

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

In our previous articles we have treated at considerable length on the important subject of eternal salvation, showing that it was solely a work of God, independent of the performance of any stipulated conditions, and we feel sure that we have proved beyond successful contradiction that this is a work God does for us.

We now propose, in a brief article, to consider that work God requires of us, and what we gain by obeying the Lord's commands. That God requires certain duties of his children after they are regenerated, or born again, the Bible clearly teaches.

That God has promised certain blessings, on condition of their obedience to his commands, is equally clear; but we should be ever careful not to blend the work of God and the work of Christians together, which shows the necessity of our obeying the injunction of the inspired apostle to Timothy, his son in the gospel, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

The term salvation is often used in the Scriptures without any reference to our deliverance from sin. For instance, on the day of Pentecost, Peter said to those that cried out and said, "What must we do?" "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call; and with many other words did he exhort them saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

All the above Peter told them to do, not in order to get the Lord to save them in heaven, or from sin. But [rather] the final result, or that which was to grow out of their obedience to what Peter taught them in the above lesson, was salvation from that untoward generation, which salvation they enjoyed just as soon as they gladly received Peter's words and were baptized.

Hence, they did not have to wait till they died, were buried and resurrected, and ascended home to God, to enjoy the privileges of this salvation, but they enjoyed it just as soon as they did what

Time (Temporal) Salvation

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Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

God, through Peter, commanded them to do. Therefore, we call it time salvation.

Had these Pentecostians refused to obey what Peter taught them, we have no evidence they could have enjoyed that salvation. Hence, the supreme necessity of the church is, and ever has been, absolute obedience to God's commands. We are certain that the first and last thing in the prosperity of a church, and the enjoyment of their privileges as such, and their salvation in time from the errors and delusions, false signs, and lying wonders, which lie in wait to deceive the people of God, is obedience to what God commands.

Where a church, or an individual member, ceases to obey, they cease to live in the enjoyment of their Christian privileges, or time salvation. Jesus never has required of us to keep his commandments in order that we might love him, but he makes obedience a test of love. He says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And again, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Obedience to God's commands is the very best evidence one can give of a renewed heart. We cannot depart from his commands without feeling that we have proven false to ourselves, and false to him. On the other hand, disobedience, throughout the Bible, is threatened with God's chastisements, insomuch that no Christian can disobey the Lord without fearfully looking for the judgments of God to be visited upon him.

A very important lesson may be learned from the case of Moses. Upon Moses rested the blessings of heaven, and to him were granted many privileges. He was favored of God, and was a type of Christ. Yet Moses, at one time, was decoyed off and disobeyed the Lord. When the congregation of Israel had gathered about him, and were begging for water, God told Moses to speak to the rock, but Moses disobeyed the command of God, "and lifted up his rod and smote the rock twice."

For this seemingly little transgression, this good man, Moses, was not permitted to enter the land of Canaan, and enjoy that time salvation promised to the children of Israel, if they would be willing and obedient .

But that Moses was permitted to enjoy the blessings of heaven, and the eternal salvation of God, is too clearly set forth in the Scriptures to be denied, we presume, by any. When Jesus

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

was transfigured upon the mount, Moses was one of them that appeared from the glory land to witness the scene, and the apostles wanted to build a tabernacle for him. Surely, if Moses had been eternally lost for his disobedience, he would not have been present on that memorable occasion.

Another very striking instance of God's abhorrence of disobedience is found in the case of Saul, the king of Israel, who was commanded to "go and slay Amalek, and utterly destroy all they had, and to spare them not, but slay both men and women, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."

Saul went contrary to the divine command and preserved Agag and the best of the oxen, sheep, etc., and when the prophet came to inquire after the matter, his reasons seem good. It does seem that if a person could be excused for disobedience at all, Saul surely could, for he said he had reserved them to sacrifice them to the Lord; but Samuel let him know that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." God let him know, "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." This man failed to enjoy his time salvation in consequence of his own disobedience.

There is no part of God's word that sanctions disobedience in the very smallest of his requirements; but, on the contrary, there are abundant passages that teach the displeasure of God for such disobedience; which we can find by following the path of the children of Israel from the Red Sea to Canaan.

God had promised them temporal, or timely, salvation from all their enemies which surrounded them, and from all the plagues incident to temporal life, on condition that they obey the law given to them through Moses upon Mount Sinai. But he had told them that if they rebelled, he would let their enemies in upon them, and they should devour them.

Israel soon waxed fat and rebelled against God's law, and began to say, "The ways of the Lord are not equal." No sooner than they began to rebel, God began to visit them with his chastisements, "and there fell in one day about three thousand souls."

All of these failed to enjoy the time salvation, because of their disobedience. When we consider the fact that ancient Israel was a type of spiritual Israel (or the church of Christ), should it not

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

stimulate every power we possess to try to obey the injunction of the woman at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, "Whatsoever the Master saith unto you, do it."

That there is a time salvation to be enjoyed by God's people in consequence of their obedience, or lost in consequence of disobedience, is clearly set forth by Paul in Php 2:12-13, "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

These obedient children of God were careful to observe all things that the Lord had commanded them, not only when Paul was there present with them, but they were more careful when he was absent; and Paul, knowing this fact, exhorts them to continue this course, and work out their own salvation by obeying what the Lord commanded.

Paul would not have them suppose for a moment that their eternal salvation from sin, and their home in heaven, depended on their work, for he had just taught them that this is by grace, and not of works. But he would have them know that their time happiness and time salvation, depended, not in part, but in whole, upon their strictness in the observance of God's commands. Jesus says, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." He does not say you shall be saved from sin and hell if you do them, but the man that knows what God has commanded and refuses to do it, cannot be happy if he truly is a child of God.

Therefore, we would exhort all who have a little hope in Jesus not to wait for a more convenient season, not to wait to get a larger hope, but to go now and obey the Lord and enjoy the blessings that grow out of obedience to God. We have heard some say to such characters, "Stay away just as long as you can, and if you can keep from obeying the Lord at all, do it."

Now, my brethren, this is all wrong. If you were to come to my house and tell my children not to obey me just as long as they can possibly keep from it, I would certainly tell you to get away from my house as soon as possible, and never come there again. I cannot believe that God has sent out his servants to tell his children not to obey him, if they can possibly keep from it. Instead, he told them to "teach them to observe all thing whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

Obedience to God is one of the absolute essentials to a Christian life. A most beautiful lesson is taught us in 1Pe 1:1-25, in which Peter first sets forth the work of God in giving us all things that pertain to life and godliness, such as faith, repentance, remission of sins, and a blessed assurance that we shall at last be delivered from the power of sin into the glorious home of the blest.

Then he changes the subject by saying, "besides this," which shows very conclusively that there is something else, separate and apart from the work that God does for us. "Besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith (not add faith, but add to your faith), virtue."

One of the most beautiful Christian graces that ever adorned one of Adam's fallen, apostate race is living virtuously to the Lord as our only husband. Suppose that I, for instance, were married to a lady, and I leave her and go into a far country to prepare for her a home, and after I had been gone for sometime, I at last return and inform her that all preparations are now made, and I am now ready to carry her to that beautiful home I have prepared for her, and, lo and behold, she has married several other men while I was gone. Would you think she had added virtue to her pretended faith in me?

I think you would say no, and we doubt not that you would, at once, enter suit for divorce, and never live with her again on earth. Now, my brethren, let us remember that Jesus, our husband, has gone to prepare a place for us and said he would come again and receive us unto himself, that where he is, there we should be also. Now suppose when he comes he finds us (his bride) married to every little institution in the world, instead of devoting our whole life to him, and endeavoring to show forth his praise; can we expect to receive his smiles? Can we expect him to bestow upon us his precious jewels?

Surely we cannot expect it. What else could we look for but to receive the chastening of his hot displeasure? Could we expect him to bestow upon us the great blessing of temporal, or timely salvation?

Surely we cannot expect it. Were it true that Jesus was a changeable being, as we are, he would sue for divorce, and have us to sink down to irretrievable woe and misery; but blessed be his holy name, he is not as one of us, for he declares, "Though my children forsake my laws, and keep not my statutes, then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, yet my loving kindness will I not utterly take from them, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

Therefore, seeing the great and unchangeable love our husband and Savior has for us, oh, how diligent we ought to be to obey all his commands, and observe all of his precepts, and not go out of the church into the world and join the institutions, and marry and intermarry with all the abominations on earth. For when we do this we show our disregard for our husband.

Should you wish to observe the rules of a Masonic or other fraternity, observe the rules Jesus has laid down for the government of his church, and you have it in full. Should you wish to be a temperance man, observe the laws of the church of God, and you have all there is in any temperance institution.

Therefore, we can see no need of a church member's joining any secret order in order to do good in the world, or to enable him to let his light shine, for if he does what the Lord commands him as a member of his church, he has all that is claimed for any secret order on earth. Therefore, we would say, as did Peter, "Add to your faith, virtue," and don't stop here, but add "to virtue, knowledge."

Suppose we were to leave our wives, and go into a far country, and before we left we write a long letter, giving them full instructions about how we wanted everything attended to while we were gone, and after we were gone they should lay it away in the desk, and never take it down to read and see what we instructed to be done while we were gone, but would depend on some one else to read it and tell them what to do. They would not know whether they had told them correctly or not, but they would depend upon them and do as they say, right or wrong, and we return and find everything different to what we instructed, and we ask, "Did you 'add knowledge' to your faith?" "Well, no; I didn't have time to read your letter of instructions, but I let one of our neighbors read it and tell me how to do, and I did as he said; I thought that would do."

Do you suppose he would smile in love upon them and say, "Well done, my love?" We imagine that almost any of us would fly into a rage and perhaps discard our companions, because they had no more respect for us than to treat our letter of instructions with such disregard.

Jesus has left us a book (or letter) of instructions and has commanded us to search it while he is gone, and thereby to "add to your faith knowledge." Shall we treat it with disregard, and lay it aside and follow our own notions, or conscience, instead; or shall we hire a preacher to read for us and tell us what it says, and then let him tell us what to do, and do as he says, right or wrong,

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

or shall we obey the command of our Savior and husband, and search for ourselves, and thereby “add knowledge” to our faith, and show our regard for his word, and live under his continued smiles, and save ourselves, from the lash of a guilty conscience?

As for us, we would join with Peter in saying, “Add to your faith knowledge, and to knowledge temperance,” not by joining some institution, but add this as one of the Christian graces that should necessarily grow out of a renewed heart. “Add to temperance patience”; that is, learn to be patient in whatsoever condition of life you may be placed, realizing that, “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Therefore we ought to “glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Therefore, let us “add to our faith patience, and to patience godliness,” that is, to be God-like in our everyday deportment.

And to godliness “add brotherly kindness”; that is, should we see a brother overtaken in a fault, or in an error, let us not take him by the throat and demand full payment of all that he owes, but let us treat him with brotherly kindness, and try to restore him in the spirit of meekness. And to brotherly kindness “add charity,” for if we see a brother have need, and shut up our bowels of mercy, and not administer to his necessities, how dwells the love of God in us?

Therefore, let us consider that one of the important features in working out our time salvation is to “add to our faith charity.” “For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that you shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.”

Oh, how often we hear Christians say, “I am so dark and gloomy. Surely it can’t be that I was ever purged from my old sins. If I were a Christian, it would not be thus with me.” Now, my brother, you have only failed to add to your faith the above mentioned Christian graces, and therefore have failed to enjoy the time salvation that God has promised on condition that you do these things. “Therefore, you are blind, and have forgotten that you were purged from your old sins.” Then Peter came forth with the exhortation, “Wherefore, the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure, for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”

You will observe that he does not tell them to elect themselves or call themselves, neither to act

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

in a way to get the Lord to elect them or call them. Neither are they to make it sure to the Lord, for he knows all about it already, but make it sure to themselves, and to their brethren by adding all of the above named Christian graces, and if they do these things, "they shall never fall."

He is not talking about falling from grace, but the Christian that does all these things is never to fall into these dark and gloomy places in which we are so often found, but by doing these things we enjoy the blessings of this time salvation and live in the enjoyment of the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit, rejoicing continually in hope of heaven and immortal glory at God's right hand. And not only so, but Peter says, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

From this we draw the conclusion that the obedient Christian, that is, the one who has been diligent in "adding to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity," will, when he comes to press a dying pillow, have a more abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of God than the one that neglects these things.

We have heard some say, when they came to meet death, that, "I have but one thing to regret; that is, I have not done my duty while I lived; I look beyond death, I have nothing to fear, but on this side, I have not added to my faith as I should have done." Therefore, the obedient Christian has the more abundant entrance. Let us, then, endeavor to discharge our whole duty as followers of the Lord in this life, that we may enjoy the sweet blessings of the time salvation, and when we come to die, we may have that abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of the Lord.

A very striking lesson is given in the epistle of Jude. He begins the epistle with this language, "Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. Mercy unto you, and peace, and love be multiplied. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

This, Jude spake to his brethren in view of the fact that none should enjoy this common salvation, except those who strictly observe and contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. Not that Jude would teach that every one must believe the same doctrine here in order to be saved in heaven, but this common salvation grew out of their strict observance of

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

the truth of the faith (or doctrine) which was once delivered to the saints. And to this Paul had reference when he said to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and to the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

Of course, Paul would not teach Timothy that he was to save himself with an eternal salvation, neither was he to save his hearers with an eternal salvation; for Paul had just taught him differently. He said to him, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God, who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

And surely Paul would not now turn and teach Timothy the very reverse of that, and tell him that by giving heed to himself and to the doctrine, he would thereby secure to himself the very same salvation which Jesus worked out for him while on earth. We presume that none will believe that; therefore, we must conclude that Paul had reference to time salvation, when he said, "Take heed to thyself, and to the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

And none of us would presume for a moment that Timothy was a savior and could save his hearers with an eternal salvation, for we have shown in our previous articles that this is alone the work of God. And Paul says, in Eph 4:10-14, "He that descended is the same also that ascended up above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

All of the above Paul wrote as the purpose or which God gave his ministers, and not a single word is said about their saving sinners with an eternal salvation, but a great deal is said about their tenaciously contending for the true faith which was once delivered to the saints, that God's people might be built up and established in the true faith of the gospel, and no more be as children tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Hence the preaching of the gospel, and their strict adherence to the faith, was to save them from the many lying wonders and false signs and cunning traps set by men of design to ensnare the poor

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

unsuspecting child of God. Oh, how necessary, then, that the ministers of the cross of Jesus be particular about what they preach, lest they teach some erroneous doctrine and thereby cause some dear little child to be entrapped by some false theory, and in that event come short of the enjoyment of this time or common salvation. We are living in a fast age, an age in which we have many lo here's and lo there's, and if there ever was a time in the history of the world when God's ministers should deal in plain, simple matters of fact, it is now.

Look around you, dear reader, and see how many you can call to mind that you have every evidence to believe are children of God, who are ensnared in the clutches of Arminianism, and are thereby failing to enjoy the blessings of that time salvation. What is the matter? Is it true that God by his Holy Spirit has influenced one of his dear children to disobey him and join in with some other sect, and is now calling for them to come out. He says, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins."

And he commands us again to touch not, taste not, handle not the unclean thing, which is to perish with the using. Surely God does not influence his dear children to go contrary to his commands. Nay, but some of us have got so straight that we are like the Indian's tree; we lean back a little, and instead of exhorting God's people to a full discharge of their duty, we have rather told them to "stay away from the church just as long as they can," and never come to the church and discharge their duties as long as they can possibly keep from it, and many of the dear saints have been discouraged by such talk as this, and have gone to other sects, because they thought the Old Baptists did not want them.

Now, my dear brethren, this is wrong; we are not thereby contending for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, but are, rather, denying the doctrine taught by Christ and his apostles, and causing many of the dear saints to fail of the enjoyment of the blessings of this time salvation. Therefore, we fail to save ourselves and them that hear us. Oh, my brethren, let us be careful how we teach; let us be found faithful in exhorting God's people "to love and good works"; let us endeavor with the ability that God gives us to show them the blessings that grow out of our obedience to the commandments of our dear Lord. God says by the mouth of the prophet Malachi, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house; and prove me herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open to you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground, neither shall your vines cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of Hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of Hosts." No sooner had God spoken those grant truths than his people heard it, and began at once to obey. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

Oh, how needful then that everyone should obey the Lord, and what blessings are enjoyed by God's people when they are diligent in obeying the commands of their dear Savior. God rebukes the devourer and their fields never fail to yield their fruits.

Their vineyards never cast their fruits before their time; everything is prosperous, and the fields yield abundant harvest. Everybody is merry and happy, and God's church is building up in every quarter and is enjoying the refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord, and is living continually under the precious smiles of the heavenly Master, hence enjoying the time salvation.

Oh! how needful then, my dear brethren in the ministry, that we should turn neither to the right nor to the left, but take a straight forward course, and earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints; and should we see the enemy trying to make inroads upon the flock, let us rally to their relief, let us beard the lion on the spot, and fight valiantly as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. In the strength of Elijah's God we shall always conquer the foe, and save our brethren from being ensnared by the enemy of God, and we will ever feel that sweet whispering in our hearts, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

"Only the obedient enjoy the blessings of time salvation. Hence, John said, "Blessed and holy are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." The tree of life we understand here to represent the blessings that are to be enjoyed by the obedient children of God, and none have a right to these blessings except those that do his commandments. Then, my dear brethren and sisters, how needful for us that we do those things that our King and Lawgiver has given in his holy word.

In view of this grand truth James says, "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, for the doers of the word are justified." There is a sense in which we are justified by works; "Was not Abraham justified by works, when he offered up his son Isaac?" We answer, he surely was; but the question is, was he justified in an eternal sense? We answer, No. For Paul said, "If Abraham were justified by works he hath whereof to glory." Abraham was justified in an eternal sense by the merit and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, we see that a man is not justified by faith only. James says, "Ye see then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." From this we learn that faith justifies a man; hence the two justifications cannot be the same.

Suppose we were to enter a drug house and call for a remedy to cure chills, and the druggist

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

should hand us down Smith's Tonic. We ask him, "Will Smith's Tonic cure the chills?" He answers, "Yes." We ask him again, "Will Smith's Tonic only cure chills?" He would at once answer, "Oh, no, quinine will cure chills also." Therefore, we see how that Smith's Tonic will cure chills, and not quinine only; hence we can discover the difference between the words only and alone.

Should you ask, "Is a man justified by faith alone?" we would answer, "Yes." Should you ask, "Is a man justified by works alone?" we would answer, "Yes, but not by works only, for faith justifies a man also."

Therefore, we see that there is a sense in which a man is justified by faith, and there is a sense in which a man is justified by works. Abraham was justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar. And just so we are justified by works when we obey the blessed commandments of our dear Savior.

And James says again, "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he that converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins." Notice he is not talking about the ungodly sinners, but brethren; hence, if one of our brethren should be drawn off into error, and therefore fails of the enjoyment of the blessings of the time salvation, it is our duty to labor with him, and do all we can to convert him from the error of his way, and we thereby save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins—not that we save him from an eternal death, for Jesus alone can do that; but we save him from death to the enjoyment of his privileges in the church of God; we save him from that error in which he has been ensnared, and thereby enable him to enjoy again the blessings of the time salvation.

Peter, after having set forth the work of God in choosing his people according to his foreknowledge through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, and also having shown that God had begotten us unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that should never fade away, and that they were kept by the power of God unto salvation ready to be revealed at the last time, then comes down to the thirteenth verse and says, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your minds; be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ, as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance. But he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy, for I am holy. And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear. Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from the vain conversation

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God. Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again (not in order to born again, but because ye are born again), not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of god, which liveth and abideth forever. For all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower fo grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof fadeth away. But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.”

All of the above Peter gives as the reasons why we should obey the Lord, because he had done so much for us, and not in order to get him to so something for us. By obeying the truth we would purify our souls unto feigned love of the brethren, and, as a matter of course, would enjoy the sweet fellowship of the saints, and thereby be partakers of the benefits of the time or common salvation.

Another very striking lesson is taught by Paul in Heb 4:1-16, “Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest; although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. And in this place again, If they shall enter into my rest. Seeing therefore it remaineth that some must enter therein, and they to whom it was first preached entered not in because of unbelief....There remaineth therefore a rest unto the people of God....Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” This Paul spake in view of what was lost by the ancient Israelites in consequence of unbelief and disobedience.

God had long since made promise to Abraham, saying, “I will make thee exceeding fruitful; and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee, And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.” No doubt the time had been in the history of this toiling nation when they believed that God would fulfill this promise, but after so many years of toil and hard servitude they had come to the conclusion that God had entirely forgotten them, but “God is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness.” Hence he still remembered his promise to his chosen people as a nation when they had gathered on the banks of the Red Sea.

Time (Temporal) Salvation

Written by T.S. Dalton

Tuesday, 18 May 2010 23:42 -

This vast moving throng, numbering perhaps not less than two million souls, could not now behold the fulfillment of the glorious promise of God to their father Abraham, "that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is on the seashore." But when they heard the grating of the chariot wheels, over the rocks, of Pharaoh's host in hot pursuit of them, no doubt they still felt that they would never be able to reach that long-promised hand, and Moses commanded them to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." God commanded Moses to "stretch forth his rod." Moses obeyed the command, and the Israelites were enabled to see the almighty power of God displayed in their salvation. As soon as this was done God told Moses to "speak to the children of Israel, that they go forward," and they passed through the sea, a redeemed and happy people. The particular point we wish to rivet upon the minds of our readers is that God never commanded to go forward till after they had seen the "salvation of the Lord." We are sure the first and last thing in the prosperity of the church is obedience. The whole duty of the church is to "Fear God and keep his commandments." For "Obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." When a church fails to obey the commands of the Lord, they fail to enjoy the blessings of the time salvation. Therefore, it behooves us to labor, as Paul instructed, to enter into rest, for many of this nation who started from the land of Egypt fell in the wilderness on account of disobedience and unbelief.

"Is it conceivable that the great God could possibly lend the sanction of his authority to that which is nothing but emptiness? Or that he would command us to do that which might well be left undone? Does disobedience of any part of his law make no change in our relations to him? A mere form is an insignificant thing and unworthy of respect. Has God commanded anything that is insignificant or unworthy of respect? Is any part of his law contemptible? The soul takes fright at the very thought. Gods commandment is exceedingly broad; each part of it is zealous of every other, and each is invested with the majesty of all."

There is no part of God's word that sanctions disobedience in the very smallest of his requirements, but on the contrary, there are abundant passages that teach the displeasure of God for such disobedience. Lot was commanded to leave the doomed city of Sodom; he at once obeyed the command of God and fled. Abraham was commanded to go out into a land that God would show him; he immediately started and journeyed, "not knowing whither he went." And God told Moses, when he was about to build the tabernacle, "to see that he made all things according to the pattern shown him in the mount." Oh, how minute in detail was that pattern, yet all important, which clearly proves to us that God has commanded no non-essentials. To teach that there are non-essentials in the gospel is not only insulting to Jesus, but dangerous to men. Therefore, it behooves every true servant of God to "teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," and then command every heaven-born soul "to go forward" in the discharge of his or her duty.

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Our ways may often seem hedged, and we can see no way of escape, but the command of God, "go forward," still stands, and so sure as we obey the command and press on in duty, so sure will God open the way and strew our path with the rich blessings of heaven. Jesus says, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," not that you are to be saved for doing them, but you are to be happy in doing them. And again, James says, "He that looketh into the perfect law of liberty, being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, that man shall be blessed in his deeds," not saved because he does it, but blessed in doing it. Therefore, my brethren, it behooves us to go forward in the discharge of all our Christian duties, and not stop to inquire what we are to gain by it. When the Master says, "fill the water pots to the brim," let us not stop to inquire what he is going to do, but let us go forward and fill the measure of our duty as humble followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, remembering that it is ours to obey, and God's to bless. Oh, that the time may come when we can see all of God's dear saints obeying the commands of the Lord, and when we can hear all the ministers lifting up their voices together, "speaking to the children of Israel, that they go forward."

Just so sure as God's dear saints go forward in the discharge of their duties as the humble children of God, so sure will they enjoy the blessings of the time salvation. Hence, we find that there is a rest that Jesus gives, and there is also a rest that we are to find, and we find it only in the path of obedience; therefore, it is our duty, as the dear saints of God, to labor to enter into that rest. Therefore, it is needful, my dear brethren, that we should fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, some of us "should seem to come short of it." We feel that we say truthfully that many of God's dear saints have come short of this rest by disobedience, but when their work is done on earth they enter that eternal rest that Jesus has prepared for them, and spend an eternity of bliss with God. By their disobedience they have failed to enjoy the time salvation, but this does not affect their eternal salvation, when they come to die. All of their works are burned up, and they suffer loss, but they themselves, are saved, yet so as by fire.

Another very striking lesson is taught us in John's report of the seven churches of Asia. Only one out of the seven had strictly obeyed the commandments of the Lord, and all the rest God had something against. God called upon them to repent and do their first works, or else he would come and remove the candlestick (church) out of its place. That is (we understand) he would remove the church from them and plant it somewhere else, and they should no longer enjoy the blessed privileges that they then were enjoying. He did not mean by this that he would send them to torment, but they should not enjoy the time salvation. We will not give this in detail, but will ask that our readers read Revelation and draw their own conclusions. May God help us all to labor for the blessings of this rest.