

Salvation in the Old Testament

Salvation is the adjustment a person makes to the Justice of God when he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The justice of God was satisfied when Christ bore our sins in His body on the cross. This makes it possible for God to reconcile the believer to Himself and to impute righteousness to the believer. Gen. 15:6

The Gospel is the information provided in the Bible to give us the facts about God's provision for us.

The death of Christ on the cross was predetermined by the decisions of the Divine Decrees so that, from the standpoint of the OT times, Jesus Christ's substitutionary atonement was certain to take place, even though the actual efficacious sacrifice had not yet occurred. The justice of God was satisfied.

OT believers received Jesus Christ as Savior as He was revealed in OT times. Sometimes He was called Elohim, Jehovah-Elohim, or Jehovah plus a noun (God our Righteousness, etc.). Whenever there was positive volition at the point of God consciousness, God provided Gospel information to the individual.

The first statement of the Gospel is recorded in Genesis 3, at the time of original sin, Man's fall. When Adam and Eve fell, they only had one count against them - negative volition to the command regarding good and evil. Good and Evil is the plan of Satan; so knowledge of good and evil is knowledge of Satan's plan. Adam and Eve, in their innocence in the garden of Eden did not need to be introduced to Satan's plan or to be inculcated with it. Therefore, this one tree was forbidden.

Eve partook of the tree in innocence, Adam partook in cognizance. He had seen the first sinner, Eve, disobey God, but he took part anyway. Remember, there was no immorality involved here, because at the time they were neither moral or immoral. Their sin was merely rejection of what God had commanded. This brought instant spiritual death.

At this instant, man no longer ruled the world; Satan became the ruler of this kosmos. The coup d'etat was complete; and man was now subject to

Satan as far as this world is concerned. Mankind immediately became marked with the "mark of Adam", the Sin Nature.

To the question "Which came first, personal sin or the Sin Nature?" the answer is that personal sin came first and caused the existence of the Sin Nature. The human spirit was cancelled out in the sense of spiritual death.

For the rest of the human race, the Sin Nature is inherited at birth, so the Sin Nature is present before there is any opportunity for personal sin. Also, Adam's sin is imputed to us, so that we are born with two strikes against us. "For as in Adam all die ..." Note : we are not called sinners because we sin; we are sinners because we are born, with a Sin Nature, and having Adam's sin imputed to us.

This is the reason that God, with His character of absolute Justice and Righteousness, is not free to enter into a relationship with us unless it can be done without compromising his integrity. And that is only possible if all the sins of the world are judged.

But the Lord has found a way to save mankind. Gen. 3:15, "I will put enmity (hostility) between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; it shall bruise (crush) thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The "seed of the woman" is the title for the Lord Jesus Christ in virgin birth. The Sin Nature and Adam's imputed sin is passed down through the male; and Christ was not born of a male-female relationship. He was able to avoid that result of the curse. The Lamb of God had to be without spot or blemish.

At the Second Advent of Christ, the head of Satan will be crushed, and he will no longer rule the world - Christ will rule the world and Satan will be imprisoned for 1,000 years.

The pattern of salvation in the Old Testament is exactly the same as the pattern of New Testament salvation. Gen. 15:6, "Abraham believed God, and

God imputed it to him for righteousness.” Imputed righteousness means that God’s Justice has been satisfied. This verse is found in the context of Rom. 4:1-4 (READ).

Comments:

1. There never was a time, and there never will be a time when God is not saving mankind. Rom. 10:13; 2 Pet. 3:9
2. The Gospel was clearly declared in Old Testament times. Rom. 1:1-4; I Cor. 15:3-4; Acts 3:18. The passage in Isa. 53:5,6 has exactly the same boundaries as are found in I Cor. 15:3. Dan. 12:2,3 has the boundary of the resurrection.
3. Regardless of age or dispensation, man is always saved in the same manner - positive volition to the Gospel expressed in a non-meritorious way, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 4:12; Gal. 3:6-8
4. Positive volition existed in Old Testament times, both at the point of God consciousness and the point of Gospel hearing. Ex. 33:7; Gen. 15:6
5. While revelation from God is progressive, reaching its peak with the New Testament scriptures, it has always been, nevertheless, sufficient for salvation of souls at all periods of time.
6. The object of faith in salvation is the Lord Jesus Christ, Gal. 3:26. However, the revelation concerning Christ varies in different ages.
7. Jesus Christ was first revealed as Savior at the time of man’s fall, Gen. 3:15. He is represented as the “seed of the woman”.
8. Jesus Christ is usually revealed in the Old Testament by “shadows”. For example, in the Tabernacle, in the feasts, in the modus operandi of the Levitical priests.

Another means of revealing Christ was through “inanimate revelation”, that is, through things in nature like the burning bush, the Rock, the Shekinah Glory, or through the typology of the furniture in the Tabernacle (Num. 17:7). The Mercy Seat, the **hilasterion**, was the place of propitiation in the Holy of Holies.

The Levitical offerings were “witnessing by ritual”. The burnt offerings taught propitiation, with emphasis on the word of Christ, the Lamb of God. The meal and fruit offerings revealed the Person of Christ on the cross. The peace offering taught about the barrier between God and man being removed.

The gospel was presented in the Old Testament directly in theological teaching. Isa. 53 was straight doctrinal teaching which showed that Christ carried our guilt as well as our sins.

9. Once the reality is come, we have the New Testament, which is historical Christology.
10. According to Isa. 55:6, salvation in the person of Jesus Christ, is always available. Acts. 4:12.
11. Many conversions are recorded in the Old Testament, including:

Noah was declared “just” in Gen. 6:8,9, and was said to have righteousness in Heb. 11:7. Heb. 11 shows the spiritual life of OT believers. The OT imputation of righteousness is seen in Psalm 24:5 and Isa. 61:10.

For Abraham, compare Gen. 15:6 with Rom. 4:1-4

Job gave perfect testimony to salvation in Gospel form – death, burial, and resurrection. Job. 19:23-27.

Many Gentiles were saved in the Old Testament. The citizens of Nineveh responded to the Gospel when Jonah preached to them. Matt. 12:41; Luke 11:32. See also Rom. 9:24,25; 9:30-33. See Daniel regarding the salvation of Nebuchadnezzar.