

# ABC's of SALVATION

by

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## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

### QUESTION GOD CANNOT ANSWER

WERE we to go to some leading manufacturer and ask him how a beautiful finished product came into being, he would trace it from the raw material to its present state. But ask him what question God cannot answer and he would be compelled to say, "I do not know."

Call in the leading lawyer of the city or state. He might be able to answer all the questions we might ask him concerning jurisprudence. He could tell of decisions in the local, circuit and supreme courts of the state and could even give the decisions of the federal courts. Ask him the question under discussion, and, were he honest, it would produce only a blank stare upon his countenance.

Call in the leading educator, the leading physician, the leading metallurgist, and the effect would be the same. Were it possible to pull back the curtains of the world of the doomed and damned and ask the inhabitants of that dismal abyss we would find that they would be unable to answer the question. Were it possible to call the archangel down from heaven and propound this question, he would fly back to glory leaving it unanswered. Yea, were it possible to mount up through the atmosphere, the stratosphere, through space to the eternal throne of God and ask the question of Him who sits upon the Throne, the answer would be, "Were I able to answer it I would not have asked it in My Book of Divine Revelation."

The question is found in Hebrews 2:3, "**HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE, IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT SALVATION?**" This question concerns the salvation that was purchased on the cross of Calvary over nineteen centuries ago—the neglect of which makes man the guiltiest sinner in the world, and as sure of damnation as if he were already a resident of the world of the doomed. Why does it bring such awful condemnation?

#### I. It Is God's Salvation

**"Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it"** (Acts 28:28).

For centuries and millenniums God had spoken of this salvation in types and symbols. Along the highway of divine revelation, He had pictured it in Abel's offering, Isaac on the altar, the Passover lamb, and scores of other photographs.

Prophet after prophet had predicted it and the poets had sung about it. So clearly had it been told, that the rich man in hades, pleading for his brethren on earth, was told, **“They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them”** (Luke 16:29). But **“when the fulness of time was come”** God dressed Himself in human flesh to bring this salvation to man. To neglect this is the most appalling presumption and defiance man has ever displayed.

## II. It Is the Great Salvation

**“How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?”** (Hebrews 2:3).

It is great because of the way and the price of its purchase. Over nineteen hundred years ago the Son of God left heaven’s glory. The One, **“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God”** (Philippians 2:6), came out of the ivory palaces with the smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia upon His garments (Psalm 45:8) and was born as a babe among the malodors of a stable.

The Lamb of God was born among the lambs of the animal kingdom. The stones of the hillsides became the pillows of rest for His weary body when **“every man went unto his own house”** (John 7:53). Finally he was nailed to the cross, died, and was buried in a grave not His own. Why all this? He was bridging the awful chasm between God and lost man. Surely it is terrible to neglect so great salvation.

## III. It Is an Eternal Salvation

- **“And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him”** (Hebrews 5:9).

- **“By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us”** (Hebrews 9:12).

So many things are temporal and fleeting. Nothing seems to last. We look into the bright eyes of a babe one day; the next it may be cold in death. The wife waves a fond hand at her husband as he leaves to work, the next time she sees him his cold form may be in an undertaker’s establishment. A home may be beautiful and happy one day and the next day wrecked by sin, crime, tragedy, or death.

There may have been years of long, honest, patient toil and a modest little sum acquired for old age, when all of a sudden the money takes wing and flies away. But this salvation is eternal—it outlasts the hills on which we tread, yea, it will outlast the stars in yonder heavens. What a terrible crime to refuse the eternal for something fleeting and temporal!

## IV. It Is a Personal Salvation

To a religious leader of the Jews the Lord Jesus Christ said, **“Ye must be born again.”** To the Philippian jailer who cried out, **“What must I do to be saved?”** Paul and Silas answered, **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”**

We are born into this world one at a time. The natural birth is an individual matter. So it is also with the second birth—the new birth. It is an individual, personal experience. It cannot be delegated to you by another. Parents transmit to their children the old nature of sin (Psalm 51:5) but cannot transmit to their children the new nature for **“that which is born of the flesh is flesh”** (John 3:6).

It is perfectly right for parents to instruct their children in the Word of God. It is not only right but it is commanded in the Word. But through no act of parents can their children become children of God. The whole body of Scripture teaches that salvation is a personal matter and must be accepted personally. **“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name”** (John 1:12) was the Scripture used by the Holy Spirit in the writer’s salvation. Have you personally accepted Christ as Saviour? If you have not, then you do not have this salvation.

### V. The Only Salvation

**“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among\* men, whereby we must be saved”** (Acts 4:12).

This simple, yet sublime, statement should awaken many people. There are thousands who are trusting in a makeshift salvation. These words are being written while I am conducting a Bible conference in a North Carolina town. Just last week an elderly man told me plainly that he expected to be saved “by keeping the commandments,” yet there stands the unequivocal statement by Paul, **“Therefore by the deeds (doing) of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin”** (Romans 3:20).

Men are trusting in rituals, ceremonies, church membership, works, morality, etc., etc., when the Word says we must trust in Christ. Suppose you wanted to cross a strange river. Someone would direct you to a great stone or concrete bridge upon which you could see scores of heavy trucks moving. You knew its strength by what you saw. But instead you went down by the river and secured a frail canoe, which so far as you knew, had never successfully negotiated a trip across the river, and against which you had been faithfully warned by people who knew the canoe, the river, and the bridge. I beg of you today, quit trusting these canoes and trust Him who said, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me”** (John 14:6).

### VI. It Is a Present Salvation

**“Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”** (II Corinthians 6:2).

Not next year, not next month, not next week, not tomorrow, not the next hour or even the next minute, but NOW. Volumes could be written upon the tragedies of those who thought they had time. Two personal workers, in the church of which I was pastor, called in a home one day. They seemed able to do little with either husband or wife, especially the latter. When ready to leave, after the final words with them, the wife said, “There is always time to be sorry.”

A few days later she was missed by her neighbors. The husband said she was visiting in another state. A vacant log house which stood in a neglected district had burned one night. None seemed to regard this as other than the work of campers or small boys. A detective seemed to have “a hunch.” He went to the remains of the house, carefully sifted the ashes and found some lady’s rings. The husband was given a grilling at the hands of detectives, admitted killing his wife, carrying her body to the vacant building, and setting it on fire. Her last known words to the gospel invitation were, “There is always time to be sorry.”

A man with whom I had dealt many times on the subject of salvation came down the aisle to speak to me at the close of a service. His request was, “I want you to pray that I may be saved some time.” While he seemed rational, I noticed the odor of liquor on his breath. I said to him, “I cannot do this.” He seemed shocked at my seeming lack of interest all at once. I said “Mr. M I God’s Word says, ‘**Now is the day of salvation.**’ Let us step into this room, take the Word and settle this matter.” He refused to do so. When I left that city he was still unsaved so far as I know, yet I had seen the tears flow from his eyes more than once when talking to him on the matter of salvation. He was unwilling to heed the Word of God.

## VII. It Is the Common Salvation

“**Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation . . .**” (Jude 3).

It is common because it is for all people. It is for the tramp as well as the treasurer; the prowler as well as the president; the scum as well as society; the murderous as well as the moral; the pigmy as well as the powerful; the sportful as well as the sad; the down-and-outer as well as the up-and-outer. It is for all, for “**All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God**” (Romans 3:23). The only thing you have to do to be lost is that which some reader may be doing now—just neglect this salvation. Just continue to do this, and one day from the region of the lost you will say, “I did not know that the rider on the pale horse was so near the day I read the ‘Q’ chapter in the book on ‘The ABC’s of Salvation.’”

Salvation! O the joyful sound!  
What pleasure to our ears!  
A sov’ reign balm for ev’ry wound,  
A cordial for our fears.

Salvation! O ascended Lamb,  
To Thee the praise belongs!  
Salvation shall inspire our hearts,  
And dwell upon our tongues.

~ end of chapter 17 ~

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