

ETERNAL SALVATION

AS SEEN IN THE EARTH'S RESTORATION
(1)

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The Bible is a book of redemption; and basic, unchangeable teachings surrounding redemption are set forth at the very beginning of Scripture.

In the opening verses of Genesis God sets forth the unchangeable manner in which He, in His infinite wisdom and knowledge, restores a ruined creation. There is *a restorative work* which follows *a specific pattern*, and the matter is accomplished entirely through *Divine intervention*.

And within this pattern set forth and established in a perfect God-ordained fashion at the very beginning, God reveals how any subsequent ruined creation would, *of necessity*, have to be restored. It would have to be restored *in complete accord with the established pattern*. In this respect, it would have to be restored after *a certain order*, and it would have to be restored

entirely through *Divine intervention*.

Thus, to establish correct thinking relative to the fundamentals of salvation (restoration), as previously stated, one *must begin where God began* — in the opening verses of Genesis chapter one.

In these opening verses, God begins by revealing His creation of the heavens and the earth (v. 1). Then, immediately following this, in the first part of the second verse, God reveals that the earth became a ruin (which, as subsequent Scripture reveals, could only have resulted from God's actions following Satan seeking a higher regal position than the one which he held [the God-appointed ruler over the earth (Isa. 14:12-17; Ezek. 28:14-16)] and be "like the most High" [be like the Ruler over the entire universe, like God Himself (Ps. 103:19)]).

Then, immediately following the statement in Gen. 1:2a concerning the ruin of the material creation, God reveals the means which He used to restore this ruined creation (vv. 1:2b ff) — *a restoration accomplished entirely through Divine intervention*.

The importance of understanding that which is revealed in these opening verses *cannot be overemphasized*, for man, a subsequent creation of God, *also* fell into a ruined state because of Satan's actions (Gen. 1:26-28; 3:1ff). And if ruined man was to be restored (as the ruined material creation had previously been restored), it would have to be accomplished *exactly in accordance* with the previously established pattern. It would have to be accomplished *exactly in accordance* with the method which God revealed

at the beginning of His Word *concerning how He restores a ruined creation*.

This is the first of numerous unchangeable ways in which God has revealed Himself, His plans, and His purposes to man in His Word.

Once God establishes a pattern, *no change can ever occur*. And He has forever established, once for all, at the very beginning of His Word, *exactly* how He goes about restoring a ruined creation.

Genesis 1:2b, 3 records *the initial act* of the triune Godhead in bringing about the restoration of the ruined material creation — an act in which *the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit* each participated.

In this foundational pattern, forming a type, *the Spirit of God moved, God spoke, and light came into existence* (note that nothing can come into existence apart from the Son, Who is "the light of the world" [John 1:3, 9; 9:5]).

And in the antitype, within the framework of man's salvation experience, the matter is *identical*. Salvation can occur *only* through a work of the triune Godhead, and this Divine work follows an established pattern.

Thus, there is *an initial past work* of the triune Godhead which foreshadows *an initial present work* of the triune Godhead:

In *God's initial past work* of restoring the ruined material creation in Genesis chapter one, *the Spirit of God moved, God spoke, and light came into existence*.

In *God's initial present work* of restoring ruined man, *the Spirit of God moves, God speaks, and light comes into existence*.

This is the manner in which God began/begins His unchangeable, restorative work.

And, relative to God's present restorative work, foreshadowed by the foundational pattern surrounding His restorative work on day one in the type, *everything* within the outworking of that revealed in this pattern is based on *one thing* — *the Son's finished work at Calvary almost 2,000 years ago* (progressively opened up and brought to light in subsequent types).

(Note that God's initial restorative work, seen on day one in the Genesis account, is the only part of His six-day restorative work which has to do with salvation by grace. There had to be an initial work, producing light shining out of darkness, before God could continue His restorative work.

And exactly the same thing is true concerning ruined man today. Ruined man has to initially be made alive spiritually — pass "from death unto life," light has "to shine out of darkness" [John 1:5; II Cor. 4:6] — before God can continue a restorative work.

Man today [saved man] has a redeemed spirit dwelling alongside an unredeemed soul, with both housed in an unredeemed body. That foreshadowed by God's work on day one in the Genesis account had to do with man's spirit, and that foreshadowed by His work on days two through six had to do with man's soul, with the body to be redeemed at the end of that foreshadowed by God's work throughout the entire six days.)

When the Son cried out from the Cross, "It is finished" (John 19:30; *cf.* Luke 23:46), He (the living Word) meant *exactly* that; and when

God's Word reveals that we have a salvation of Divine origin, based entirely on the Son's finished work, this Word also means *exactly* what it states.

When man sinned in the garden, he died *spiritually*; and when unregenerate man, "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1), is made alive today, he is made alive *spiritually*. The movement of the Spirit (Gen. 1:2b) and God speaking (Gen. 1:3) in order to restore the ruined creation are simultaneous events. It is the Spirit using the Word — the written Word and the Word which became flesh (*cf.* John 1:1-3, 14) — to effectually perform a supernatural work in unredeemed man.

It is at this point — through the in-breathing of God — that *life* is imparted to that which previously had no life. It is at this point that God breathes into lifeless man (the Spirit imparting *life*, in accordance with the God-breathed Word, based on Christ's finished work), and man is "quicken[ed] ['made alive']" (Eph. 2:1; *cf.* Gen. 2:7; II Tim. 3:16).

At this point, light *shines* "out of darkness" (II Cor. 4:6), a *division* is made between the light and the darkness (Gen. 1:4), and the darkness has no apprehension or comprehension of that which is light (John 1:5; *cf.* I Cor. 2:14).

The "spirit" of unsaved man, associated with "darkness," is *dead*. It is a part of the totally depraved man, with his "body of... death," in which there dwells "no good thing" (Rom. 7:18, 24). But, with the movement of the Spirit — breathing life into unsaved, lifeless man — man's spirit is made *alive* and, at the same time, *separated* from his soul (Heb. 4:12).

The "soul" remains within the sphere of darkness, which is why "the natural [Gk., *psuchikos*, 'soulical'] man" cannot understand "the things of the Spirit of God" (I Cor. 2:14). That which remains in the sphere of darkness can have no apprehension or comprehension of that which has shined out of darkness. There is a God-established division between the two which cannot be crossed over (*cf.* Luke 16:26).

Thus, the unchangeable method which God uses and the pattern which He follows to restore a ruined creation have forever been set forth at the beginning of His Word, through the account of God's restoration of the ruined material creation.

Then, in Genesis chapter three, God's new creation, *man*, finds himself in a ruined state. But he is not to be left in this state, for man, at this point, becomes the object of a new Divine restorative work.

And this work, as seen in the latter part of chapter three and subsequent types, follows that which had already been set forth in an unchangeable fashion in the first chapter.

"What must I do to be saved?"

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:30, 31).

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