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FULL AND FINAL SALVATION THROUGH THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Psalm 22-24

Our salvation is full and final through the good Shepherd. The Psalms under consideration follow chronologically and are significant to our salvation and the ministry of our Saviour, Shepherd and glorious King in our lives. Our gracious Saviour, His sacrifice, suffering and substitutionary work on the cross at Calvary are revealed in Psalm 22. He rose from the dead and became the Shepherd that supplies all our needs (Psalm 23). The moment a sinner turns away from sin, believes on the Lord Jesus Christ and has his name written in the book of life, he becomes a sheep in the fold and can boldly say, “**The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want**”. Although Christ returned to heaven, He promised to come again with the clouds of heaven and with glory to take us home (Psalm 24). He will come as the sovereign King of glory and all eyes will see Him. Nothing can hinder Him from coming; and when He comes, we shall appear with Him in glory.

1. THE SUFFERING OF THE GRACIOUS SAVIOUR

Psalm 22

Christ is full of grace and truth. There are three things to note:

(i). The Suffering of Our Sinless Substitute

Psalm 22:1,6-8,16-18; Luke 24:46,47; Acts 17:3,4; 26:22,23; 1 Peter 3:18; 2:21-24

Christ's ordeal and exact words on the cross were already spoken of prophetically in this Psalm which talks about the sinless, spotless, blameless, righteous and holy Christ who became our Substitute and went through scorn, shame and sorrow for us. How the Lord would be “**reproach[ed] of men, and despised of the people**”; how they would pierce His hands and feet, “**part [His] garments among them, and cast lots upon [His] vesture**” were all fulfilled.

While He bore the sins of humanity on the cross, the Father, who is of a purer eye than to behold iniquity, forsook Him. Thus, He cried, “**My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**” Rejected by the people and forsaken by the Father, He sacrificed Himself to make reconciliation for all sinners, “**that he might bring us to God**”. We have connection with the Lord because of the substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. The fulfilment of Scripture prophecies should give us the assurance that every jot and tittle of the word of God will be fulfilled eventually.

(ii). The Sinfulness of All Scornful Sinners

Psalm 22:6-8,12,13,18; Mark 15:20; Romans 3:23; Acts 9:4-6; 1 Corinthians 8:12; Philippians 3:18,19

The sinners who arrested, scorned and crucified Jesus are representative of all the sinners in the world, “**For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God**”. Today, people still commit sins. By inspiration, Paul the apostle described sinners as “**the enemies of the**

cross of Christ". They might be churchgoers but they speak against Christ and do not have real faith in Him. But the Lord wants sinners to repent of their sins, believe on Him and embrace the grace of God and the sacrifice He made on the cross at Calvary.

(iii). **The Salvation of Submissive Seekers**

Psalm 22:26-31; Acts 4:12; Romans 10:9,10; 2 Corinthians 7:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:8,9; Hebrews 2:1-3

It is heart-warming that this same Psalm that talks about the suffering and death of Christ also mentions His resurrection. He rose on the third day for our salvation and justification. Salvation comes as a gift to those who seek the Lord. Submissive, sincere seekers "**remember** [Christ's death and resurrection] **and turn unto the LORD**". To receive salvation, sinners must confess their sins and believe in their heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. As beneficiaries of God's mercy, the Lord expects us to preach the gospel to sinners so that they will repent and come to Him. Saved from sin, we must recognise Christ as Lord, Controller, Director and Guide of our lives.

2. THE SUFFICIENCY OF THE GREAT SHEPHERD

Psalm 23

"The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want". All that we need for the soul, spirit and body; present and future; earthly dwelling and eternal sojourn are found in Christ our Sufficiency. This Psalm is personal, gives a promissory note and is perpetual. The Shepherd watches over us and prevents us from going astray. We must "**fear no evil**" because He has taken the strength, sting and substance of death away. Therefore, "**goodness and mercy shall follow [us] all the days of [our] life: and [we] will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever**". There are six things to note:

(i). **The Lordship of Our Shepherd**

Psalm 23:1; John 10:11,4,5,27; Jeremiah 31:10,11; Hebrews 13:20,21; Psalm 34:9,10

Because the Lord is our "**shepherd**", He supplies all our needs. If we fear the Lord and put our trust in Him, we "**shall not want any good thing**". Everything we need has been provided by our Lord and Shepherd.

(ii). **The Leading of the Sheep**

Psalm 23:2; John 10:3,4,9; Proverbs 8:19-21; Isaiah 48:17,18; Matthew 7:13,14

"He leadeth me". Because He leads us, we have rest, peace, serenity and confidence. We also have enough because He teaches us to profit as He leads us, and every good thing we desire and purposefully pursue, He grants us.

(iii). **His Likeness in Our Soul**

Psalms 23:3; 51:12; Galatians 6:1,2; 2:20; Acts 3:19-21

Christ is the righteous One. When we pass our sin unto Christ our sin-Bearer, He passes His righteousness to us and we become like Him. Consequently, we have joy, peace, victory and righteousness. We also have the fullness of His nature as He upholds us with His free Spirit.

(iv). **Our Liveliness under His Security**

Psalms 23:4; 27:1-3; 46:1-3; 138:7,8; 110:2; Micah 7:14-16

Whenever we are faced with any form of trouble, the Lord assures us of His deliverance. Therefore, we should be lively as we go through life because He is with us. The “**rod**” in the hand of the shepherd is not to smash, kill or destroy the sheep in his fold but the lion. The “**staff**” is the crook he uses to draw the sheep back from danger. Hence, the rod and the staff should not make us panicky or afraid because with them, our Shepherd will perfect all that concern us.

(v). **The Liberality of Our Saviour**

Psalms 23:5; 31:19,20; John 10:9,10; Ephesians 3:17-20; Acts 10:38; 1 John 2:27

The Lord assures us that we can make progress, be healed, satisfied with His goodness and make profit in our profession despite “**the presence of [our] enemies**”. He also promises us superabundance and overflowing blessings every time and in every situation. He will answer our prayers and supply our needs “**abundantly above all that we ask or think**”.

(vi). **Living with Him in His Eternal Sanctuary**

Psalms 23:6; 102:19; 16:11; 17:15; 73:24-26; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Philippians 1:23

“**...And I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever**”. Christ will surely return to take us to Himself “**that where [He is], there [we] may be also**” (John 14:3). As believers, He wants us to have the expectation to finish our journey on earth joyfully, purposefully and victoriously.

3. THE SUPREMACY OF THE GLORIOUS SON

Psalms 24:1-10

Christ is preeminent and He possesses supreme power. As the glorious Son, all power is given unto Him in heaven and on earth. There are three things to note here:

(i). **Our Citizenship in the Kingdom of His Son**

Psalms 24:1-4; Colossians 1:13,14; John 3:3,5; Romans 14:17; Psalm 24:5-7; 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Hebrews 12:14,28

Christ has a Kingdom. The moment we are cleansed and purified by faith in the Lord, we become citizens of the kingdom of God. Being delivered from the power of darkness, “**we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins**” and the righteousness that is required in the Kingdom. To make it to heaven, we must possess “**clean hands, and a pure heart**” and “**Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.**”

(ii). **The Coming of the King for His Saints**

Psalms 24:5-8; John 14:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; 2 Thessalonians 2:1; 1 Corinthians 15:51,52; Revelation 19:7,8

The Lord will come for His saints to take them Home at rapture. “**For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord**”. While we shall be with Him at the marriage supper of the Lamb, there will be great tribulation in the world as the Antichrist will rule

those present on the earth with cruelty. To partake in the rapture, we must ensure we are ready for His coming.

(iii). **The Crowning of the King with His Saints**

Psalm 24:9,10; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 1:14-16; Matthew 24:30; 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8; Revelation 1:7,8; 19:11-16; Daniel 7:22

After seven years of the great tribulation, Christ will come again. This time, He will come with the saints to possess the kingdom. While the King of glory comes for His saints at the rapture, He will come with His saints at His Second Coming to judge the world. **“And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”**

GHS: 74, 68 & 147