

# The Old Paths

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## “The Great Salvation”

Jarrod Jacobs

In Hebrew 2, the Jewish Christians were shown the great salvation that belongs to those in Christ. They were told, “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak” (Heb. 2:1-5). Knowing that we can become frustrated and want to give up at times, let us remember what makes our salvation great.

### ***A Great God Planned It.***

The Holy Spirit said this great salvation, “at the first began to be spoken by the Lord” (Heb. 11:3). In fact, our salvation was planned before man sinned (Rev. 13:8; Gen. 3:15). God promised that it would be through Abraham that “all families” of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:1-3). We can also read of the prophecies of a coming Saviour (Isa. 7:14, 9:6; 53). When thinking about the great salvation God provides, we see forethought and extensive planning on His part.

### ***A Great Savior Executed This Plan.***

Revelation 13:8 shows us that God’s plan for the great salvation was for Jesus to die for man’s sins. This passage also reveals that Jesus agreed to God’s plan long before man was created! David declared that God planned for Jesus to be resurrected from the grave never to die again (Ps. 16:8-10; Acts 2:25-27). While on earth, Jesus had one motive, to seek and save the lost (Lk. 19:10). His life, death, and resurrection was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. His crucifixion in Matthew 27 was the fulfillment of Isaiah 53. Jesus prophesied of His own death and burial (Matt. 12:40). He then prophesied that He was to be resurrected the third day (Jn. 2:19). Matthew 28 records His resurrection in which even His enemies declared that Jesus had risen!

The Bible states that Jesus is the Son of God by the resurrection (Rom. 1:4). In fact, it is His resurrection that gives us the hope of everlasting life (I Cor. 15:13-20; I Pet. 1:3). God’s plan for this great salvation was executed flawlessly by the Sinless Saviour (Matt. 5:17; John 17:4, 19:30).

### ***Great Miracles Were Used To Confirm The Word.***

In Hebrews 2:3-4, we read, “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to

his own will?” The purpose of miracles was to prove that Jesus was the Son of God and that He was speaking the truth (Jn. 2:11, 23; 4:46-54; 11:43-48). The Apostles and 1st Century Christians used miracles for the same reason (Acts 13:7-12).

What good would it have done for God to offer salvation to people who wouldn’t believe? They did not have Bibles to read like we do, thus the need for miracles, signs, and wonders. Seeing that the word has been confirmed through the miracles, and recorded by the apostles and prophets (II Pet. 1:20-21), there are no miracle workers today (Jude 3; I Cor. 13:8-10).

### ***The Simplicity Of Obedience Makes Salvation Great.***

God’s plans are such that man can carry them out. What good would it do for God to devise a plan of salvation that was impossible for man to obey? God’s commands have always been such that man could accomplish them.

In Genesis 2:15-17, mankind was to dress and keep the Garden of Eden and stay away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Wasn’t that simple? In II Kings 5:10-14, we read about a man named Naaman who complained about God’s plan for cleansing him from leprosy (an incurable disease) because it was so simple! Today, God’s plan of salvation is that we believe that Jesus is the Son of God (Jn. 8:24), repent of our sins, and be baptized (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38). Isn’t this plan simple?

Man’s plans do not turn out like God’s (Isa. 55:8-9). God’s plan for salvation is so great because it simply requires us to turn from our sinful life and submit to Him.

### ***The Great Reward.***

Nothing could be greater than the reward that is given to the saints. This reward is an inheritance for His people

(Matt. 25:34; I Pet. 1:3-4). This reward provides great joy to those saved (Matt. 25:21, 23). One of the best parts about this great reward is that those saved will be in the presence of Jesus forever (Jn. 14:1-3). The Bible also teaches that our reward will not include some things (sorrow, death, crying, Rev. 21:4). This great reward makes salvation great! Will you neglect this great salvation? I hope not!!

## “DOST THOU STEAL?”

Jarrold Jacobs

**P**aul warned the Romans against hypocrisy in Romans 2:21-22. He wrote, “Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege?” When looking to yourself in self-examination (II Cor. 13:5), are you a hypocrite?

### *The Word “Hypocrite”*

The word “hypocrite” as used in the Old Testament means: “one defiled in mind and conscience, yet concealing it, and pretending to be outwardly what he is not inwardly; to have zeal and affection towards God, when his heart is far from him” (Wilson’s O.T. Word Studies, p. 224). W.E. Vine translates the Greek word for “hypocrite” in the following way: “primarily one who answers, then a stage-actor; hence the word became used metaphorically as a dissemler, a hypocrite” (Vine’s, p. 582). In other words, one who says one thing and does another is a hypocrite.

The hypocrite has always been presented in a negative light

throughout the Bible. On 15 separate occasions, Jesus rebuked the people, calling them “hypocrites.” In looking at these definitions, does this sound like you? Are you pretending to be a Christian? Are you an actor, or are you genuine?

### *Teach One Thing And Do Another*

Many today have the attitude that people should “do as I say, and not as I do.” My friend, this will not work. This very concept was what Paul was fighting against in Romans 2. How sad to see the transparent efforts of some who attempt to teach others while they themselves act like the Devil!

The Pharisees were known for teaching one thing, and doing another. In Matthew 23:1-12, Jesus told the multitude and the disciples to not act like the Pharisees, “For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men...” (Matt. 23:4-5). If you are like this, rest assured, people can see through you; your co-workers, your friends, and especially your children!

### *Pretend To Be Someone You Are Not*

There are many who are Christians in name only. They are hypocrites. While they pretend to be

Christians, they are actually children of the Devil. The Old Testament shows people who pretended to be someone else, literally. In Genesis 27:1-46, we read the story of Jacob’s deception of his father. That day Jacob received the blessing that belonged to Esau. How was this accomplished? He dressed and acted like his brother. Genesis 27:18-30 records for us the account of Jacob pretending to be Esau. This is literally what it means to be a hypocrite.

In the New Testament, we read the account of “Christians” pretending to be unselfish givers, when in truth, they were selfish. This is found in the book of Acts 5:1-11. Ananias and Sapphira pretended to give all the money gained from selling a possession (v. 1). In truth, they kept back part of the money (v. 2), and were found to be liars (v. 4-5). These accounts show us that hypocrisy is a vulgar thing that needs to be avoided at all costs.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” (II Cor. 13:5). It is up to all of us to keep away from hypocrisy, and make sure it is not in our lives. Are you a pretender? Do you teach others that “now is the day of salvation” (II Cor. 6:2), but act like there is no tomorrow? Do not be a hypocrite! Live for Christ!

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