**Bible Facts Little Understood by Christians (2)**

By Charles Strong

**Salvation**

God’s redemption plan for man is far more intricate than most Christians realize. It is normally understood as a singular concept, which would be the salvation of the spiritual part of man from sin with the end-result being heaven. Most verses of Scripture dealing with man’s salvation are generally attributed to this one linear dimension. This may be attributed to “illegitimate totality transfer” (the error that arises, when the “meaning” of a word [understood as the total series of relations in which it is used in the literature] is read into a particular case as its sense and implication there), [[1]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm#_ftn1) which results in *the* most prominent aspect of salvation for the Christian as discussed in the New Testament being almost unknown within Christendom today.

To illustrate this, any Christian can easily understand that subsequent to his placement of faith in Christ’s finished work on the cross for his eternal salvation (*i.e.*, being “*born* [from above] *again*” as mentioned in **John 3:3-7**), his body continues to exist in a state of degradation (*i.e.*, death), only to be redeemed (saved) at its resurrection.

*As was the man of dust*, *so also are those who are made of dust*; *and as is the heavenly Man*, *so also are those who are heavenly*. *And as we have borne the image of the man of dust*, *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. Now this I say*, *brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*; *nor does corruption inherit incorruption*. *Behold*, *I tell you a mystery*. *We shall not all sleep*, *but we shall all be changed* — *in a moment*, *in the twinkling of an eye*, *at the last trumpet*. *For the trumpet will sound*, *and the dead will be raised incorruptible*, *and we shall be changed*. *For this corruptible must put on incorruption*, *and this mortal must put on immortality*. *So when this corruptible has put on incorruption*, *and this mortal has put on immortality*, *then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written*: “*Death is swallowed up in victory*.” (**1 Corinthians 15:48-54**)

In this case the salvation of the body is quite different (*i.e.*, transpires later) than the spiritual salvation of man that comes instantaneously upon his faith-based decision to accept God’s grace-gift of salvation in Christ. But what is not so well understood by a vast majority of Christians is that besides the salvation of the body there are two other distinct aspects of a Christian’s salvation, both of which are spiritual in character. One is immediate, eternal in scope, and complete while the other is initiated, millennial in scope, and progressive (or regressive, as the case may be) upon the person’s faith-decision in Christ.

That which is immediate, eternal in scope, and complete (never to be abrogated by man or God), which is based solely upon the finished work of Christ upon the cross, is the *salvation of the spirit* (that part of man’s composition [to be discussed later] that connects him to God). Many if not most Christians see only this aspect of salvation in Scripture.

*Jesus answered*, “*Most assuredly*, *I say to you*, *unless one is born of water and the Spirit*, *he cannot enter the kingdom of God*. *That which is born of the flesh is flesh*, *and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*. *Do not marvel that I said to you*, ‘*You must be born again*.’” . . . *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son*, *that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*. *For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world*, *but that the world through Him might be saved*. (**John 3: 5-7**, **16**-**17**)

*And he brought them out and said*, “*Sirs*, *what must I do to be saved*?” *So they said*, “*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*, *and you will be saved*, *you and your household*.” (**Acts 16:30**-**31**)

*If anyone*’*s* *work is burned*, *he will suffer loss*; *but he himself will be saved*, *yet so as through fire*. (**1 Corinthians 3:15**)

*Deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh* *that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*. (**1 Corinthians 5:5**)

*For by grace you have been saved through faith*, *and that not of yourselves*; *it is the gift of God*, *not of works, lest anyone should boast*. (**Ephesians 2:8-9**)

But the aspect of salvation (and its related doctrinal components) that is addressed much more in both Testaments than the salvation of the spirit is that which is initiated at the “new birth” and is either progressive or regressive throughout a Christian’s life. And rather than eternal, it is millennial in scope. This salvation, which is little understood but often known as “sanctification,” is described in the New Testament as the *salvation of the soul* (that part of man’s composition [to be discussed later] that represents his *life lived as a Christian*, which connects him to the material world, and which is adjudicated at the Judgment Seat of Christ with only millennial varieties in view).

*Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness*, *and receive with meekness the implanted Word*, *which is able to save your souls*. (**James 1:21**)

*Brethren*, *if anyone among you wanders from the truth*, *and someone turns him back*, *let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins*. (**James 5:19**-**20**)

*But we are not of those who draw back to perdition*, *but of those who believe to the saving of the soul*. (**Hebrews 10:39**)

*Whom having not seen you love*. *Though now you do not see Him*, *yet believing*, *you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory*, *receiving the end of your faith* — *the salvation of your souls*. (**1 Peter 1:8-9**)

*Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren*, *love one another fervently with a pure heart*. (**1 Peter 1:22**)

*Beloved*, *I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims*, *abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul*. (**1 Peter 2:11**)

*Beloved*, *I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health*, *just as your soul prospers*. (**3 John 1:2**)

*Then Jesus said to His disciples*, “*If anyone desires to come after Me*, *let him deny himself*, *and take up his cross*, *and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it*, *but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it*. *For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world*, *and loses his own soul*? *Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul*? *For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels*, *and then He will reward each according to his works*.” (**Matthew 16:24-27** [**Mark 8:34-36**; **Luke 9:23-25**; **17:33**])

*But he who endures to the end shall be saved*. (**Matthew 24:13**)

*And do this*, *knowing the time*, *that now it is high time to awake out of sleep*; *for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed*. (**Romans 13:11**)

*Moreover*, *brethren*, *I declare to you the gospel that I preached to you*, *which also you received and in which you stand*, *by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you* — *unless you believed in vain*. (**1 Corinthians 15**:**1**-**2**)

Furthermore, this error of interpretation (illegitimate totality transfer) has led to a major division within the realm of soteriological theology (the doctrine of salvation), with respect to the “eternal security of the believer” and which is reflected in the teachings of the French Protestant reformer John Calvin (Calvinism) and the Dutch theologian Jacobus Arminius (Arminianism). “The issue that is paramount is whether the saving work of Christ on the cross includes the safekeeping of the one who trusts Him, or not. This is the central and precise issue in the controversy.”[[2]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn2) And this division, along with other differences in less significant doctrines, has led to a proliferation of variant beliefs and denominations within Christendom.

It should be noted that Scripture is precise in the use of the Greek words, which are translated “spirit” (*pneuma*) and “soul” (*psuche*), never the two being confused in meaning or use. Furthermore, it should be said that both the past and future aspects of salvation (*i.e.* spirit and soul) are based on works — spirit-salvation on the finished work of Christ upon the cross (which is personally acquired solely by believing God’s Word about His Son, Jesus Christ) and soul-salvation on the works (*i.e.*, fruit) of the individual believer. The salvation of the soul should never be associated with the past aspect of salvation. Scripture carefully distinguishes between the soul and the spirit, never using the words interchangeably in this respect (*cf.* **1 Thessalonians 5:23**; **Hebrews 4:12**). Salvation in relation to the spirit is always dealt with in a past sense, but not so with the salvation of the soul. Rather, the salvation of the soul is always dealt with in a future sense.

The basis for the contrast in the two theological positions (Calvinism/ Arminianism) previously mentioned, and thereby the reason that *the* most prominent use of the words “salvation” and “save” in the New Testament (*i.e.*, salvation of the soul) is almost universally unknown within Christendom today, can be attributed to ignorance of (1) the purpose for the creation of man, (2) the relevance of the skeletal structure and type-antitype relationship of Scripture, (3) the relevance of the composition of man as a tripartite being to his redemption, (4) the three Greek tenses used of salvation in Scripture, (5) the aspect of inheritance and hope in God’s redemptive plan, (6) the correct rendering of the Greek word normally translated “eternal” in Scripture, and (7) the contextual setting of salvation passages in the New Testament.

The Purpose for the Creation of Man

When one studies the Word by beginning at the “beginning” (the book of **Genesis**), which is how it should be, only then will he be able to understand *why* God created man and how this purpose bears upon and is relevant within the panorama of salvation. The importance of beginning in this fashion is well stated by Arlen L. Chitwood, as follows:

The Old Testament opens with the statement, “*In the beginning God created the heavens* *and the earth*”; and the gospel of **John** opens with a parallel simple statement, “*In the beginning was the Word . . . All things were made by Him* . . .” (**John 1:1a**, **3a**). Both references go back to the same point in time — the beginning of God’s creative activity relative to the heavens and the earth.

The first five verses of **Genesis** (Genesis1:1-5) can be paralleled with the first five verses of John’s gospel (John 1:1-5). But, beginning with verse **six (John 1:6)**, John moves millennia ahead and continues with events during his day, though he still continues to reference events of prior days.

The gospel of **Matthew**, opening the New Testament, immediately references the Old Testament after another fashion —“*The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ*, *the Son of David*, *the Son of Abraham*” (**Matthew 1:1**). And in the gospel of **Luke**, the matter of Christ’s genealogy is carried all the way back to Adam (**Luke 3:23-38**).

The Old Testament leads into the New after *an inseparable fashion*. The latter forms a continuation and completion of that which was begun in the former; and both together constitute *one continuous*, *complete revelation* that God gave to man over a period of about 1,500 years through some forty different Jewish writers, revealing His plans and purposes in relation to man, the earth, and the universe at large.

Consequently, one must be understood in the light of the other, apart from precedence given to either. It is no more or no less valid to interpret the Old Testament in the light of the New as it is to interpret the New Testament in the light of the Old. One is to be interpreted both in the light of itself (other parts of the same Testament) and in the light of the other (the New in the light of the Old, or the Old in the light of the New).

*The interpretative method laid down in Scripture is very simple*:

. . . *not in words that man*’*s wisdom teaches but that the Holy Spirit teaches*, *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. (**1 Corinthians 2:13b**)

One part of the Word (at any point in the Old or New Testaments) is compared with another part of the Word (at any point in the Old or New Testaments) under the leadership of the indwelling Spirit.

Then, again, many of the distinctions that Christians often view between the Old and New Testaments simply do not exist. A basis for calling the two parts of Scripture by these names could be derived from verses such as **2 Corinthians 3:6**, **14**; but to see one Testament as Jewish and the other as Christian, as is often done, is about as far removed from biblical reality as one can get.

The word “testament” is a translation of the Greek word for *covenant* (*diatheke*). The word appears thirty-three times in the New Testament, and, in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible, it has been rendered “covenant” twenty times and “testament” the other thirteen (*cf.* **Hebrews 9:4**, **15 KJV**). Either translation is correct so long as one understands that the thought has to do with two different covenants.

And confusion often arises at this point through the erroneous thought that the new covenant has been made with the Church. That simply is incorrect. Covenants are not made with the Church. They never have been, and they never will be.

Since the call of Abraham 4,000 years ago, God, within His covenant relationship to mankind, concerns Himself with *one nation alone* — *the nation of Israel* (**Romans 9:4**). The old covenant was made with the house of Israel during the days of Moses, and the new covenant will be made with the house of Israel when the One greater than Moses returns (**Hebrews 8:7**ff; *cf.* **Jeremiah 31:31**ff).

During the interim, Christians are ministers of the new covenant in the sense that the shed blood of Christ is the blood of this covenant, and the entire basis for any Christian’s ministry has to do with this blood — blood shed at Calvary, presently on the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies of the heavenly tabernacle (**Matthew 26:28**; **2 Corinthians 3:6**; **Hebrews 9:14-22**). But the fact remains. The new covenant has not been — nor will it ever be — made with the Church.

The new covenant will replace the old, and it will be made with those in possession of the old. And, apart from being ministers of the new during the interim (for the blood has been shed, and this is the basis for all ministry during the present time), the Church has no more to do with the establishment of the new covenant than it did with the establishment of the old covenant.

Thus, when one talks about “New Testament doctrine,” “New Testament theology,” etc., the expressions cannot extend beyond the thought of doctrine or theology that has for its basis the shed blood of Christ; and this is something that cannot be understood at all apart from the Old Testament.

Revelation surrounding the shedding of blood for the remission of sins begins in **Genesis 3** immediately following man’s fall; and the entire Old Testament sacrificial system that followed pointed toward the One — of whom the prophets spoke (*cf.* **Isaiah 53:12**; **Zechariah 12:10**; **13:6**) — who would one day come and take away “*the sin of the world*” through the sacrifice of Himself (**John 1:29**).

The *foundations* have been established in the Old Testament, and both Testaments together comprise *one continuous*, *complete revelation* of all the various facets of the person and work of Christ. And *the only way* one can grasp the complete picture is to look at the whole of Scripture after this fashion.[[3]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn3)

And it is in **Genesis 1:26-28** where one may find the purpose of man’s creation as stated by God Himself.

(26) *Then God said*,“*Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness*; *let them have dominion over the fish of the sea*, *over the birds of the air*, *and over the cattle*, *over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth*.”. . . (28) *Then God blessed them*, *and God said to them*,“*Be fruitful and multiply*; *fill the earth and subdue it*; *have dominion over the fish of the sea*, *over the birds of the air*, *and over every living thing that moves on the earth*.”

Man, along with his bride (his co-equal partner), were to have *dominion* over the earth. They were to *rule* over all the land and all that moved in and about it. And this purpose for man, which was restated by God after the Flood, has never changed.

But following the “fall of man” in the Garden and although God’s purpose for man to rule the earth never changed, its fulfillment continued in a damaged state. Instead of a rule in which man and creature existed in tranquility and harmony, the fear and dread of man has been on every beast of the earth (**Genesis 9:1**-**2**) since that time.

But God’s ultimate intent relative to His purpose for man will not be thwarted. The day will come when man will indeed rule upon the earth after the fashion as it was set in the beginning, where the earth will prosper and bloom and man and animal will thrive and coexist in peace together (**Isaiah 11:6-9**).

And it is this facet of God’s redemption plan for man that is often overlooked when one considers the subject of his salvation. It is in fact a predominant theme throughout both Testaments. It is foremost in the field of eschatology (the division of Systematic Theology that is concerned with things to come [prophecy]). To overlook this is to miss a major portion of the teachings throughout the entirety of God’s Word. And further, to miss this is to misunderstand a major facet of man’s salvation.

The Relevance of the Skeletal Structure and Type-Antitype Relationship of Scripture

Scripture is unique beyond all other writings upon earth. It is God-breathed and structured in a precise fashion. Nothing can compare to its accuracy and unity. Although it consists of sixty-six separate books penned by over forty authors over a period of several thousand years, it is an integrated message organism, *i.e.*, it is “alive” with every passage, every word, every number, and every subject skillfully designed and integrated within the whole. It is of extraterrestrial origin. And it continues to defy the efforts of man to discredit it.

Although Scripture is primarily taken upon the basis of faith, should one address the subject with a genuinely unbiased outlook, its divine origin can be mathematically and scientifically proven. Two notable prior-atheists have compiled substantial evidence to this end. One is the award-winning journalist for the Chicago Tribune, Lee Strobel, who through years of research became absolutely convinced that the God of the Bible was in fact for real. He came to this revelation through extensive research in modern biology, physics, cosmology, and astronomy. He chronicles his journey from spiritual skepticism to a profound faith in God by means of 21st century science in both book and video formats; each entitled “The Case for a Creator.”

The other distinguished atheist turned believer after his many years of intense analysis of the Bible is Ralph O. Muncaster, a professor at Vanguard University of Southern California. Among many of the arguments that he so skillfully advances in support of Scripture as being divine in origin is the following one that deals in mathematical probabilities and is most compelling.

Can we ever “prove” anything? Apart from mathematical proofs, many critics would say no, especially regarding history or even regarding the world around us.

However, statisticians and most other scientists agree there is a point when the probability of something happening is so remote that it becomes absurd or essentially impossible. As a guideline, scientists accept that anything with a probability of less than one chance in 10 to the 50th power (1 followed by 50 zeros) is “impossible.” If such an “impossible” event happens to occur, it may be concluded that it required God’s action or some other supernatural action outside of the dimensions of time and space.

For example, suppose a friend correctly foretold the winning number in a state lottery with one single prediction (like buying *one* ticket). The odds of that is about one in 10,000,000 (or 1 in 10 to the 7th power). You might be extremely impressed, but you probably wouldn’t claim he had “divine insight.” Now suppose he did it a second consecutive time — again with one single prediction. The odds immediately jump to one in 100,000,000,000,000 (1 in 10 to the 14th power). Suddenly it would seem impossible without some trick or supernatural information. Imagine someone successfully picking three consecutive lotteries (one chance in 10 to the 21st power). Such an “impossible” feat would likely end lotteries forever — because the odds of such a chance occurrence are nil.

The miraculous insights in the Bible occurring by chance has a probability far more remote than that of winning *dozens* in the manner described above. Only supernatural inspiration can account for it. “Statistical proof” of God’s inspiration comes in at least three ways:

*Scientific insights* — Scientific information in the Bible that was written hundreds, even thousands of years before modern science had the knowledge to recognize the Bible was correct. These insights are in the areas of physics, biology, engineering, and medicine, among others.

*Concealed evidence* — Cross-referenced information contained in books of the Bible that were written hundreds of years apart by very different authors in different situations in different parts of the world.

*Prophecy miracles* — The future foretold with precision and total accuracy. Over 1000 specific prophecies are recorded in the Bible, of which 668 are historical. None have errors. All types of prophecies are included — about people, places, and events. Irrefutable evidence exists that these prophecies could *not* have been contrived.[[4]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn4)

Muncaster arrived at the conclusion that “all Bible prophecies,” which through exhaustive research were shown to be absolutely accurate, had a mathematical probability of 1 in 10 to the 999th power. This alone substantiates the divine origin of Scripture. To conclude otherwise would be beyond all reason.

Taking the Bible as truly the Word of God, it is then contingent upon the student of the Word to study it with proper recognition and attention to its skeletal and type-antitype structure. In this regard, Chitwood says it best, as follows:

*Then He said unto them*,“*O fools*, *and slow of heart to believe all that the*

*prophets have spoken*:

*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things*, *and to enter into His glory*?”

*And beginning at Moses and all the prophets*, *He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself*. (**Luke 24:25-27**)

*Now these things were our examples* [Now these things happened as types for us], *to the intent we should not lust after evil things*, *as they also lusted . . . .*

*Now all these things happened to them for examples* [Now all these things happened to them for types’]: *and they are written for our admonition*, *upon whom the ends of the world* [the ages] *are come*. (**1 Corinthians 10:6, 11**)

Three things above all else must be adhered to in the study of Scripture.

1) A person must recognize that all Scripture is God-breathed.

2) A person must begin where God began.

3) A person must study Scripture after the fashion in which it was written.

God gave His Word to man through man in a particular manner:

. . . *holy men of God spoke as they were moved* [borne along] *by the Holy Spirit*. (**2 Peter 1:21b**)

The manner in which God revealed Himself, His plans, and His purposes in His Word (a God-breathed revelation, penned as the Spirit moved men to write) is what makes Scripture different from all other writings. *Scripture stands in a category solely by itself*, *completely alone*; and all other writings stand in a completely separate category.

Then, in the process of giving to man, through man, the God-breathed Word, at the very outset God set forth a skeletal structure covering the whole panorama of revelation that was to follow, along with foundational building material. And if a person would understand Scripture correctly, he *must* begin where God began and follow that which God has set forth, after the manner in which He Himself established the matter.

The person *must* follow the skeletal structure and build upon this structure after the manner in which God Himself began and set matters forth, establishing them in a particular manner at the outset. At any point in the whole of Scripture, any teaching *must* have a connection with and be in complete agreement with the God-established skeletal structure and subsequent foundational material set forth at the beginning.

Then, beyond that, God structured His revelation to man after a particular fashion, alluded to in **Luke 24:25-27**, **44** and stated in so many words in **1 Corinthians 10:6**, **11**. Scripture not only deals with a completely accurate history of certain events surrounding God’s dealings with the earth, angels, and man, but biblical history has been recorded after such a fashion that it is *highly typical* as well. God has established His primary means of teaching, not through history *per se*, but through *inherent types* (seen in past history) pointing to *antitypes* (seen in later history and/or prophecy).

The manner in which God revealed Himself to man is as stated in **1 Corinthians** chapter **ten**:

*Now all these things happened to them for examples* [Greek: *tupos*, for “types”] . . . .

(**1 Corinthians 10:11a**)

The reference is to events during Moses’ day, drawing from the wilderness journey of the Israelites. But the reference would, of necessity, have to go far beyond simply the specific events listed in verses **one** through **ten (1 Corinthians 10:1-10)**, preceding the statement in verse **eleven (1 Corinthians 10:11a)**. In the light of other Scripture, as becomes increasingly evident when one views the whole of Scripture, the reference would have to be enlarged to encompass not only all biblical history during Moses’ day but all biblical history beginning with **Genesis 1:1**.

That would be to say, God has structured His revelation to man after a fashion in which not only true, correct history is presented but this history is presented in such a manner that it is *highly typical* in nature. God, within His sovereign control of all matters, brought things to pass after such a fashion (within the history of the earth, angels, and man) that He could, at a later time, have these events to draw upon in order to teach His people the deep things surrounding Himself, His plans, and His purposes. And this would be accomplished mainly through *types* and corresponding *antitypes*.

Thus, God draws not so much from history *per se* as He does from the *spiritual content* set forth in the historic accounts — *the great spiritual lessons*, taught mainly from *types* pointing to corresponding *antitypes*.

Anyone can understand facts within revealed biblical history (saved or unsaved man). This would pertain more to the letter of the matter. But only saved man can go beyond the *letter* to the *spirit* of the matter (**2 Corinthians 3:6-16**). Only the saved can understand the *spiritual lessons* drawn from history. Only the saved can look within biblical history and see *spiritual content* (**1 Corinthians 2:12-16**).

For the *unsaved*, things beyond the simple, historical facts are completely meaningless. They can’t see these things; nor can they know them. Spiritually, they are *dead*; and these things are “*spiritually discerned*.” They can view Scripture only from a “*natural* [‘soulical’]” standpoint (**1 Corinthians 2:14**).

But for *the saved*, the matter is entirely different. They, through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, have been made *alive spiritually*. The Spirit has breathed life into the one having no life, and they have “*passed from death unto life*.” And they have this same Spirit — the One who gave the Word to man through man — indwelling them to lead them “*into all truth*” (**John 16:13-15**; **1 Corinthians 3:16**; **6:19**-**20**; **1 John 3:24**). Accordingly, the saved possess the ability to see beyond the facts of history and view the spiritual lessons inherent therein.

This is what is meant by “*comparing spiritual things with spiritual*.” It is within this facet of Scripture that man can see the things which “*eye hath not seen*, *nor ear heard* . . . .” It is within this facet of Scripture that “*God hath revealed them to us by His Spirit*: *for the Spirit searches all things*, *yes*, *the deep things of God*” (**1 Corinthians 2:9-13**).

And it is within this complete, overall thought that one finds the whole of biblical history filled with types and meanings. This is the manner in which God has structured His Word. It has been given to man after this fashion, and if man would properly understand that which God has revealed in His Word, *he must study it after the fashion in which it was given*.[[5]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn5)

As one studies Scripture in this manner, it soon becomes apparent not only is Christ the central Person of Scripture but that there is an aspect of salvation that has nothing to do with heaven *per se*. Rather it has to do with man’s purpose that God intended for him at his creation. In fact, one who studies in this fashion soon learns that this aspect of salvation is the most prominently facet of that subject addressed in Scripture.

This most prominent aspect of salvation, which centers on the central Person of Scripture, Jesus Christ, has to do with the coming literal kingdom and glory of Christ. Again, Chitwood explains it as follows:

As all Scripture revolves around *a central Person*, all Scripture also revolves around *a central focus*, which has to do with *the central Person*. Scripture concerns itself with *time*, and, in the main, this time has to do with the 7,000 years portended by the seven days opening Scripture. And, within this time, there is the thought of creation for a purpose, *redemption* for a purpose, and *God*’*s work throughout the 6*,*000 years covering the present age* (*Man*’*s Day*) for a purpose.

The purpose surrounding *man*’*s creation* has to do with *the seventh day*, *a seventh 1,000-year period*; and so does *redemption*; and so does *God*’*s work throughout the six days*, *the 6*,*000 years of Man*’*s Day*. The whole of Scripture moves toward *that coming seventh day*, a pattern established in the skeletal outline set forth at the very beginning.

Thus, the central focus of Scripture *looks to that seventh day when the central Person of Scripture will be revealed in all His glory to bring about that for which man was created in the beginning and for which he has been redeemed*. The Son is to exercise dominion over one province in His Father’s kingdom — for a revealed purpose (**1 Corinthians 15:24-28**) — and man is to have a part in this dominion.

In this respect, biblical history, within its established historic-typical framework, becomes largely *prophetic* within its scope of fulfillment. Biblical history, in this respect, revolves around *the central Person* and *the central focus of Scripture*.

And the central Person and the central focus of Scripture are so inseparably related that at times they are spoken of either in synonymous terms or both are understood to be in view though only one is mentioned.

Examples of both facets of the matter can be seen in **Daniel 2:34**, **35**, **44**-**45** and **Hebrews 12:1**-**2**:

1)***DANIEL 2:34***-***35***, ***44***-***45***

The *Stone*, “*cut out of the mountain without hands*,” in one respect refers to Christ and in another respect to *the kingdom of Christ*.

The Father will give the Son “dominion, and glory, and a kingdom” (**Daniel 7:13**-**14**). He will be the “*King of kings*, *and Lord of lords*” in the kingdom. He, as *the King*, as *the Stone*, will be the One who personally smites the image at its feet (**Revelation 19:11-21**).

But **Daniel 2:44-45**, interpreting **Daniel 2:34-35**, also refers to the kingdom of Christ itself breaking in pieces and consuming all the kingdoms comprising the one world kingdom of that day (*cf.* **Revelation 11:15**). The Stone, after smiting the image, will become “*a great mountain*” and *fill the whole earth*.

In this respect, the King of the kingdom is not to be thought of apart from His kingdom. All the various facets of His person and work, set forth in detail throughout Old Testament Scripture, have *an end* in view; and *that end* is the day when He will rule and reign over the earth.

Christ’s finished work at Calvary and His present work as High Priest — foretold in the Old Testament — have the same end in view. *The Savior*, who is presently exercising the office of *High Priest*, was born *King* (**Matthew 2:2**).

And *the coming King* and *His Kingdom*, in the overall scope of the matter, become inseparable; and this is the reason they can be spoken of in synonymous terms as in **Daniel** 2.

2)***HEBREWS 12:1***-***2***

**Hebrews 12:1**-**2**, in the light of other Scripture, presents the same picture. In this section of Scripture a person is told to look “*unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith*.” The thought from the Greek text is literally to look “*from* [from the things in the surrounding world system, the present kingdom under Satan] *unto* Jesus . . . .” But yet other Scriptures exhort us to look *from* this present world system “*to* the mountain [signifying the coming kingdom of Christ (**Isaiah 2:2-4**; **Daniel 2:35**)]” **(***cf.* **Genesis 13:10-12**; **19:1**, **17**).

Are we to look unto Jesus? Or are we to look unto the Mountain? The correct biblical answer would center on the thought that a person, within a proper biblical perspective, cannot look to one apart from looking to the other. That would be to say, in a proper biblical perspective, we cannot really look “*from unto* Jesus” apart from seeing Him in connection with His coming kingdom; and, conversely, we cannot really fix our eyes on “the mountain,” *the kingdom*, apart from seeing *the King of the kingdom*.

When **Hebrews 12:2** states, “*Looking unto Jesus* . . . .,” the thought would have to include, as well, the same thing contained in the remainder of the verse. Christ,

. . . *for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross*, *despising the shame* [considering it a thing of little import in comparison to the joy set before Him], *and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*. (**Hebrew 12:2**)

The “*joy that was set before Him*” had to do with that day when He would rule and reign (*cf.* **Matthew 25:21**, **23**). Christ had His eyes fixed on that day as He endured present sufferings; and we are to fix our eyes on the One who left us *an example*, after this same fashion, as we endure present sufferings.

Christ, at the time of His sufferings on Calvary, had His eyes fixed on *the coming kingdom*, *the day of His exaltation and glory*. And that is *exactly* the place — the same place — we should have our eyes fixed as we look “*from unto* Jesus” during present sufferings. He left us *an example* that we “*should follow His steps*” (**1 Peter 2:21**). His eyes were fixed on that which lay ahead.

And, as has been demonstrated, *in the true biblical sense of the command*, there can be no such thing as a Christian fixing his eyes on Jesus apart from seeing both *the King* and *His Kingdom*.[[6]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn6)

The Relevance of the Composition of Man as a Tripartite Being to His Redemption

*Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely*; *and may your whole spirit*, *soul*, *and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

(**1 Thessalonians 5:23**)

*For the Word of God is living* [*lit.* God-breathed] *and powerful*, *and powerful*, *and sharper than any two-edged sword*, *piercing even to the division of soul and spirit*, *and of joints and marrow*, *and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*.

(**Hebrews 4:12**)

The use of language by the Holy Spirit in Scripture is quite precise. As Dr. Chuck Missler has said: “Although the Bible consists of sixty-six separate books penned by over forty authors over a period of several thousand years, it is an integrated message system. Every passage, every word, every number, and every place name is there for a specific reason.”[[7]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn7)

Scripture well establishes that man is comprised of three components — spirit, soul, and body. The effort of commentators to equate the “spirit” with the “soul,” and thereby advance the notion that man is a dichotomous (two-part) being, will not stand the tests of linguistics and exegesis. The tripartite nature of man is well documented by Arlen L. Chitwood, as follows:

Man is a tripartite being comprised of *spirit*, *soul*,and *body*;and the salvation of man within its complete scope (past, present, and future) pertains to *the salvation of man with respect to his complete being*. In the study of Scripture it is revealed that each of these three parts of man is subject to salvation at different times. Thus, to understand salvation in its complete scope, one must first understand certain things about man’s tripartite nature. Then, salvation in relation to this tripartite nature becomes the issue.

Chapter **one** of **Genesis** reveals that man was created in the “*image*” and “*likeness*” of God. The word translated “God” in the Hebrew text of this statement is *Elohim*.This is a plural noun, which, in complete keeping with related Scripture, would include all three members of the Godhead — God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (*e.g.*, *cf.* **John 1:1-3**).

Since *Elohim* is a trinity, for man to be created in the “*image*” and “*likeness*” of God, he too must be a trinity. Unlike the dichotomous animal kingdom (created apart from the “*image*” and “*likeness*” of God) possessing only bodies and souls, trichotomous man (created in the “*image*” and “*likeness*” of God) is a triune being. Man not only possesses *a body* and *a soul*, but he also possesses *a spirit* as well.

Jesus is *Elohim* manifested in the flesh; and having been made in the “*likeness*” of man (but apart from man’s fallen nature), He, as man, must also be a trinity (**John 1:14**; **Philippians 2:7**). This tripartite nature of Christ, in whom “*dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*” (**Colossians 2:9**), was clearly revealed at the time of His death. At this time Jesus yielded up *His spirit*, which went back into the presence of His Father in heaven (**Luke 23:46**;*cf.***Ecclesiastes 12:7**; **Acts 7:59**); *His soul* went into Hades, the place of the dead, housed inside the earth at this time (**Acts 2:27**); and *His body* was removed from the cross and placed in Joseph of Arimathea’s tomb (**Matthew 27:57-61**). This threefold separation persisted until the soul and spirit re-entered the body at the time Christ was raised from the dead.

Thus, God, *Elohim*,is a trinity; Jesus, *Elohim*,manifested in the flesh, is likewise a trinity; and man, created in the “*image*” and “*likeness*” of *Elohim*,can only be a trinity as well. Accordingly, *a complete redemption* provided by the triune God must, of necessity, pertain to man as *a complete being*. *Man*’*s complete redemption must encompass spirit*, *soul*, *and body*.[[8]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn8)

The Three Greek Tenses Used of Salvation in Scripture

Salvation is expressed in three tenses — past, present, and future — within the New Testament as they apply to the three differing components of man. Again, Chitwood handles this in a most compelling manner, as follows:

*For by grace you have been saved through faith*, *and that not of yourselves*; *it is the gift of God*, *not of works*, *lest anyone should boast*. (**Ephesians 2:8**-**9**)

*For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing*, *but to us who are being saved it is the power of God*. (**1 Corinthians 1:18**)

*Are they* [angels] *not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit* [*lit.* “for the sake of the ones about to inherit”] *salvation*? (**Hebrews 1:14**)

Salvation in the Word of God is spoken of in three tenses — *past*, *present*,and *future*: (1) Christians *have been saved*, (2) Christians *are being saved*, and (3) Christians *are about to be saved*. The previously quoted verses provide examples of how Scripture deals with each of these three tenses or aspects of salvation.

In **Ephesians 2:8**-**9**, salvation is *a past*, *completed act*; in **1 Corinthians 1:18**, salvation is *a present*, *continuous work*; and in **Hebrews 1:14**, salvation is *a future*, *inherited possession*. Since the Word of God presents salvation in a framework of this nature, it is vitally important in Scriptural interpretation to *first* ascertain to which of these three aspects of salvation any given passage pertains.

In the first aspect of salvation, dealt with in **Ephesians 2:8**, the words, “*you have been saved*,” which is a correct translation, are a translation of two Greek words that form, what is called in the Greek, a “periphrastic perfect.” The “perfect” tense refers to *action completed in past time*, with *the results* of this action extending into *the present and existing in a finished state*. The “periphrastic” construction places additional emphasis on the present, finished state and refers to *the persistent results* during present time of *the past*, *completed work*.

Salvation in this verse is wrought *by grace through faith*, accomplished completely *in past time*, and is *the present possession of every believer*.This present possession, in turn, constitutes an active, continuing, ever-abiding salvation. The eternal security of the believer cannot be expressed in stronger terms than the periphrastic construction of the perfect tense in **Ephesians 2:8**, for the present results of the past action, in this case, *can only continue unchanged forever*.

However, in **1 Corinthians 1:18**, dealing with the second aspect of salvation, things are presented in an entirely different light than seen in **Ephesians 2:8**. Rather than the tense in the Greek text referring to *a past*, *completed act*, the tense refers to *a present*, *continuous work*. The former has already been completed, but the latter has yet to be completed.

Then, in **Hebrews 1:14**, dealing with the third aspect of salvation, matters are presented yet in a completely different light. The wording in the Greek text of this verse refers to something that is about to occur. Nothing is past or present; the reception of this salvation, in its entirety, is placed *in the future*.

Further, the salvation referred to in **Hebrews 1:14** is not only to be realized in the future, but it is also *an inherited salvation*. And the thought of *inheritance* further distinguishes the salvation in this verse from the salvation previously seen in **Ephesians 2:8**, for the salvation that Christians presently possess *is not* an inherited salvation.

Rather, our present salvation was obtained as *a free gift* during the time we were alienated from God. And, as aliens (outside the family of God), we were in no position to inherit salvation, for inheritance in Scripture is *always a family matter*.

In the Old Testament, “sons” were first in line to receive the inheritance, with “daughters” next. If there were no sons or daughters in the immediate family, the inheritance was passed on to the nearest family member or members, designated by the law of inheritance (**Numbers 27:8-11**).

Consequently, an individual must first be *a family member* before he can be considered for the inheritance, which, during the present dispensation, is restricted to “children” or “sons” of the Owner. That’s why the statement is made in **Romans 8:17**, “*If children*, *then heirs* . . . .” And that’s also why, in **Hebrews 1:14**, that an inherited salvation pertains to those who have already been saved, those who are no longer alienated from God but are presently family members.

In this respect, the complete scope of salvation — *past*, *present*, *and future* — has a beginning point, with an end in view. It involves the Spirit of God breathing life into the one having no life and thereby effecting the birth from above. And this has been done with a purpose, with an end in view. This has been done so that the Spirit can take the one who now has spiritual life and perform a work in the life of that individual, with a view to an inheritance that will be realized at *a future time*.

Thus, one should immediately be able to see the importance of proper distinctions being drawn and observed in the realm of these three aspects of salvation. And depending on how one approaches and deals with the different salvation passages in Scripture, either *difficulties* can be avoided on the one hand or *insurmountable problems* can result on the other.

*Past*, *Present*, *Future* . . . *Spirit*, *Soul*, *Body*

When man sinned in the garden in Eden, the complete being of man — spirit, soul, and body — became in a fallen state. God had commanded Adam concerning the fruit of *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, “*you shall not eat*, *for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die*” (**Genesis 2:17**). After Satan had deceived Eve into eating of the fruit of this tree, she then “*gave to her husband with her*; *and he ate*.” Immediately following this, “*the eyes of both of them were opened*, *and they knew that they were naked*; *and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings*” (**Genesis 3:1-7**).

At the time of the fall, Adam and Eve lost something; and it is clearly stated in Scripture that both immediately recognized this fact. That which they lost could only have been a covering of pristine glory that had previously clothed their bodies; for they, following the fall, found that they were in a twofold condition: (1) *naked* and(2) *separated from God*.

God is arrayed in a covering of “*light*,” connected with “*honor and majesty*.” And man, created in the “*image*” and “*likeness*” of God, could only have been arrayed in a similar manner prior to the fall.

*Bless the LORD*, *O my soul*! *O LORD my God*, *You are very great*: *You are clothed with* [You have put on] *honor and majesty*,

*who cover Yourself with light as with a garment*, *who stretch out the heavens like a curtain*.” (**Psalm 104:1**-**2**)

Recognizing the loss of this covering, realizing that they were naked, explains why Adam and Eve immediately sought to clothe themselves following the fall. They tried to replace the covering that had been lost with a work of their own hands, with fig leaf aprons. And then, apparently realizing the utter inadequacy of this covering, they, in their fallen state, sought to hide from God.

God, finding Adam and Eve in this condition, completely rejected the works of their hands. God completely rejected their feeble efforts to atone for their own sin by seeking to replace the covering of pristine glory with fig leaves. Then, to bring His fallen creature back into a right relationship (although not in complete keeping with their previously unfallen state — something still future even today), God provided a covering consisting of animal skins (**Genesis 3:21**). This necessitated *death and the shedding of blood*;and herein lays basic, unchangeable truths concerning the state of fallen man and the means that are necessary to effect his redemption.

Unredeemed man is a fallen creature, alienated from God; and two things are necessary to effect his redemption: (1) *divine intervention*,and (2) *death and shed blood*.These truths have forever been set forth in the opening chapters of **Genesis** and can never change.

(Two different words are used for “*naked*” in the Hebrew text of **Genesis 2:25** [before the fall] and **Genesis 3:7** [after the fall]. In the latter [**3:7**], the word has to do with *absolute nakedness*,but not so in the former [**2:25**].

Remaining within the way a person dressed in the East at the time Moses wrote **Genesis**, and at later times as well, the word used relative to *nakedness* pertaining to Adam and Eve preceding the fall [**2:25**] could be used to describe a person clothed in a tunic [inner garment] but lacking the mantle or cloak [outer garment]. In the preceding respect, prior to the fall, Adam and Eve were clothed in the Glory of God but had yet to possess the regal outer garments worn by kings [fulfilling the reason for man’s creation — to rule the earth (**Genesis 1:26-28**)].

Then, following the fall, no longer clothed in the Glory of God, Adam and Eve were no longer in a position to be further clothed in regal garments, realizing the purpose for their creation. They, apart from the inner garment [the Glory] could not wear the outer garments [royal apparel]. Adam, prior to the fall, never wore regal garments or held the scepter. In this respect, he never moved beyond the description given in **Genesis 2:25** — a “*naked*” condition, “*naked*” *in relation to the reason for his creation* [*lacking the outer regal garments*]*.*

Thus, if man, now separated from the Glory, is to ever fulfill the purpose for his creation, God must act. Redemption has to occur; and this, of necessity, has to include the complete man — *spirit*, *soul*, *and body* — with a view to not only *a restoration of the Glory but to regality beyond this restoration.*)

a) *Spirit*

Man’s sin in the garden in Eden produced *death*. Man *died* the day he ate of the forbidden fruit. Since his *body* continued to live, revealing that his *soul* — the life-giving principle in the blood (**Leviticus 17:11**; *cf.* **Genesis 9:4**) — remained unchanged with respect to life (natural life), it is evident that it was his *spirit* that died.

The spiritual nature is that part of man that links him directly with God. “*God is spirit*,” and man’s worship of God must be “*in spirit and truth*” (**John 4:24**). The death of Adam’s spirit separated him from God (establishing the primary meaning of “death” in Scripture — *separation from God*), and this *death* (this separation from God) “*passed upon all men*” (**Romans 5:12**).

Scripture speaks of an unsaved person as being “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (**Ephesians 2:1**). With an unredeemed, inanimate spirit (*spiritually dead*), he is *alienated from God*, *separated from God* (**Ephesians 2:12**).

But once the person has been born from above, he is then spoken of as *having passed* “*from death to life*,” as *having been* “*quickened*” (**John 5:24**; **Ephesians 2:5**). Possessing an animate spirit, possessing spiritual life (having been made alive spiritually), he is *no longer separated* from the One who Himself is “*Spirit*” (**John 4:24**).

This aspect of salvation is brought to pass through the Spirit of God breathing life into the one having no life, based on Christ’s finished work at Calvary; and once this has been accomplished, everything surrounding the work effecting this aspect of salvation has been completed, with this work existing in a finished state (as previously seen through the use of the perfect tense in **Ephesians 2:8**). Thus, the salvation experience that man enters into at the time of the birth from above is a work of the Spirit, based on a previous work of the Son. It is a *spiritual* birth and has to do with man’s *spirit* alone: “. . . *that which is born of the Spirit is spirit*”(**John 3:6b**).

b) *Soul*

*The salvation of the soul*,on the other hand, should *never* be associated with the past aspect of salvation. Scripture carefully distinguishes between *the soul* and *the spirit*, never using the words interchangeably in this respect (*cf.* **1 Thessalonians 5:23**; **Hebrews 4:12**). And Scripture also carefully distinguishes between salvation in relation to *the spirit* and salvation in relation to *the soul*. Salvation in relation to *the spirit* is always dealt with *in a past sense*, but not so with the salvation of *the soul*.Rather, the salvation of *the soul* is always dealt with *in a future sense*:

*Receiving the end of your faith — the salvation of your souls.* (**1 Peter 1:9**)

*Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness*, *and receive with meekness the implanted Word*, *which is able to save your souls*. (**James 1:21**)

*But we are not of those who draw back to perdition*, *but of those who believe* [are faithful] *to the saving of the soul*. (**Hebrews 10:39**)

The statements and exhortations in these verses pertain to *Christians alone* — those whose *spirits* have already been saved and whose *souls* are in the process of being saved, with the salvation of the soul being realized only at *a future time*.

c) *Body*

The salvation of *the body* presents very few problems for the majority of Christians. Very few Christians contend, contrary to Scripture, that the body has either already been redeemed or is in the process of being redeemed. Scripture places the redemption of man’s body entirely in the future (**Romans 8:23**).

The Christian’s body is presently in a continuous state of deterioration. The body grows old and weakens with time; and the body is subject to sickness, disease, and eventually death. This must ever remain the case as long as the body remains unredeemed. The “*wages of sin is death*” (**Romans 6:23**), and the unredeemed body must pay the price that sin requires.

Within this unredeemed body are two opposing entities, each seeking dominion — *a redeemed spirit*,and *an unredeemed soul*.The unredeemed soul is housed in an unredeemed body, and the two are mutually compatible. But the redeemed spirit housed alongside an unredeemed soul in an unredeemed body experiences no compatibility with either of the other two at all. Compatibility is not possible, for “*what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness*, *and what communion has light with darkness*?” (**2 Corinthians 6:14**). This heterogeneous union is what produced the cry of the Apostle Paul in **Romans 7:24**:

*O wretched man that I am*! *Who will deliver me from this body of death*?[[9]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn9)

The Aspect of Inheritance and Hope in God’s Redemptive Plan

Unless one recognizes how inheritance and hope, particularly as the former is seen in the Old Testament, relates to the redemption of man, it is difficult to understand a major facet of salvation. Again, Chitwood covers the topic in a most persuasive manner, as follows:

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, *who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*,

*to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away*, *reserved* [‘preserved’] *in heaven for you*,

*who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time*. (**1 Peter 1:3-5**)

Peter in his epistles, as James in his epistle (or any of the other writers in their epistles), directs his message to the regenerate, not to the unregenerate. Peter’s message is for the “*elect*,” those who have been “*begotten*” from above, those *in a position* to receive the Word of God into their saved human spirits, those who have been called “*out of darkness into His marvelous light*,” those who have “*obtained mercy*,” those who are “*strangers and pilgrims*” on the earth, those who have “*obtained like precious faith with us*” (**1 Peter 1:2**-**3**, **23**; **2:1**-**2**, **9-11**; **2 Peter 1:1**).

The epistles of **1** and **2 Peter** have been written to encourage Christians, who are being tried and tested, through holding up before them prizes, rewards, compensations. The subject matter in these epistles, set forth at the very beginning, concerns a present“*living hope*,” a future“*inheritance*,” and a future“*salvation*”; and *encouragement for proper conduct in trials and tests* is derived from “a knowledge” of God’s revelation concerning these things (*cf.* **1 Peter 1:2-9**; **2 Peter 1:2-8**).

**A Present, Living Hope**

Christians have been “*begotten*” from above unto “*a living hope*” through “*the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*.” Christ lives, and Christians will live with Him. But this fact is not the object of one’s hope. *Hope* is described as “living” *because of Christ*’*s resurrection*, but a Christian’s hope lies in *things beyond His resurrection*. And these things are revealed in the text to be an “*inheritance*” and a “*salvation*.”

“Hope,” “inheritance,” and “salvation” are inseparably linked in Scripture. It is only because we are saved (past, salvation of the spirit) that we can possess a “hope.” And this *hope* looks ahead to the reception of *an inheritance* within *a salvation* (future, salvation of the soul) to be revealed.

Christians are commanded,

*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts*: *and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear*. (**1 Peter 3:15b**)

Since this hope pertains to a future inheritance and salvation, the “reason” for this hope must also be futuristic in scope. Thus, to respond in accordance with **1 Peter 3:15**, Christians *must* be knowledgeable concerning scriptural teachings pertaining to present and future aspects of salvation, for their hope is inseparably linked with the salvation of their souls.

*The Christians*’ *hope* is a subject found numerous places throughout the Pauline and general epistles (**Hebrews** being included in the general epistles). Two of the best books to help Christians understand exactly what is involved in *the hope that they possess* are the books of **Titus** and **Hebrews**. Both books deal with the same subject matter as **1** and **2 Peter**, or any of the other epistles for that matter.

1.“*Hope*” *in Titus*

The epistle of **Titus** centers on the Christians’ relationship to both “hope” and “the coming age,” for it is in the coming age that *the hope of our calling* will be realized. *Hope* in **Titus 2:13** is called “*that blessed hope*” and is associated with the “*appearing of the glory of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ*” (ASV). The structure of the Greek text shows the “*appearing of the glory*” as *the object of one*’*s hope* (through placing both “blessed hope” and “appearing” under one article). Christians are the ones who possess this hope, as they are the ones who are to be partakers of Christ’s glory when it is revealed. In this respect, *participation in the coming glory of Christ will be the realization of the Christians*’ *present hope*, *for one cannot be separated from the other*.

The word *hope* is also used in this same framework within its two other appearances in **Titus** **1:2**; **3:7**. In **Titus 1:1**-**2**, *hope* is associated with a “mature knowledge” [“*acknowledgment*” (v. **1**) is *epignosis* (mature knowledge) in the Greek text] of truth, and with “(*aionios*) *life*, *which God*, *who cannot lie*, *promised before time began*” (v. **2**). Then, in **Titus 3:7**, this “hope” is reserved for the justified alone, and it has to do with a future inheritance:

*That having been* *justified by* His grace *we should become* *heirs according to the hope of eternal* [*aionios*] *life.* (**Titus 3:7**)

The Greek word *aionios* appearing in **Titus 1:2**; **3:7**, translated “eternal” in most English versions, does not itself mean “eternal.” The Greek language actually contains no word for “eternal.” *Aionios* can be, and many times is, used in the sense of “eternal”; but this meaning is derived from its textual usage, not from the word itself. *Aionios* refers to “a period of time,” usually thought of as “an age.”

The only way the Greek language can express “eternal,” apart from textual considerations, is by using the noun form of *aionios* (*aion*)in the plural (“ages” [*e.g.*, **Luke 1:33**; **Hebrews 13:8**]), or by using *aion* twice in the plural (“unto the ‘ages [*aionas*]’ of the ‘ages [*aionon*]’”[*e.g.*,**Revelation 1:6**, **18**; **4:9**-**10**; **5:13**-**14**; **7:12**; **10:6**; **11:15**; **14:11**; **15:7**; **19:3**; **20:10**; **22:5**]). A person using the Greek language thinks in the sense of “ages,” with eternity being thought of in the sense of “endless ages,” *i.e.*,“*aeons*,” *or* “the *aeons* of the *aeons*.”

*Aionios life* in **Titus 1:2; 3:7** — *a hope* associated with *an inheritance* set before the believer — must be understood contextually to mean “age-lasting,” referring to the coming age, the Messianic Era. “Eternal life” cannot be in view at all. Neither “hope” nor “inheritance” is used pertaining to eternal life that Christians presently possess; but both words are used numerous times concerning Christians and their relationship to the coming kingdom (with its glory), which is what is in view in the book of **Titus**. *The hope* (*the blessed hope*)set before every Christian is simply that he/she may, at the judgment seat of Christ, be found qualified to occupy one of the numerous, proffered positions with Christ in His kingdom. A Christian — already in possession of eternal life — may or may not realize this hope, for such depends entirely upon one’s faithfulness during his present pilgrim walk.

2.“*Hope*” *in Hebrews*

In **Hebrews 6:11**-**12** a Christian’s *hope* is associated with *faith*, *patience* [patient endurance; a lengthy waiting during the pilgrim walk for postponed promises], and *the inheritance* set before Christians. This hope is to be held with “*diligence*” until “*the end*,” with “*full assurance*” that the hope of one’s calling will be realized. The “*end* [Greek: *telos*]” in this passage is the same “*end*” set forth in **1 Peter 1:9**: “*Receiving the end* [Greek: *telos*] *of your faith*, *even the salvation of your souls*.” *The end* in both instances has to do with *faith* brought to perfection, brought to maturity, brought to its goal, *through* “*works*”(*cf.***James 2:22**).

In **Hebrews 6:18-20** “*the hope*” set before Christians is stated to be “*an anchor of the soul*, *both sure and steadfast*, *and which enters the Presence behind the veil*.” Christ Himself presently resides beyond the veil in the Holy of Holies; but His future ministry, “*after the order of Melchizedek*,” rather than His present ministry (after the order of Aaron), is in view in **Hebrews** chapter **six** (**Hebrews 6:20**; *cf.* **Hebrews 5:6-11**).

An anchor, firmly secured, will moor a ship that it might withstand the movements of currents, winds, etc., and remain in a certain place; and the anchor of our souls, firmly secured in the very presence of Christ beyond the veil, provides protection from the onslaught of the enemy in order that we might be “*steadfast*, *unmovable*, *always abounding in the work of the Lord*” (**1 Corinthians 15:58**). The salvation of our souls is in view; and just as a ship in mooring is continually being drawn toward the place where its anchor lies, we are continually being drawn toward the place where our anchor lies — unto Christ and His Melchizedek priesthood.

The book of **Hebrews** is built around five major warnings; and, prior to the writer’s comments concerning “hope” in **Hebrews 6**, he had previously introduced the Christians’ “hope” in the second warning (**Hebrews 3**, **4**) by showing the relationship between *hope* and *faithfulness*.The central portion of the second warning, introducing “hope,” is in **Hebrews** 3:

*But Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.* (**Hebrews 3:6**)

This hope within the text has to do with *the house of Christ*; and within the context (**Hebrews** **3**, **4**), in order to teach Christians the deep things of God in this realm, the Spirit of God draws a parallel between *the house of Christ* (present) and *the house of Moses* (past). This parallel constitutes a type-antitype treatment of Israelites under the leadership of Moses with Christians under the leadership of Christ. The experiences of the Israelites under Moses have their counterpart in the experiences of Christians under Christ. And all these things have been “*written for our admonition*, *upon whom the ends of the ages have come*” (**1 Corinthians 10:6**, **11**).

Christians are presently members of the house of Christ in the same sense that those who appropriated the blood of the paschal lambs in Egypt during the days of Moses were members of Moses’ house. *An earthly inheritance* lay before the Israelites under Moses, and *a heavenly inheritance* lies before Christians under Christ. Through unfaithfulness to their calling, the majority of Israelites within the accountable generation under Moses were overthrown (cut off from the house of Moses); and through unfaithfulness to their calling, the majority of Christians under Christ will also be overthrown (cut off from the house of Christ).

Neither the type nor the antitype has to do with eternal verities. *The faithless Israelites were overthrown on the right side of the blood in the type*, *and thus will it be for faithless Christians in the antitype*.

*Many are called* [as the entire accountable generation under Moses], *but few are chosen* [*lit.* “called out,” as Caleb and Joshua]. (**Matthew 22:14**)

The key words in **Hebrews 3:6** pertaining to *hope* are “*confidence*” and “*rejoicing*.” The Greek word translated “*confidence*” (*parresia*)has to do with being “bold,” or “courageous”; and the Greek word translated “*rejoicing*” (*kauchema*)has to do with “the object of boasting,” “a thing of pride.” Christians are to be *bold*, *courageous* as they journey toward their heavenly inheritance; and they are *to exult in the hope set before them*. They are to display this hope as the very object of the salvation that they possess in such a manner that the One who secured this hope for them will receive the praise, honor, and glory.

A Future Inheritance

The future inheritance of the saints (**1 Peter 1:4**), mentioned numerous times in Scripture, must be understood from the standpoint of the inheritance surrounding the birthright, having to do with firstborn sons. The word translated “*birthright*” in the New Testament is from the Greek word *prototokia*,a plural noun that should be properly rendered, “the rights of the firstborn.” And the rights of firstborn sons consists of *a plurality of rights*, *which are inherited rights*.

The rights of firstborn sons in the Jewish economy in the Old Testament consisted of three things: (1) *ruler* of the household under and for the father, (2) *priest* of the family, and (3) the reception of *a double portion* of the father’s estate.

Every Jewish firstborn son was in line to receive this threefold inheritance; but, according to that which God has revealed in His Word, this inheritance was *forfeitable*.The positional standing as a firstborn son did not itself guarantee that the inheritance would be received. A firstborn son, through rebellious actions, *could forfeit the rights of primogeniture*.

Two classic examples of *the forfeiture of the rights belonging to firstborn sons* are given in the book of **Genesis**, the book wherein the roots of all biblical doctrine lie. One is the account of *Esau*, and the other is the account of *Reuben*.

1. *Esau and the Birthright*

Esau, the firstborn of Isaac, forfeited his birthright to his younger brother, Jacob. Esau forfeited his birthright to satisfy a fleshly gratification. He sold his birthright to his younger brother, Jacob, for a single meal (**Genesis 25:27-34**).

Since the rights of the firstborn had ultimately been promised to Jacob (**Genesis 25:23**), some doubt that Esau ever actually possessed these rights. However, Esau was no pretender to the rights of the firstborn. The Greek word translated “sold” in **Hebrews 12:16** (referring to Esau and the birthright) is inflected in a tense implying that the article sold belonged to Esau alone, and he was fully aware of his actions when he sold his birthright to Jacob.

In **Genesis 25:34** we read that Esau “*despised his birthright*.” The Greek word in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament translated “despised” implies that Esau regarded the birthright as a paltry, a mere trifle. Esau regarded the birthright as practically worthless, and sold his rights as firstborn with the thought in mind that what he was selling was of no real value.

It was only later, at a time when it was too late, that Esau realized the value of that which he had sold. Though the forfeiture of the birthright did not affect Esau’s sonship, it did affect forever *blessings surrounding his relationship to Isaac as firstborn*.

After Jacob had been blessed as the firstborn in the family, Esau, apparently for the first time, realized the value of that which he had forfeited. Esau then tried to retrieve the birthright, but the Scripture records that “*he found no place of repentance*.” After Esau realized the value of the birthright and the finality of that which had occurred, he pleaded with his father, Isaac, *to change his mind* and bless him also. Esau cried out to Isaac:

*Have you but one blessing*, *my father*: *bless me*, *even me also*, *O my father*.

And it is recorded,

*Esau lifted up his voice*, *and wept*. (**Genesis 27:38**)

(The way in which **Genesis 27:38** is worded in the Hebrew text shows that Esau was literally beside himself with grief at this time, apparently from not only coming into a full realization of the value of that which he had forfeited but from realizing the finality of his previous actions as well.)

The word “repentance” means *to change one*’*s mind*.Esau sought to effect a change of mind on the part of his father, but “*he found no place of repentance*,” *i.e.*,Esau was unable to get his father to change his mind.

In this respect, in the light of that which Esau was seeking to accomplish, the American Standard Version of the Bible (ASV, 1901 ed.) has possibly the most accurate rendering of **Hebrews 12:17** ASV to be found in any of the translations presently available. This verse in the American Standard Version reads,

*For you know that even when he afterward desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected; for he found no place for a change of mind in his father, though he sought it diligently with tears*. (**Hebrews 12:17 ASV**)

Isaac could not change his mind. The birthright had been forfeited, the blessing had been bestowed upon Jacob, and the rights belonging to the firstborn were now beyond Esau’s grasp forever.

2. *Reuben and the Birthright*

Reuben, as Esau, was in direct line to inherit the rights of primogeniture; but because of one grave sin committed during his life, Reuben forfeited these rights. Reuben’s sin, resulting in the forfeiture of his birthright, was sexual impropriety of a nature that dishonored and shamed his father: “*Reuben went and laid with Bilhah his father*’*s concubine*” (**Genesis 35:22**).

Because of this one sin, years later when Jacob called his twelve sons into his presence (shortly before his death) to relate that which would befall not only them but their descendants “in the latter days,” Reuben heard the words:

*Reuben, you are my firstborn*, *my might and the beginning of my strength*, *the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power.*

*Unstable as water*, *you shall not excel*, *because you went up to your father*’*s bed*; *then you defiled it — he went up to my couch*.(**Genesis 49:3**-**4**)

Not only did Reuben not excel, as Jacob prophesied, but the tribe of Reuben did not excel. Reuben’s forfeiture of the rights of the firstborn affected not only himself but his descendants as well. No judge, prophet, or king ever came out of the tribe of Reuben.

That which Reuben lost, he lost forever. But he himself remained a son of Jacob and was blessed in measure, *but not as the firstborn*.

Reuben’s birthright was divided among three of his brothers. *The tribal rulership* was bestowed upon “Judah”; *the priestly office* was bestowed upon “Levi”; and *the double portion* of the father’s estate was given to “Joseph.” The tribe of “Judah” became *the kingly* line; the tribe of “Levi” became *the priestly* line; and the tribe of “Joseph” received *the double portion* through Joseph’s two sons, “Ephraim” and “Manasseh,” who each received a full inheritance (**1 Chronicles 5:1**-**2**).

During the Messianic Era the status created by Reuben’s sin will still abide. *The King* will be of the house of Judah (**Revelation 5:5**); *the priests* will be of the house of Levi (**Ezekiel 44:15**-**16**; **48:11**); and *the double portion* will be held by the house of Joseph, through Ephraim and Manasseh (**Ezekiel 47:13**; **48:4**-**5**).

3. *Christians and the Birthright*

Every Christian is presently a firstborn child of God awaiting the adoption, to be followed by the reception of the inheritance belonging to firstborn sons. As in the Old Testament, this inheritance consists of three things: (1) a position as *ruler*,(2) a position as *priest*,and (3) the reception of *a double portion* of the Father’s estate.

The position of *ruler* has to do with occupying a position of “*power over the nations*” with Christ during the coming age (**Revelation 2:26**-**27**). God’s original purpose for the creation of man in the beginning involved *rulership over the earth* (**Genesis 1:26-28**), and following the complete redemption of man (spirit, soul, and body) and the removal of the earth from its present position (under a curse), this purpose will be realized.

*Let Us make man in Our image*, *after Our likeness*: *and let them have dominion* [let them rule]. (**Genesis 1:26**)

*The gifts and calling of God are without repentance* [without a change of mind]. (**Romans 11:29**)

God will not change His mind concerning the reason He brought the earth out of its ruined state and called man into existence in **Genesis** 1. Redeemed individuals from the lineage of the first Adam will, in the coming age, with the last Adam, rule over a restored, inhabited earth.

The position of *priest* has to do with a combined kingly-priestly function that will be exercised by Christians at the same time they are given “*power over the nations*.” Christians are presently “priests,” but are not presently “*kings and priests*.” This position is reserved for the coming age (*cf.***1 Peter 2:9**; **Revelation 5:10**). Our present ministry as priests, as Christ’s present ministry as High Priest, is connected with the tabernacle in heaven (*cf.***Hebrews 9:11**-**12**; **10:19**-**20**; **1 John 1:5-2:2**). But this status of existing conditions will continue only until the end of the present dispensation. During the coming dispensation (the Messianic Era) Christ’s ministry on behalf of Christians will no longer be connected with the tabernacle. He will, prior to that time, come out of the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, judge Christians, and subsequently appear to Israel on earth as the great King-Priest after the order of Melchizedek.

And the Christians’ ministry at that time will also be no longer connected with the tabernacle. Christians in that day will appear with Christ in glory. They will appear in the position of “*kings and priests*” with the great “King-Priest” and will rule with Him during the day of His power.

*The reception of a double portion of the estate* can only have to do with the dual sphere of the kingdom that is to be inherited — *both heavenly and earthly*.Christians are to rule from the heavens over the earth as joint-heirs with Christ. Occupying such positions really means possessing an inheritance that is associated with both the heavens and the earth. God has promised His Son,

*Ask of Me*, *and I will give You the nations* [the Gentiles] *for Your inheritance*, *and the ends of the earth for Your possession*.(**Psalm 2:8**)

This earthly inheritance and possession is open only to God’s Son and those who rule from the heavens as “*joint-heirs*” with Him. Thus, *a rule from the heavens over the earth* will incorporate this double portion.

Every Christian is in line to receive the inheritance belonging to the firstborn; but, according to that revealed in Scripture, this inheritance is *forfeitable*. The positional standing of Christians “*in Christ*” places all Christians in a position wherein God can deal with them in relation to the inheritance awaiting firstborn sons, but this positional standing does not itself guarantee that this inheritance will be received. A firstborn child of God, through rebellious actions, can, as firstborn sons in the Old Testament, forfeit the rights of primogeniture.

The fifth and last of the five major warnings to Christians in **Hebrews** **12:14-17** concerns the account of Esau and the forfeiture of his rights as firstborn. This warning has been placed in the book of **Hebrews** in a type-antitype arrangement, as the wilderness journey of the Israelites in **Hebrews** 3, 4, to sternly remind and warn Christians that the things that befell Old Testament saints can also befall New Testament saints.

*Esau,* Isaac’s firstborn son, was in line to receive the rights belonging to the firstborn, but he, through disobedience, was rejected. Esau was denied the rights of primogeniture — his rightful inheritance within the family.

*The Israelites in the wilderness* — forming God’s firstborn son (**Exodus 4:22**-**23**) — were in line to go in, conquer, and take possession of the land. They were in line to realize their earthly inheritance. But the entire accountable generation, twenty years old and above, save Caleb and Joshua, was overthrown in the wilderness, short of the goal of their calling.

And *Christians* on their pilgrim journey, with a heavenly inheritance in connection with the rights of the firstborn in view, can, through disobedience, also be overthrown and be denied their inheritance “*reserved in heaven*.” This is seen in both the type dealing with Esau and the type dealing with the Israelites under Moses, together forming the foundational material for all five of the major warnings in **Hebrews**.

“To deny the parallel is to overthrow inspiration: to ignore the parallel is to silence Scripture: to admit the parallel is to disclose a momentous peril to the believer in Christ*.”—* D. M. Panton

A Future Salvation

The underlying theme throughout the epistles of **Peter** involves our present *hope,* which is centered in the salvation to be revealed, wherein Christians will realize the inheritance “*reserved in heaven*” for firstborn sons. During our present pilgrim walk, anticipating “*that blessed hope*” set before us, we are being “*kept* [guarded] *by the power of God through faith*” for the purpose of realizing the salvation of our souls and occupying positions as joint-heirs with God’s Son during the coming age. The entire program of God for Christians today moves toward this end.

As *the living hope* possessed by Christians and *the inheritance* “*reserved in heaven*” for Christians have their respective counterparts within teachings drawn from the five major warnings in **Hebrews**, so does *the salvation* “*to be revealed in the last time*.” **Hebrews 1:14** speaks of a future salvation that is so intimately associated with the inheritance of the saints that “salvation” itself is said to be inherited; and **Hebrews 2:3** calls this future salvation, “*so great salvation*.”

It is the greatest thing God could ever design for redeemed man, for it consists of the recipients exercising power and authority from the heavens over the earth with God’s Son when He rules as “*King of kings*, *and Lord of lords*.” Through coming into possession of this *future* salvation, Christians will realize the very purpose for their *present* salvation — *the goal of their calling*, *the end of their faith*, *the salvation of their souls*.

However, the first warning in **Hebrews**, as the other warnings in this book, gives two sides to the overall picture; and the lessons at the very beginning, as in subsequent warnings, are drawn from Old Testament history. The object lesson beginning these warnings surrounds the experiences of the Israelites in the wilderness:

*For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast*, *and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward* [retribution or penalty];

*How shall we escape*, *if we neglect so a great salvation* . . . ? (**Hebrews 2:2**-**3a**)

The “*just recompense of reward*” is receiving *exactly what an individual deserves*. *All of the Israelites* who left Egypt under Moses were saved (**1 Corinthians 10:1-4**). *All* of these Israelites had availed themselves of the substitutionary atonement in Egypt through the death of the paschal lambs. The death of the firstborn was past and could never be their lot, for the paschal lambs had previously died in their stead.

The danger that the Israelites faced was not that of being returned to Egypt and being removed from the safety of the blood. Such an act was an utter impossibility, for *the firstborn had died* (via a substitute), and *God was satisfied*.

Rather, the danger that the Israelites faced lay in the fact that *they could be overthrown in the wilderness and not realize the purpose for their deliverance from Egypt*. Through *obedience* they would realize this purpose, but through *disobedience* they would fail to realize this purpose. In either instance, they would receive a “*just recompense of reward*” — receiving exactly what they deserved, *based upon faithfulness or unfaithfulness to their calling*, whether positive or negative.

The same is true for Christians today. *All Christians* have availed themselves of the substitutionary death of the Passover Lamb. The death of the firstborn is past and can never be their lot, for the Passover Lamb has already died in their stead.

The danger that Christians face is not that of being removed from the safety of the blood. Such an act is an utter impossibility, for *the firstborn has died* (via a Substitute); and *God*, *as in the type*, *is satisfied*.

Rather, the danger that Christians face is the same as that which the Israelites under Moses faced: *Christians can be overthrown in their present position and fail to realize the purpose for their salvation*.

Through *obedience,* which involves a “living” faith — connected with faithfulness in carrying out *the works* that the Lord has outlined for one’s life — an individual will realize this purpose. But through *disobedience*, which involves a “dead” faith — connected with unfaithfulness in carrying out *the works* that the Lord has outlined for one’s life — an individual will fail to realize this purpose.

In either instance, Christians will receive “*a just recompense of reward*.” They will receive wages *exactly commensurate* with services rendered as household servants in the Lord’s house, receiving exactly what one deserves in this respect, *based upon faithfulness or unfaithfulness to their calling*,whether positive or negative.

The “*so great a salvation*” in **Hebrews 2:3**, synonymous with the salvation to be inherited in **Hebrews 1:14**, is, within the context, associated with *the inhabited earth* to come:

*For He has not put the world to come*, *of which we speak*, *in subjection to angels*. (**Hebrews 2:5**)

Angels occupy positions of power over the nations during the present age. But, during the coming age, angels will not occupy these positions. Satan and his angels will be removed from their positions of power at the end of the present age; and Christ, with His “*companions*” (*cf.***Hebrews 1:9**; **3:14**), will exercise power over the nations during the coming age.

The writer of **Hebrews** clearly states that this coming inhabited earth under the rule of man is what the preceding verses are dealing with. *The inherited salvation* (**Hebrews 1:14**), *the so great salvation* (**Hebrews 2:3**), has to do with the coming age when *a new order of rulers — a new order of sons* (**Hebrews 2:9**-**10**;*cf.* **Romans 8:18**-**19**) — will be crowned and will exercise regal power and authority over the earth.

The books of **Hebrews**, **James**, and **1, 2 Peter** all deal with the salvation to be revealed, the salvation of the soul; and these epistles, as all of the other epistles (which also deal with this same subject), must be interpreted within this same framework. The *warnings* in **Hebrews** and *works* in **James** have to do with the same thing as the text in **1 Peter 1:3-5** — a “*just recompense of reward*” to be realized in the coming age.[[10]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn10)

The Correct Rendering of the Greek Word Normally Translated “Eternal” in Scripture

Although this point was covered previously, it bears repeating. The Greek word *aionios* translated “eternal” (or its equivalent, “everlasting”) in most English versions, does not itself mean “forever without end.”

The Greek language actually contains no word for “eternal” seen in this fashion. *Aionios* can be, and many times is, used in this sense; but this meaning is derived from its textual usage, not from the word itself. *Aionios* refers to “a period of time,” usually thought of as “an age.”

The only way the Greek language can express “eternal,” apart from textual considerations, is by using the noun form of *aionios* (*aion*)in the plural (“ages” [*e.g.*, **Luke 1:33**; **Hebrews 13:8**]), or by using *aion* twice in the plural (“unto the ‘ages [*aionas*]’ of the ‘ages [*aionon*]’”[*e.g.*,**Revelation 1:6**, **18**; **4:9**-**10**; **5:13**-**14**; **7:12**; **10:6**; **11:15**; **14:11**; **15:7**; **19:3**; **20:10**; **22:5**]).

A person using the Greek language thinks in the sense of “ages,” with eternity being thought of in the sense of “endless ages,” *i.e.*,“*aeons*,” *or* “the *aeons* of the *aeons*.”

The Contextual Setting of Salvation Passages in the New Testament

When interpreting which facet of salvation is under consideration within the New Testament, the context is fundamental in making the determination. Of course, this should go without saying regarding any passage under study. Nevertheless, it is one rule of interpreting Scripture that routinely goes unheeded, usually because it is so easy to approach Scripture with preconceived and preprogrammed theological positions and because pride will allow no other approach.

A prime example of how ignorance of context leads to misinterpretation of Scripture would be how most commentators view the book of **Hebrews**. The book draws richly from the Old Testament in order to present truth. Note Chitwood’s comments, as follows:

Melchizedek is introduced in Scripture as a king-priest in Jerusalem, and he forms a type of Christ as King-Priest in Jerusalem during the coming day of His power, during the coming Messianic Era. This is clearly seen to be the case through both the two Old Testament references to Melchizedek (**Genesis 14:18**-**19**; **Psalm 110:4**) and the place that Melchizedek occupies in **Hebrews 5-7**.

Both Old Testament references are *Messianic* in their scope of fulfillment, as are the references in the book of **Hebrews**. In this respect, Christ is not presently exercising a priestly ministry after the order of Melchizedek, for Melchizedek was also a king in Jerusalem as well. Rather, Christ is presently exercising a priestly ministry after the order of Aaron, who ministered in the sanctuary on the basis of shed blood, on behalf of a redeemed people. Christ is presently ministering in the sanctuary (the heavenly), on the basis of shed blood (His Own), for a redeemed people (for Christians).

Christ *is* presently a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, as He *is* presently King (He was born King [**Matthew 2:3**]). Christ though has yet to exercise either office; and Scripture presents His exercise of both offices as occurring at the same time, during the coming age.

In keeping with the manner in which Scripture has been structured, Melchizedek appears in **Genesis 14** in a particular *setting* and at a particular *time*;and, within this *setting* and *time,* God established foundational truths from which He could later draw spiritual lessons in order to teach His people deep spiritual truths surrounding the various things having to do with His Son's coming reign over the earth.

These foundational truths were established during Abraham’s day through the record of that which occurred in **Genesis 14**. Then the writer of **Psalm 110** drew from this account, as did the writer of **Hebrews 5-7.**

Thus, in all three sections of Scripture, the three different writers dealt with issues surrounding Christ in relation to the Messianic Era, not in relation to the present age. And sections of Scripture such as **Hebrews 6:4-6**, contextually, must be looked upon and interpreted in this same light.

There is a logical progression in thought as one moves through the five major warnings in the book of **Hebrews**. And all the warnings are directed to Christians alone, centering on the same subject matter — Christians either realizing or failing to realize the salvation of their souls/lives, synonymous with Christians either realizing or failing to realize the rights of the firstborn; and this salvation has to do strictly with the position that Christians will occupy in the coming Messianic Era (**Hebrews 6:12**, **18-20**; **10:36-39**; *cf.* **James 1:21**; **1 Peter 1:9**).

In the first warning, the salvation set before Christians is called, *so great salvation*, and is specifically stated later in the epistle to be “*the saving of the soul*.” This is the greatest thing God could ever design for redeemed man, for it centers on man being removed from the earth, placed in the heavens, and occupying the throne as co-heir with the “*Heir of all things*” (**Hebrews 1:2-2:5**; **10:39**;*cf.* **Hebrews 3:1**).

Then the second warning outlines the route that one must travel during his pilgrim journey if he would one day come into a realization of *so great salvation*. The route is *from Egypt to Canaan*.

Spiritual lessons are drawn from the historic account of the Israelites under Moses, forming the type. And these spiritual lessons are seen in the antitype surrounding the experiences of Christians under Christ. The Israelites under Moses had been called out of Egypt and were being led toward an earthly land, wherein their calling was ultimately to have been realized. And Christians under Christ have been called out of the world and are being led toward a heavenly land, wherein their calling is ultimately to be realized.

With these things in mind, the third warning then continues with one major overriding thought: *Let Us Go On*! (**Hebrews 6:1**). The thought has to do with moving from immaturity to maturity; and this maturity, contextually, centers on Christians coming to a knowledge and understanding of the things surrounding the land set before them, for a revealed purpose.

In other words, *so great salvation* has been set before Christians (warning one), and *the route* that Christians must travel to realize this salvation has been well marked (warning two); then, with these things as an established background, the writer exhorts Christians *to go on* to a mature knowledge and understanding of those truths that God has revealed concerning the land set before them (warning three).

Entering into that land and realizing the rights of the firstborn therein is the goal of the Christians’ calling. And pressing toward any goal apart from knowing and understanding certain things about the goal, or things that may lie in the pathway preventing one from reaching the goal, would be *unheard of*.

This is easy to see from the manner in which Christians are commanded to array themselves for the spiritual warfare in **Ephesians 6:11**ff, for they cannot properly array themselves apart from a *knowledge and understanding* of that which lies out ahead.

The “*helmet of salvation*,” for example, is identified as the “*hope of salvation*” (*cf.* **Ephesians 6:17**; **1 Thessalonians 5:8**); and the “*hope of salvation*” has to do, not with the salvation that Christians presently possess, but with the salvation of the soul (**Hebrews 6:12**, **18**-**19**; **10:36-39**), which is the central message of the book of **Hebrews**.

The “*helmet of salvation*” cannot be possessed apart from a “hope” based on *knowledge and understanding*. But it is only one part of the armor, and the possession of other parts of the armor requires a similar *knowledge and understanding* surrounding the goal of the Christians’ calling. And, apart from being properly arrayed for battle after the fashion revealed in **Ephesians 6:11**ff, Christians will suffer defeat time after time and ultimately fail to realize the goal of their calling.

Drawing from the previous two warnings in order to understand the third is the progressive manner in which the things in this book, [Bible One - Arlen Chitwood's Let Us Go On](http://bibleone.net/LUGO.htm) , have been structured; and this is also the progressive manner in which any correct exposition of **Hebrews 5, 6** must be viewed.

Scripture must be understood in the light of Scripture. There is first *the near context*, and there is then *the far context*. The near context, in this case, takes one back to the previous two warnings; and the far context takes one to the various other related points in Scripture throughout both the Old and New Testaments. One must compare “*spiritual things with spiritual*” if he would come into a correct knowledge and understanding of the things that God has revealed to man in His Word (**1 Corinthians 2:9-13**).[[11]](#eleven)

A Final Word on Salvation

The following would be an overview of salvation by Chitwood:

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

In **Genesis 1** 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 unchangeable pattern set forth at the very beginning, God reveals how any subsequent ruined creation would, of necessity, have to be restored. It would have to be restored after a certain order, entirely through divine intervention, over a six-day (six-thousand-year) period.

Thus, to establish correct thinking relative to the fundamentals of salvation, one *must* begin in **Genesis**. If all those holding erroneous views *had begun* in **Genesis** 1 and *understood and adhered* to that which God set forth at the very beginning concerning how a ruined creation is to be restored, *not a single erroneous view concerning salvation would exist today*. *Such couldn*’*t exist*.

And, going to more specific thoughts concerning salvation, the preceding would *equally apply* to not only *the salvation of the spirit* but *the salvation of the soul* as well. Within the structure of this foundational framework, the salvation of the spirit (the salvation that we presently possess) is realized at the very beginning of the six days; but the salvation of the soul (a salvation occurring at the end of one’s faith, or as the goal of one’s faith [**1 Peter 1:5**, **9**]) is an on-going process and is to be realized only at the end of the six days, on the seventh day.

In this respect, *the unchangeable basics* pertaining to redemption in relation to *the whole* of that which, in reality, is the man himself (both spirit and soul) have been set forth at the very beginning of Scripture, in **Genesis 1:1-2:3**. And if a person would understand salvation within its correct perspective, avoiding all error, he *must* begin here. Here — and only here — can a person see *the unchangeable foundation*,setting forth *the unchangeable basics*,laid down *at the very beginning*.

Salvation of the Spirit

**Hebrews 4:12** reveals a division being brought to pass between man’s soul and his spirit. And this is a teaching drawn from the very opening verses of **Genesis** (as seen earlier in this same section in **Hebrews** relative to the “*rest*” set before “*the people of God*” [vv. **4**, **9**]). The Spirit of God moves in **Genesis 1:2b**, and God speaks in **Genesis 1:3**. In relation to man’s salvation, it is at this point (in what would be referred to as *the foundational type*) that a division is made between man’s soul and his spirit (in what would be referred to as *the antitype*).

In the type, the Spirit of God moved, God spoke, and light came into existence. **Genesis 1:2**-**3 [2b]** 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 — the Spirit moved, God spoke, and then note that nothing can come into existence apart from the Son (**John 1:3**).

In the antitype, within the framework of man’s salvation experience, the matter is *identical*.There must be an act of the Triune Godhead, for this is how God worked to restore a ruined creation in the **Genesis** account, establishing *an unchangeable pattern* for a later work. Thus, as in the type, so in the antitype — the Spirit of God moves, God speaks, and light comes into existence.

*Everything* is based on the Son’s finished work at Calvary. The Spirit moving and God speaking are both based on that which occurred almost 2,000 years ago. When the Son cried out from the Cross, “*It is finished* [*lit.*,‘It has been finished’]” (**John 19:30**; *cf.***Luke 23:46**), He meant exactly that; and when the Word of God reveals that we have a salvation of divine origin, based entirely on the Son’s finished work, the Word of God means exactly that.

When man sinned in the garden, he died *spiritually*;and when unregenerate man, “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (**Ephesians 2:1**), is made alive today, he is made alive *spiritually.* The movement of the Spirit (**Genesis 1:2b**) and God speaking (**Genesis 1:3**) in order to restore the ruined creation are simultaneous events. It is the Spirit using the God-breathed Word to effectually perform a supernatural work in unredeemed man. It is at this point — through the inbreathing of God — that life is imparted to that which previously had no life. God breathes into dead man (the Spirit using the God-breathed Word, based on the finished work of the Son), and man is “*quickened* [‘made alive’]” (**Ephesians 2:1**, **5**).

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

It is at this point in man’s salvation that the spirit is *separated* from the soul. The “spirit” in unsaved man is *dead*.It is a part of the totally depraved man, with his “*body of . . . death*,” in which there dwells “*no good thing*” (**Romans 7:18**, **24**). With the movement of the Spirit, using the God-breathed Word, man’s spirit is made *alive* and, at the same time, *separated* from his soul.

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*” (**1 Corinthians 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 that cannot be crossed over (*cf.* **Luke 16:26**).

(Note that the preceding forms a foundational part of the reason why Christ becoming one’s Lord [*cf.* **Luke 6:46**] cannot be an integral part of salvation by grace.)

Salvation of the Soul

The preceding process is the manner which God uses to deliver the spirit from its fallen state, resulting from Adam’s sin. And because the spirit has been delivered, there can once again be communion with God. Man can now comprehend spiritual things, and there can now be a progressive, continued work by the Spirit of God within man so that he can ultimately be delivered to the place which God has decreed that he occupy at the end of six days, at the end of six thousand years.

Within the framework of the type in **Genesis** 1, this is the very first thing which is foreshadowed. This had to be set forth first, for man has *to first be made alive* — he has to first pass “*from death unto life*” — before anything else in *the restorative process* can occur.

Thus, this is foreshadowed at the very beginning of the six days that God, in accordance with the established pattern, would use to bring about man’s complete restoration — spirit, soul, and body (*cf.* **1 Thessalonians 5:23**).

To briefly illustrate how God’s complete restoration of man is patterned after God’s complete restoration of the material creation in **Genesis** 1, note three things:

1) Where the complete restorative process began (on day one, as previously mentioned).

2) That which occurred on each succeeding day (days two through six).

3) Where the whole of the restorative process was leading (the seventh day, the Sabbath, a day of rest following six days of work).

Within a type-antitype framework — pertaining to man’s salvation in the antitype — that which occurred in the type on day one pertains to *the salvation of man’s spirit*,and that which occurred in the type on days two through six pertains to *the salvation of man*’*s soul*,with the whole of that revealed leading to *the seventh day*.

The salvation of the spirit is *an instantaneous event* where one passes “*from death unto life*,” but not so with the salvation of the soul. It is *a progressive event*.It is an event that begins at the point one is made alive spiritually, and it will not be completed and realized until the end of that foreshadowed by the six days of restorative work — 6,000 years of restorative work.

(The issues of the judgment seat of Christ at the end of the present dispensation — which will occur at the end of the six days, at the end of the 6,000 years — will have to do with issues surrounding the salvation [or loss] of the soul/life. It will be at the judgment seat — not before — that man will realize [or fail to realize] the salvation of his soul/life.)

Since the *salvation of the spirit* cannot occur apart from an exact duplication in the antitype of that which occurred in the type during day one of the restoration in **Genesis**, it should be evident that *the salvation of the soul* and its relationship to that which occurred on days two through six *must be looked upon the same way*. *The latter must follow the pattern to the same degree as the former*.There can be no difference in this respect.

And since this is the case, note what occurred on days two through six in the restoration of the ruined material creation in **Genesis**. Then, to see the overall picture of that which must be done to bring about the salvation of redeemed man’s soul, these same events can be viewed in relation to God’s present continuing restoration of man, a subsequent ruined creation.

Events on days two and three (as events on the first day) have to do with *divisions*.On the second day God established a division between the waters (**Genesis 1:6-8**), and on the third day He established a division between the dry land (with its vegetation) and the waters (**Genesis 1:9-13**).

Then events on days four through six belong together as another unit, depicting *things beyond the divisions previously established*. On the fourth day God placed lights in the heavens to give light upon the earth (**Genesis 1:14-19**), on the fifth day He created birds that could soar above the earth and marine life that could move throughout the depths of the sea (**Genesis 1:20-23**), and on the sixth day He created the land animals, which included great creatures capable of roaming the earth (**Genesis 1:24-25**).

And, as previously noted, the *whole* of God’s restorative work relative to the material creation in **Genesis** foreshadows the *whole* of God’s restorative work relative to man today. After man has “*passed from death unto life*,” wherein the spirit is separated from the soul — wrought entirely through divine intervention — redeemed man finds himself in a position and condition where a continued divine work not only *can occur* but *must occur* if he is to realize the salvation of his soul. And only through this continued divine work can *the whole* of God’s restorative work, as it pertains to man, be realized.

(Man, as the material creation, *must be completely passive* in relation to the salvation of the spirit [he is *dead,* rendering him incapable of acting]; and man, as the material creation [“*And the earth brought forth* . . . .”] *must be active* in relation to the salvation of the soul [he now has *spiritual life*,allowing him *to act in the spiritual realm*]. But, as in the restoration of the material creation, *the entire salvation process* [spirit and soul, and ultimately the body] is a divine work. “Salvation is of the Lord” [**Jonah 2:9**].)

Events occurring during the first three days in **Genesis 1** would point to elementary things or the basics in one’s spiritual life and growth. Events occurring during day one would point to a division between the soul and the spirit, having to do with the impartation of life. Then events occurring during days two and three would point to divisions and distinctions as one begins to progressively grow within the framework of the new life brought into existence on the first day. One would learn to distinguish between the soulical and spiritual, spiritual and carnal (fleshly), Jew, Gentile, and Christian, the dispensations, etc.

Only when one learns the divisions and distinctions depicted by that which was brought to pass on days two and three is he in a position to move on into the things depicted by that which was brought to pass on days four through six. On these three days, light was restored to the sun and moon (day four, **Genesis 1:14-19**); sea life and the birds of the air were created (day five, **Genesis 1:20-23**); and then God created all the living creatures that roam the earth, followed by His creation of man (day six, **Genesis 1:24-27**).

That depicted by the work of the Triune Godhead during these three days points to things beyond elementary truths in the antitype. After one has passed “*from death unto life*” and has been instructed in the elementary truths (days one through three — after he has grown to a degree in his Christian life — he can then begin to view with understanding deeper spiritual truths of the Word. He can then begin to view with understanding those things in the Word depicted by events on days four through six of **Genesis** 1.

An individual in this position can begin to sink deep shafts down into the Word and mine its treasures. He can look into the Word and understand that depicted by the lights in the heavens. He can, in the true sense of the Word, “*mount up with wings as eagles . . . run*, *and not be weary . . . walk*, *and not faint*” (**Isaiah 40:31**), as he scales the heights; or he can scale the depths of the Word, as the sea creatures plunge to the depths of the sea; or he can roam through the Word, as the land creatures roam the earth.

*Christian maturity* and *spiritual victory* — bringing to pass the salvation of the soul — go hand-in-hand. And the entire process of God’s restoration work throughout the six days is with a view to that which lies beyond, on the seventh day. It is with a view to *the Sabbath rest awaiting the people of God*.[[12]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftn12)

[[1]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref1) James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Languages* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 218.

[[2]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref2) Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 3.* (Kregel Publications, Inc., 1993), p. 274.

[[3]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref3) [The Study of Scripture by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/TSOS.pdf), pp. 1-3.

[[4]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref4) Ralph O. Muncaster, *Does the Bible Predict the Future?* (Harvest House Publishers, 1984), pp. 8, 9.

[[5]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref5) [The Study of Scripture by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/TSOS.pdf), pp. 123-126.

[[6]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref6) [The Study of Scripture by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/TSOS.pdf), pp. 136-138.

[[7]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref7) Dr. Church Missler, *Learn the Bible in 24 Hours* (Thomas Nelson Publishers), pg. 1.

[[8]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref8) [Salvation of the Soul by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/SOS.pdf), pp. 3, 4.

[[9]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref9) [Salvation of the Soul by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/SOS.pdf), pp. 1-8.

[[10]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref10) [Salvation of the Soul by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/SOS.pdf), pp. 81-94.

[[11]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref11) [Let Us Go On by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/LUGO.pdf), Back cover & Foreword.

[[12]](http://bibleone.net/BF03.htm" \l "_ftnref12) [Salvation by Grace through Faith by Arlen Chitwood](http://lampbroadcast.org/Books/SGF.pdf), pp. 46-52

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