

December 1997 Coxsackie, NY

Salvation is a Free Gift(But Who Does He Give It To?)

Salvation is a *free gift*, this is true, *but who does He give it to?* Paul said that those who heard him preach the good news were not *worthy* of Eternal Life. So, how can a person be worthy or deserving of a *free gift*? *If it is a gift, then a gift is free. Why* would Paul say such a thing as he did in Acts 13:46? Oh yes, Paul did say, "Since you rejected it." That is, since they rejected the good news of God's free gift of Salvation. At this point they were not *worthy* of Eternal Life.

So, a person must *become worthy* of Salvation by receiving the message. Jn 3:18, 36 means a person is *judged* not worthy of Salvation right now in this present age, even the moment he rejects it, and the wrath of God *remains* upon him. *Remains* (#3306) means to stay forever and ever.

The Master Yahshua said also in Mt 10:37-38 that a person must *become* worthy of Him. So the free gift is only for those who are *worthy of Him*. Acts 5:32; Heb 5:9; Jn 3:36 — This actually says *obey* Him or obey the Son.

God only grants eternal life to those who are worthy of *His Son*. So a message believed is a message to be obeyed (Jn 13:20; Rom 10:16-17), and *faith* is the key to obedience. Without faith it is *impossible* to *obey* the gospel or *obey the Son*; or to do what one must be able to do. Without faith it is *impossible* to *please Him* (Heb 11:6).

So we can see that a person must now *please God* (Jn 7:17) — must be pleasing to Him, but knowing His will and being willing to do it is not enough. You must actually *take* the next step; you must *do* His will, since the person that is preaching the message is qualified to preach and to be believed and received (Jn 7:18, 13:20; Lk 10:16, Mt 10:41; Rom 10:14-17).

Eph 1:13 speaks of us who believed — by the faith we received we obeyed the Son and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. In Acts 2:32-45, after hearing the many other words of the gospel (i.e., Lk 14:26-33; Acts 16:30-33), those who were cut to the heart did not actually have the faith to obey those many other words until after they had heard them. As Rom 10:17 says, they needed to hear the *good news* of *what* they had to do to be saved. The jailer and his family did not have the faith to be baptized until they more thoroughly *heard* what to do or how to do it. The jailer didn't hear the many other words before he asked what he should do to be saved. At this point was he interested in the Salvation of Messiah or was his own life in jeopardy due to the responsibility that a jailer had in those days?

Please note: Rom 10:17 — Faith *comes to a person*. How does faith come to a person? By *hearing*. By hearing what? By hearing who? Jn 10:16,27; 5:24; 7:17; 13:20; Rom 10:14-17.

Rom 10:16 — the word *report* (#189) — a *report* is a verbal message that is *heard* (#189, 190, 191). *Report* in Rom 10:16 involves the act of *hearing* (Mt 13:14-19; Acts 28:26-28; Gal 3:2,5; Heb 5:11; Acts 17:20; 2 Tim 4:4; Jn 12:38; Rom 10:16). Rom 10:8 — the *word we are preaching*, the word *in your mouth* — this is the *spoken* word which is heard by the ears, by which, if received, good confession can be made unto salvation, which is by the faith one *receives* (verse 17). This means that one hears from Messiah — from His *mouth*, through the sent one — and if one receives the faith that *comes* by the hearing of the ear, then Rom 10:13 is one's *answer in return*, for Him to hear. Verses 9-10 is the confessing of what one actually believes in his heart by the ministry of the faith that he received — and the Body of Believers says "*Amen, Halleluyah, praise You, Father!*"

Mt 13:9-20 — So we see and understand that true faith to believe and to understand comes by *hearing* — someone telling a person what it *means*, as Acts 8:26-40.

Rom 10:17 — Faith comes through the "air waves" from where it proceeds — *the heart* (Jn 7:38) of the *righteous* person (Jn 7:18; Mt 10:41). So it is *spirit* which travels from one to another (Jn 13:20), to be accepted or received (or *rejected*, Jn 3:18,36; Acts 13:46-47), causing one to do or obey what he must in order to have Eternal Life — that is, to be *worthy* of Him (Mt 10:37).

So how does one "Believe upon the Sovereign Yahshua Messiah" (Acts 16:30-31) in order to be saved? Only after one hears the whole gospel can one become a disciple of Yahshua, as in Acts 14:21. Paul in Acts 16:31

had not preached the whole gospel to the jailer until afterward, when they were at his house. Even in Acts 2:37, the people heard a message but they did not know what to do since they had not heard the many other words about what Messiah had commanded the apostles as in Mt 28:19-20. So we see a person must hear and obey the words of the Master before he can know what to do to be worthy of Him, as in Mt 10:37. Who would know this if he were not told? This includes Lk 14:26-33. These are some such things that the apostles were commanded by Messiah, as in Mt 28:19-20, which must be told as Acts 5:32 says (Heb 5:9; Jn 3:36; Rom 10:16). So, salvation is a free gift, but to whom does he give it?

Acts 14:21; Lk 14:26,27,33 — To become a disciple is a serious matter. What are the commandments in the good news to all disciples? And what did Messiah say just before He ascended (Mt 28:18-20)? He said to make disciples.

As a Christian for many years I heard the one verse in Acts 16:31. I believed it with the same depth as I heard it. But I never ever realized that verse 32 was the significant part. This concerned what it meant to believe. But even verse 32 does not tell the reader what is involved in believing in the Sovereignty of Yahshua the Messiah. Only as in Acts 14:21-22 can disciples be made. These disciples were made from the word they had heard. The word *made* or *to make* — even as something is made out of the proper material and the right construction lest it not be made right. It will not be made authentic. The gospel must be *obeyed* (Rom 10:16).

Total immersion is total identity in the Godhead (Mt 28:19). 1 Cor 12:27, as verse 12-13 says, is *IMMERSION* in to one body. There is no other way to become a member of Messiah, no other way to join oneself to Him. 1 Cor 6:17 is to become one spirit with Him. Total immersion is the conference of the covenant relationship with all three persons of the Godhead. It is being immersed into the reality of all three persons of the one God who loved the world so much as Jn 3:15-18 says.

1 Cor 10:2 means that they were put under Moses' control and direction, just as Rom 8:14-16. So immersion into the reality of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit means that we are in Him (Gal 3:27). We are controlled and directed by our new head (1 Cor 11:3). Whoever is being led by the Spirit are the sons of God. So Rom 6:3-7 signifies union with Messiah in His death, burial, and resurrection. So Acts 2:38 is salvation.

Even in Mk 10:17-21 salvation was a free gift. But who does He give it to (Jn 7:37-39)? Our Master was trying to make a disciple here, but in Mk 10:22 we can see that he was not worthy of discipleship or the gift of Eternal Life (Mk 10:23-30; Lk 14:26,27,33).

So salvation is a free gift, but who does He give it to? To those who will not follow Him at the cost of their own farm, house, family, etc.? Who are His brothers, sisters, mothers, etc.? (Mk 3:34-35 and 10:29-30).

Mk 10:30 says that eternal life is given to those who actually believe or have faith to obey the good news of the free gift of salvation. Peter asked the question in Mk 10:28 (Lk 18:28; Mt 19:27), "What shall we have, who have forsaken everything to follow you?" And the answer is 100-fold in this present age and eternal life in the next age.

Jn 3:16 is a ransom. All those who ransom their own life and possessions, family, etc., will be given the free gift of eternal life. Such a free gift cannot be bought and the free gift can't be given to anyone who does not give up and hate his own life in this world (Jn 12:25) as a response to the good news of God's free gift of salvation.

Our immersion must be a total immersion as His was into death (Rom 6:2-7). Lk 12:49-53 and Mt 20:23 is one's total identity with Him. Unless one does this then he is not joined to Him and therefore does not become one spirit with Him (1 Cor 6:17). This means he does not believe in order to be sealed with the Holy Spirit as in Eph 1:13. This is what *believed* means in Eph 1:13. So, this is what Acts 2:38 meant and the *many other words* were the explanation of total immersion. There is no salvation given on any other basis.

Jn 2:22-23 is an example of what we are saying. The word *believed* in verse 23 is the same word as *en trust* in verse 24.

So Salvation is a free gift, but now we know who He gives it to. There is no way one can earn it — only believe, and to *believe* is to obey the Son, just as Abraham (Jn 8:39-47; 3:36). Whoever is willing to do His will will know what we say is from God (Jn 7:17; 1 Jn 4:6; Jn 8:47). He will also know "that there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12; also Acts 10:43).

And he will know that following this same Yahshua's *death* and *resurrection* means receiving what His disciples knew. And He informed His disciples that He heads a government of universal dominion (Mt 28:18) and therefore commanded them to make disciples *in His name*. After His ascension the disciples proclaimed to the multitudes on the day of Pentecost that "this same Yahshua whom you crucified" had been made by God both sovereign and Messiah (Acts 2:36), and with many other words told them *how to be saved* from that present evil, perverse, and abnormal society (verses 40,41). To be *in His name* means to receive (obey) this same gospel, being *one* even with the disciples He first spoke these words to (Jn 5:43; 17:11).

Peter remembered the words that his Master spoke in Jn 12:24-26. How else could Acts 2:42-47 and 4:32-37 be documented as the only *WAY* His people (those who have called on His name) *can be*? Any deviation from that pattern and foundation is *APOSTACY* (1 Cor 3:10; 1:10).

King of kings, Sovereign of sovereigns

The apostle Paul made it clear that Yahshua's Father left nothing that was not subject to Him, that is Yahshua (1 Cor 15:27; Heb 1:1-14; 2:8). The name Yahshua stands for the vast executive authority that YHWH has placed in Him (Heb 1:3,4). Only those who willingly recognize that "name" and bow down to it, subjecting themselves to the authority that it represents, will gain eternal life (Acts 4:12; Eph 1:19-23; Phil 2:9-11). If a person does anything less than this, then he is considering his own life more important than His salvation and His name (Mt 10:38). Jn 14:15 and 15:18 is the PROOF that is in the pudding (Mt 1:21).

Mt 10:22; 24:9; Jn 15:20-21; Acts 9:15-16; Mk 8:34-38 — Not that His name simply represented a savior, but because this Savior and His name represented God's appointed Ruler, the *King of kings* and *Sovereign of sovereigns*. As Rev 22:5 says, This King will return with His kings and sovereigns and the nations shall either *bow* in submission or experience destruction as Rev 19:11-20 says. Those who have submitted to His authority will reign with Him forever and ever as in Rev 5:9,10 and 20:4-6. The nations are the *dom* of His *kingship*.

So we can see that all those who *submit* to Him *now* will be the future kings and rulers that reign with Him forever and ever. They are the called, chosen and faithful followers of Yahshua (Rev 17:14). These are worthy of Him and His rule and reign over the nations (Mt 10:37-38; Rev 2:27; 3:4; Col 1:10). This is the corporate *He* in Rev 2:26-27. They will reign with Him as kings and lords forever and ever, as Rev 19:16 says.

He is teaching us to love authority. 1 Pet 2:12-15 — Our obedience and respect for authority will silence ignorant men. Verse 18 — Bad authority is better than no authority. People today do not understand slavery; Christians explain away what is in the scriptures. But there are certain kinds of people that can't function on their own. For example, Chamites kill each other and tear down their own neighborhoods. Even in Africa their governments and economies are unstable. Thomas Jefferson was a good slave master; he was a man of the nations.

Submissive slaves will be kings in the nations — we will serve them and help them.

Rev 17:14 — Yahshua is King of kings and Sovereign of sovereigns. Those with Him are the called, chosen, and faithful — they will be the kings over whom He is King. Rev 19:6,14-16 — We will be kings forever under His authority. We will follow Him on white horses, dressed in white (Rev 5:9-10; 20:3-4). We will rule *on the earth* in the next age. Rev 3:4 — Those who are *worthy* — deserving — will rule with Him. We are called and chosen, and we'll be faithful when we endure until the end. But there are some who will be left behind (Mt 24:40-41).

There will be five wise and five foolish virgins (Mt 25:2). It says *virgins* because it's talking about *believers*, those who have been betrothed to Messiah (2 Cor 11:2). They are pure. But *foolishness* is like losing your virginity, such as happened to the first edah (2 Cor 11:3). The "five foolish" will have 1,000 years to wash their robes (Rev 22:14) so that they can eat again from the tree of life. In Mt 25:30, the worthless slave was cast away because he wouldn't use the faith and grace that was available to him — he was foolish.

We are willing servants, *bondslaves* — like a slave who willingly takes the ring out his ear and puts it in his nose, to be easily led wherever his master wishes. The ring is like circumcision — a sign that we

belong to Him. A redeemer owns what he paid for. A good master buys a slave and after six years sets him free, but the slave loves his master and willingly becomes his bondsman forever (Ex 21:2-6). This is how we are with our Master — willing bondsmen. Our Master loves us so much because we lay down our lives willingly, just as He did (Jn 10:17).

Rev 1:6; 5:10 — He has made us to be kings and priests — that's who we are! We will rule over galaxies. When people of the nations see us, it will be just like seeing the Father (Jn 14:9). We will bear His name, His character, His image, His authority. This is because we surrendered to the Greater King when He was far off. We came under His dominion. We were faithful, so He could entrust us with His authority.

When we are drawn to *Him* we don't just accept Him as Savior or Redeemer but as Sovereign, and bow down before Him (Rom 10:9,10) with our good confession. There have been so many *bad* confessions because they never saw Him as *both* Redeemer and Sovereign and therefore could not confess *Him* as to who He truly is. Even as the three kings in Mt 2:1,2,11 came and saw Him for who He was, not just as Savior, but as One to whom they ought to fall down before and give all they had to (Lk 14:31-33). So we must see Him this way in order to present Him as such to others. Otherwise they will not see Him this way (Jn 13:20; Mt 10:41). This is what Acts 4:12 meant. His name, His person and authority and character is among men of such character in order to impart salvation to others (Jn 7:18).

Paul had to see Him this way in order to impart the faith to all who heard Him (Rom 10:17). To be able to obey Him one must receive the faith to see Him as one who is worthy of such obedience (Jn 3:36; Acts 5:32; Heb 5:9)

. 2 Ths 1:8 is an hour coming for everyone alive. If one does not think that Yahshua is worthy to be obeyed — *all His* commandments — and yet claims to know Him, then his destiny is in the Lake of Fire (1 Jn 2:4; Rev 21:8; Jn 9:41; Rev 19:2-3). All Christians think “believing” is one thing and “obeying” is another. But Jn 10:16,27 means to *obey* His voice — you can't hear His voice if you are not willing to obey Him (Jn 7:17, as Jn 10:14 requires). To *hear* means to heed and obey. The NRSV uses *heed* instead of *hear* because to *follow* (verse 27) means *just that*. James and John and Peter did not just *hear* His voice — they left everything behind and followed Him. Mt 19:21 is to be considered *perfect* by God, which is *salvation by faith* in Messiah. Without obedience, no faith is given (Eph 2:8-10).

To *follow* means to *obey* (*hear* is #191; *follow* is #190). The same word in Hebrew is in 1 Sam 15:22 — to *hearken* to His voice: “To obey is better than to sacrifice.” *Hearken* means “to hear effectually so as to perform what is spoken,” as the difference between Saul and David in 1 Sam 15:28 (Jn 12:25-26). David was willing to do this *and did*, while Saul was not and *did not*. Saul was a part-time disciple, while David cleaved to Him and followed Him wherever He went (Acts 13:22,36). Yahshua has no part-time disciples.

So when Yahshua Himself said in Jn 10:16 that these sheep “will hear My voice” it means that they will heed, obey, and hearken to His voice and follow Him wherever He goes and do whatever He says and be whatever He wants them to be. So there will be “one flock and one Shepherd” as verses 27-29 mean what they say, and verse 30 identifies Him with His Father, which demands the authority for obedience unto salvation and discipleship. This is what Acts 4:12 meant — that His authority is among men (2 Cor 5:18-19).

Rom 1:5 — Paul was delegated the same authority to command obedience to this faith or to this kind of faith. When Yahshua's followers referred to Him or to His name, they said “the Lord” or “the Sovereign” Yahshua, or “our Lord” or “our Sovereign” Yahshua. They recognized Him as their Sovereign, not only because He was their Redeemer and Owner (for the term *redeemer* meant also *owner*) by virtue of His ransom (1 Cor 6:20; 7:22-23; 1 Pet 1:18-19; Jude 1:4), but also because of His kingly position and authority. And it is in the full regal and royal as well as priestly authority (Rev 1:6; 5:9-10; 1 Pet 2:9) represented by Yahshua's name that His followers *preached* (Acts 5:29-32; 40-42) and *baptized* disciples (Mt 28:18-20; Acts 2:38). So it is in the name of Yahshua and no other name that Salvation can be rendered to anyone, for this name is the name above all other names, to which all must show unbreakable loyalty (Mt 12:18,21; Rev 2:13; 3:8).

Acts 2:44 — *All who believed obeyed*. Jn 3:36 — The NRSV and NASB use the words, “does not *obey* the Son” while other apostate versions say, “does not *believe* the Son” or “*rejects* the Son.”

The Master in Heb 5:9 gives *ETERNAL LIFE* to those *like Him* who obey as He obeyed the Father. Do we *like Him* sweat great drops of blood in our resistance to sin? So what does *obey Him* actually mean? Does He give eternal life to those who *have obeyed* Him or *obey* (#5219) Him? As *He was*, so also are we in this world (1 Jn 4:17).

In Jn 3:36 *does not obey* is #544 — to willfully and perversely be disobedient, to *obey not*, to *disbelieve* — due to many excuses, as a coward (Rev 21:8) who willfully is disobedient to the authority of the (edict of the) king, due to his own love for his life in this world, or his possessions, family, etc. (Mk 10:17-30; Lk 14:26-33; Jn 12:25-26).

In Acts 5:32, *obey* is #3980 — to be persuaded by a Ruler, to submit to His authority, to come under His rule or lordship, to be conformed to His word, to hearken, to obey (a magistrate) — *qashab* (1 Sam 15:22-23). Yahshua is the King who is establishing the whole order of rule in the whole universe for His Father (1 Cor 15:23). Man must surrender all things to Him and come under His rule now, regardless of his own personal choice or feelings (Lk 14:26-33). Any other *persuasion* is in direct conflict with the coming King. 2 Ths 1:8 — If a person will not obey the Good News, we see the results very plainly. And the only way to know God is through the King, His Son.

Obey here in 2 Ths 1:8 is #5219, which means to *hearken*, as a subordinate — to heed His word now, before He comes to take vengeance upon those who rebel against His voice (Jn 5:24). The word in Heb 5:9 and 2 Ths 1:8 is to *hear*, to listen attentively and conform to His word or command or authority — to be obedient (Lk 14:31-33).

All these passages of scripture speak of those whom He can choose to be His disciple (Mt 28:19) because they are willing to do His will (Isa 53:10). That is their life occupation and calling, as Eph 4:1-3. If a person does not have this mind (Phil 2:1-7), then he is not one of those who *obey* Him in Heb 5:9 and 2 Ths 1:8, and *will not surrender* all he has and all he is to the Greater King.

2 Cor 5:15 is to swap one's own righteousness for His (2 Cor 5:21). Regardless of how good one is and how many good works he does, after one hears the good news and willfully disobeys it, his own marvelous righteousness is void in Rev 22:11-12, and as far as earning the salvation which Messiah gives, his own righteousness is as *filthy rags* (Titus 3:5).

So one must surrender all — even hate his life in this world (Jn 12:25), and serve the Greater King in joy and thanksgiving that He granted him Eternal Life now (Jn 5:24-25), and not wait for the judgment to come (Jn 5:28-29).

Acts 5:32 — to *noobey* (#3980) means that one is not convinced after much persuasion concerning the good and kind intentions of this coming Greater King and will not submit and surrender to His authority — to His greater authority — or even conform to His advice as to what the terms of peace are in Lk 14:32. This person in 2 Ths 1:8 could not be persuaded by the delegation that returned with the terms of peace, which should have been good news to him. But he was unwilling to give up what he had, as Lk 14:32-33 says. He did not obey because he did not *trust* in the Ruler who is coming. He hung on to what he had, trusting in himself rather than the message of the terms of Eternal Life. He would not be *persuaded* (2 Cor 5:11). *Persuade*, #3982 — to convince. To be *persuaded* is to conciliate, to rely upon the evidence given by the ambassador (2 Cor 5:18).

If one is *reconciled* to God (Rom 5:5), he has *hated* his life in this world and will no longer love the world either (1 Jn 2:15) because the love of God has been poured out into his heart. 2 Cor 5:15 is the *absolute fact*. Only those who have done this have obeyed the gospel and obey the Son (2 Ths 1:8), will eagerly await His return and not be in dread (Heb 9:28; 10:38; 1 Jn 2:27-28; 2 Tim 4:8; 1 Jn 4:17). The community is the only place one can *obey the Son* — obey the Good News as Acts 5:32 says: "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him" — as *Ruler*. The words "obey Him" assumes a Ruler, a King. *Do not make any mistake about it*. Acts 5:32 says that the Holy Spirit is given to those who *obey* the one who was exalted to the right hand of the throne of God in Heaven (Acts 5:30-31; 2:36; Eph 1:13; Acts 2:38; Jn 7:37-39).