

# ABC's of SALVATION

by

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## CHAPTER THREE

### CHRISTIAN POSSESSIONS

THERE is a song which we have heard from childhood, the first verse of which is:

On Jordan's stormy banks I stand  
And cast a wishful eye,  
To Canaan's fair and happy land  
Where my possessions lie.

The other verses of the song show that the author makes Canaan a type of heaven, Jordan, a type of death, and intimates that the Christian does not enter into his possessions until he dies. That Canaan is not a type of heaven, in the strict sense of the word, is shown by the fact that Israel both fought and backslid in Canaan. The Christian will do neither in heaven.

Let us take a little inventory and note some of the things we have now. Not things we hope to have, or expect to have, but things we really have—the present enjoyment of which depends not upon feelings or opinions but upon divine revelation.

#### I. We Have Redemption

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

“The N. T. records the fulfillment of the O. T. types and prophecies of redemption through the sacrifice of Christ. The completed truth is set forth in three words which are translated redemption: (1) *agorazo*, “to purchase in the market.” The underlying thought is a slave market. The subjects of redemption are ‘**sold under sin**’ (Romans 7:14), but are, moreover, under sentence of death (Ezekiel 18:4; John 3:18,19; Romans 3:19; Galatians 3:10), and the purchase price is the blood of the Redeemer who dies in their stead (Galatians 3:13; II Corinthians 5:21; Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; I Timothy 2:6; I Peter 1:18); (2) *exagorazo*, “to buy out of the market.” The redeemed are never again to be exposed to sale; (3) *lutroo*, “to loose,” “to set free by paying a price” (John 8:32; Galatians 4:4, 5, 31; 5:13; Romans 8:21). Redemption is by sacrifice and power; Christ paid the price, the Holy Spirit makes deliverance actual in experience (Romans 8:2)” (*Scofield Reference Bible*).

All of this is seen in type in the redemption of Israel from Egyptian slavery. Little wonder that the first singing recorded in the Bible is found in Exodus 15 when they stood on the “Canaan side” of the Red Sea. Beloved, amid the gathering clouds of the Stygian darkness of this closing age, the Christian can sing the songs of redemption for it is one of his priceless, present possessions.

## II. We Have Internal Life

**“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life”** (John 3:36).

On this simple but marvelous truth many of God’s dear children are confused. They think they are going to get it, or hope to get it when they die. Everlasting life is the gift of God to every believer and is a present possession. What it is is difficult of explanation. We talk about the everlasting hills, but they had a beginning and are now in the process of change by erosion. Everlasting life is not only something that shall never end, but something that never had a beginning.

Here is a poor illustration—Suppose it were possible to inoculate your blood with the blood of some royal family. You would not only have the blood of future kings in your veins, but also the blood of past kings. By the new birth the believer becomes a **“partaker of the divine nature”** (II Peter 1:4). He is a child of God now (I John 3:2). Christian, rejoice in it—it is one of your priceless, present possessions.

## III. We Have a Great High Priest

**“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need”** (Hebrews 4:14-16).

During the depression in the early thirties, I called upon a dear saint of God—suffering in body, suffering by the depression, suffering from the sins of others. One of the first things she said to me was, “It looks as if God has forgotten me.” How mistaken she was! The One who was born among the malodors of a stable, who lived in the home of a poor carpenter, who slept on the mountainside with a stone for a pillow, who was misunderstood by His friends and killed by His enemies, was, at that very moment, her great High Priest at the throne of grace. She had Him then, but was not utilizing her present possession. Christian, never lose sight of the fact that the high priesthood of Christ is one of your priceless, present possessions.

## IV. We Have the Holy Spirit

**“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”** (I Corinthians 6:19).

Who has this abiding Guest—some favored, gifted saint, who seemingly never has a trial? No. Every believer, including the most tried and discouraged, has this abiding Guest. But He is more than a Guest—He is the Comforter (Gr. *Parakletos*), “*One called alongside to help.*” He lives within to make our adoption real. It is He, who puts into our soul the cry “**Abba Father**” (Romans 8:15). But He does more than this. He helps in our prayers, for it is written, “**Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered**” (Romans 8:26).

Every Christian has this Divine Person living in him. Dear Christian, yield to Him and allow Him to use you— He is one of your priceless, present possessions.

## V. We Have the Promises of God

“**Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises . . .**” (II Peter 1:4).

What a blessed thing that we have the Word of God in a time like this in which we live! After all the centuries of man’s boasted progress we have just emerged at the present writing from a second “world war.”

In spite of it all, the child of God is not perturbed, for he has the promises of God. He may see his property confiscated, as it has been done by ruthless dictators, yet he knows “**In my Father’s house there are many mansions.**” He may see the confederation of ungodly kings and rulers, yet he knows in God’s plans and purposes His King shall sit upon the holy hill of Zion.

It may be true that sometimes the promises of God and the providences of God may seem to be running contrariwise. We look into the back of a watch. Some wheels are running in one direction, some in another direction, while some seem to be standing still, yet we know that the Watchmaker has designed all these to give us a dependable timepiece. Not a single wheel just happened to fall into place. We may depend upon it that the great Designer of our lives takes His promises and His providences and makes “**All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose**” (Romans 8:28). We know “**All the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us**” (II Corinthians 1:20).

Some time ago I was sitting at a table in a Pullman car working on a manuscript when a wounded officer of the army, on his way home from the South Pacific, came along and picked up my Bible. He was Jewish. In the course of our conversation he said, “It is a strange thing that when the boys are wounded and think they are going to die, they usually spurn a drink of whisky and ask for the chaplain.”

I answered him, “It is a good thing that they do this, but I wonder why some of them put it off until that time?” His answer was, “You may have something there” and proceeded to look for a more congenial conversationalist in another car. Much has been written in the last few years about men in lifeboats, adrift upon the ocean, turning to the promises of God. What a blessed thing they did, but what a pity that some waited until such an extremity!

Dear Christian, these promises are for you now. Cling to them, they are your priceless, present possession.

## VI. We Have the Sure Word of Prophecy

**“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise . . .”** (II Peter 1:19).

The word **“dark”** means *“squalid.”* What a squalid place this world is! A few years ago we were told that the world had been made safe for democracy, yet the very soil upon which men died for this principle was the breeding place of the world’s most ruthless dictators.

I am writing these notes in a hotel in a large city on the Gulf of Mexico. Just yesterday I listened to a minister of the gospel, preaching over the radio, predict that out of World War II will come a new world order and a brotherhood of man. Poor blind leader of the blind! He is ignorant of the prophetic word of God. He does not know that the nations will continue their tramp until Armageddon is reached and then, and not till then, will we have permanent world peace.

When the clouds of that final conflict will have rolled away, the Lord Jesus Christ will be upon the throne of David, in Jerusalem, ruling over the earth. The world will then be free from tyrants, dictators, and political machinations by evil men. The devil will be bound in the bottomless pit, and peace will cover the earth like the waters cover the sea. Of this sure word of prophecy the so-called statesmen and most politico-ecclesiastical leaders seem so ignorant!

In the autumn of 1941 a professor in a well-known seminary came back to the city where I was then a pastor and preached a sermon in the church of which he had been pastor for many years. The subject of his sermon was, “Why I have to change my sermon of twenty-three years ago.” Twenty-three years before, in the autumn of 1918 he preached a sermon on the subject, “The world made safe for democracy.” While I admired his frankness on the matter, I was led to speak the following Sunday evening

‘Upon the subject, “Why I do not have to change my sermon of twenty-three years ago.” Had this pastor been familiar with the prophecies of the Word of God, he would never have found himself in this humiliating position.

A few days ago, in Chicago, I picked up a book written about fifteen years ago by a professor in a well-known liberal seminary. In his attempt to show the fallacy of a literal interpretation of the prophecies of the Word of God, the late Dr. R. A. Torrey was almost ridiculed for stating, in a prophetic conference in 1918, that another world war was in the making which would out-do the one that had just ended. If the author of that book is still living, I suspect he would be glad to delete from it his reference to the late Dr. Torrey.

Yes, beloved, prophecy is the light that shines in the squalid place. Cling to the prophecies of the Word of God —they are your priceless, present possession.

## VII. We Have a Sure Hope

**“Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec”** (Hebrews 6:19, 20).

A forerunner is one who runs before. But he is more than this—he is one who announces the coming of another. John the Baptist is known as the “forerunner of Christ.” He not only went before Christ, but he announced the coming of Christ. Christ is the “forerunner” of the church which is His body. He has gone into heaven, ahead of us, and has already announced that we are coming. Little wonder that the writer to the Hebrews calls this **“a sure hope.”** It is another of our present, priceless possessions.

Dear Christian friends, rejoice in your riches today! They are beyond the reach of torpedo, bomb, gas, or dictator.

We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,  
Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
Grounded firm and deep in the Saviour's love.

~ end of chapter 3 ~

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