin. Sin reigns unto death, exerts dominion over man, pays him his dread wages, which is death (Rom. v. 12, 21; vi. 14, 23), and the anxious soul cries out for deliverance, and finds it in God through the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. vii. 24, 25), God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by a sacrifice for sin, has condemned sin in the flesh (Rom. viii. 3). By the death and resurrection of Christ the believer is clean delivered from Satan, sin and the world. Christ risen is God's gift of

eternal life to him (Rom. vi. 23). He stands in spirit on the resurrection side of death, that life which he now possesses being the life of Christ who has passed through death, and has the privilege to reckon himself to be dead indeed unto sin, and alive unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. vi. 11).

And now, my reader, let me ask, are you rejoicing in this full salvation? Do you understand what it means? That it means not only forgiveness of sins, but clean deliverance out of the world, as also from the power of sin and Satan? Sin is in you still, but blessed be God, it is not on the believer! Yea, more, he stands outside it in spirit; Christ risen being now his life. Blessed be God for such a salvation, which will actually be completed as to our state only when we get bodies of glory like Jesus. But this is as certain as that we have got it by faith now. Now we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Now we are accepted. Now we are justified. Now we have everlasting life (Eph. i. 6, 7; Rom. v. 1; John iii. 36). By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God (Eph. ii.).

Now, whilst God is working in this way for the deliverance of souls, Satan is trying to hinder; and, when he cannot actually stop God's power working in a soul, he makes compromises. Pharaoh made four, or tried to make them with Moses. First, he said, when pressed, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land (Ex. viii. 25). Jehovah's object in saving the people was to have a worshipping people. Pharaoh says, Oh, yes, worship Jehovah, but let it be in the land. If Satan sees an anxious soul, he will give way a little and say, oh, yes, it is well to be religious, you can worship God by going to church, look at the numbers that go; and he gets a poor soul to make a compromise, and instead of taking the three days' journey of the death and resur-

rection of Christ into the wilderness, he joins the church perhaps as an unconverted worshipper, worshipping Jehovah in the land. But Moses knows this will not do. The lamb was an abomination to the Egyptians, as Christ the material of worship is an abomination to the world. The worship of Jehovah could only go on outside the bounds of the Red Sea. The waves of that sea must roll between the saved people and Egypt to worship Jehovah acceptably. Ah, sinner, take care, Satan will make this compromise with you, but know this that the Father can only accept you as a worshipper on the ground of the death and resurrection of Christ. You must come to God through Christ, and so be separated from a world on which judgment is written, and it is only then your worship can be accepted.—(Comp. Exodus viii. 25–27, with Heb. x. 19–25).

Now Pharaoh makes his second compromise, Yes, go, he says, but don't go very far away. Let your worship be as near me as possible, worship Jehovah, but have a little bit of my dominion too. Sometimes we meet a professor who has taken this bait. He professes to worship God as a saved sinner, and all the week through he is serving sin. Professor of Christianity, beware! Alas! how little power must Christ have over your heart to allow you to do this (Exodus viii. 28).

In Exodus x. we have Pharaoh's last two efforts to keep the children of Israel from altogether leaving Egypt. In verse 8, he says, Go, serve the Lord. But who are they that shall go? Moses said, We will go with our young and our old, with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds will we go, for we must hold a feast unto the Lord. And he said unto them, Let the Lord be so with you, as I will let you go, and your little ones, look to it, for evil is before you. *Not so*, go now, ye that are men, and serve the Lord, for that ye did desire. That

is to say, Pharaoh would let the men go, but keep the wives in Egypt, knowing perfectly well, that the men would soon return, if their wives and children were left behind. And now, anxious sinner, I implore you to make no compromise with Satan in regard to this. If you are a married man and have children, it is the Lord's purpose to save all. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house (Acts xvi. 31). If you are determined to be saved, make no compromise with Satan ; put your wife and children on the same ground as yourself, by faith. I knew a man in Paris who received Christ, and his first thought was, "I have left my wife behind in London, and she is unconverted. It will never do for me to be going one way, and she another." And so back he started to London, arrived at his house at about 3 A.M., got his wife up, told her of his conversion, got her on her knees with him, and they read together, and prayed together, and on the third day her heart bowed to the name of Jesus. O, man, be in earnest, eternity is in question, and if you were to make a start, and your wife remained in the world, the next thing might be you have given up Christ for the wife, and have been dragged back to the world. God's salvation is not only for you, but for your wife and children ; see that you get them all on the platform of God's salvation, through the death and resurrection of Christ, if not actually, yet by faith, and let nothing keep you in a world on which God has written, Judgment !

Pharaoh's last compromise we read of in Exodus x. 24-26 : Go ye, serve the Lord, he says, only let your flocks and herds remain ; let your little ones also go with you. Satan must give way before the power of God acting in a soul, and his last trap for a man is, "Oh, yes, go and be saved yourself; no harm too, if your children are, but the business of the

world must go on in the world's way. Let your cattle and your flocks be in the world, and yourself live outside it!" Ah, you wily tempter, well have you succeeded in many a poor soul in this way. They have run well for a time, they have professed to be saved by Christ, but their property was not put on a death and resurrection platform, it did not go out with them through the way of the Red Sea, and sooner or later they cast a longing eye back to Egypt. It is no harm, say they, to make money, put it out at the highest rate of interest, speculate as the world, get rich in the world's way, advertize and tell lies in their advertisements, blaze their names abroad in large letters for the world's patronage. Ah, worldly professor, what is the secret of this? You have professed to come out of Egypt, but your shop, your business, your herds, your cattle are in Egypt. Satan has well succeeded with you: and here you are, with all your profession, a server of God and mammon. Oh, may God awake you. If you are a real Christian, see that henceforth you do your business on the platform of a dead and risen Jesus. Devote your property, your goods, for the help of your family through the wilderness, not for the dressing them up in Egypt's clothes, and garnishing your houses with Egypt's furniture. Devote it for your own need as a pilgrim, and for the need of the other pilgrims journeying along with you to the heavenly Canaan, and the service of the Lord; then shall you know and enjoy the full extent of God's salvation, you will enjoy your heavenly leader, who can make no compromise with Satan; and you will be sheltered from the fires of Sodom, which must burn up your sons and daughters and property, if you as a Lot cleave to the world, though you yourself should be saved, yet so as by fire (Gen. xix.; 1 Cor. iii. 15).

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