

SALVATION, REDEMPTION AND SIMILAR WORDS

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INTRODUCTION

It is fair to say that a fair part of understanding Scripture is the knowing of what words mean. When two people each think of a certain word as having a different meaning, they can never communicate properly. It is normal to find Church people using words without knowing what the words really mean, and this situation may have existed with them for many years. If we take the words, "salvation" and "redemption" and ask what the difference in meaning and application is, they seldom can give any answer as to the difference. Words are bandied about without knowledge, and it is so sad to see people missing out on much that would help them, particularly in the matter of understanding. The admonishment, "*with all thy getting, get understanding*" is precluded for other reasons as well. The main other reason is that words with different meanings are treated as having the same meanings (synonyms), both by customary usage, and also by such things as Bible footnotes, translations, dictionaries and concordances. It will not take long to demonstrate that the principle words wrongly used are "saved" and "salvation", in that they are supposed to relate to a once-done spiritual thing. This can be seen in phrases such as, "Are you saved", or "I was saved ten years ago", and arguments about, "once saved, saved for ever".

To look at this matter, we will use relatively simple tools such as Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words. As a starting point, we will look at "Salvation", before looking at other words in their noun and/or verb forms.

"SAVE" – "SALVATION".

Most Christians are brought up to think of "Salvation" as being in other than a material and temporal sense. Indeed, this is written into dictionaries and such that say things like, "*The spiritual and eternal deliverance granted immediately by God to those who accept His conditions of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus, in whom alone it is to be obtained*"-(Vine). What the sinner is delivered from is said to be from "sin" and this is said in a very vague sense. Is it from sin's dominion, or is it from the physical consequence of having sinned, or is it of eternal consequences? Or is it all of these?

We are told, "*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin*", so is being "cleansed" the same as being "saved"? What is the time frame?

Where we read in Ephesians 2:8-9, "*For by grace are ye saved (verb) through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God*", there is reference to the "ages to come" in this passage, and words about a very present way of walking. That is, when walking that right way the salvation is perfect in tense and passive in voice.

So to get some understanding, let us consider how the words "save" and "salvation" are used, seeking to avoid tradition as found in commentaries etc, as a means of interpretation or understanding.

Vine says, "*Soteria –denotes deliverance, preservation, salvation. Salvation is used in the N/T of MATERIAL AND TEMPORAL deliverance from danger and apprehension*".

We can see whether or not this is right in Luke 1:69-71, "*And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us*". We can see the temporal nature of "salvation" here? It is about being saved from enemies, in the present time.

Lexicons are consistent about "save" and "salvation". For instance, Thayer's Lexicon says, "*Deliverance from the molestation of enemies, preservation (of physical life), safety*". Note the word "physical". So being "saved" carries the meaning of "being kept safe- physically". It carries on to show us that the "saving of the soul" as the ultimate climax in eternity.

Heb. 10:39 "*But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul*".

Thus salvation is still temporal in eternity, time being no more.

Let us see this present-time application in other verses.

Acts 7:25, "*For he supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not*".

Here "deliver" is the same word as "save" = *soteria*, and this is present tense and it is about Moses supposing God would save Israel from the Egyptians, at that time.

1 Timothy 2:15 *“Notwithstanding she shall be **saved** in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety”.*

Again, this is about childbirth – a physical thing. “Saved” here is conditional on practical belief.

Acts 20:27 *And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be **saved** was then taken away.*

Acts 27:31 *“Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be **saved**. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off”*

Here the word “saved” has nothing to do with the popular usage; it is about being saved from shipwreck.

1 Peter 3:20 *“In the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water”.*

Again, this is a temporal deliverance, even if it had long-term consequences.

Thus we see that being “saved” is not a once done thing. Paul could have been saved from shipwreck many times. Of Israel we read in 2 Kings 6:9, *“And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and **saved himself** there, **not once nor twice**”.* The O/T is replete with examples of these temporal and material multiple salvations.

ETERNAL SALVATION.

Now when we go on the subject of salvation from sin, this is still temporal and material in the sense that when forgiven we are delivered from the physical and temporal consequences of having sinned. But new sins demand new salvation...i.e. new confession and forsaking. There is thus no “once saved, saved for ever”, other than being permanently purged from those “old sins” already forgiven –(2 Pet. 1:9). The remedy for new sins is available (not in all circumstances, e.g. willfully practicing sin), but the Blood has to be applied-(1 John 1:9).

Put it this way; if I am saved from a car smash, that particular salvation is ongoing for all time, but this does not save me from all future car smashes while I live. After I die, I am saved from all car smashes.

The following verse shows “salvation” as a hope and an expectation to be yet obtained.

1 Thess 5:8-10 *“But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to **obtain salvation** by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him”.*

This verse shows salvation as being a consequence of consecration.

2 Thessalonians 2:13 *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*

Salvation is something conditional; it is followed by a number of “if”s.

2 Timothy 2:10 *Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.*

So the noun “salvation” is something that can be neglected. Jesus becomes, *“the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him”*-(Heb. 5:9)- this is in the present tense. That is, “eternal salvation” is the end point of an ongoing present walk.

SALVATION OF THE SOUL.

The verbs in the next passage are passive. But as we read on in context, we read, “As obedient children”.

1 Peter 1:5 *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Salvation “of the soul” is the end result of that obedience, and we see in the 9th verse, *“Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls, Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you”.*

In the Book of Hebrews, salvation is shown as being an inheritance that is revealed at the Second Advent in those who maintain those things which accompany salvation. Here salvation is described as an inheritance.

Hebrews 1:14 *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*

Hebrews 6:9 *But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.*

Hebrews 9:28 *So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.*

This is all summed up in the following two verses.

2 Peter 3:13 *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless*

Revelation 19:1 *And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God".*

It becomes clear that the popular church concept that a person is "saved" eternally when they "come forward", "choose Christ", or "give their heart to Jesus", or any other such phrase, is flawed. That they are saved from the consequence of past sins may be valid at that time, but they cannot "continue in sin that grace may abound" -(Rom. 6:1), that is, they can "fall" as a consequence of not being diligent, as Peter points out:

2 Peter 1:10 *Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

"REDEEM" and "REDEMPTION".

There are two base words translated as "redeem" or "redemption". The first about "redeeming the time" is not our subject.

The second verb *Lutroo* is given by Vine as, "To release on receipt of ransom, signifying to release by paying a ransom price". The death of Jesus is the price that is paid as a ransom. Vine indicates Luke 24:21 as the application- "*But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*". **Israel is the context of redemption.** Vine, and others, say something like, "Redemption is used in the general sense of deliverance of **the nation of Israel** - e.g. Luke 1:68, "Blessed be the Lord God **of Israel**; for he hath visited and redeemed **his people**". I have underlined the limitation, or the sole application, that is not generally taught.

When we look at verses like Hebrews 9:15, "*And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance*", we can see reference to the "first testament" that ties redemption to Israelites who alone had that old covenant made with them. You may not have noticed that there is no prophecy for, or fulfillment of the New Covenant, being made any other than Israelites. Read, Jer. 31:31 and its N/T repeat in Hebrews 8:8. The two parties are the two Houses of Israel and the House of Judah only!

The concept of the ransom, or the price paid, is in the sense of buying back what was possessed once before. It is buying back "my people". It is like redeeming one's own goods from a pawnshop. You cannot redeem someone else's property. This is why we read in Matt. 1:21, "*And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins*", we can easily see that the subject people were termed "his people", even before Jesus came to save them. See how many more such statements you can find in the first two chapters of Luke.

Now we might see why we do not find reference other than to the "Redeemer of Israel". . "Savior of Israel"....the "Holy One of Israel". Isaiah 54:5 "*For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called*". God is described as a husband to Israel....only!

There are other connected words, such as "converted", "reconciled" and "propitiation" we can look at, but there is no conflict when we keep these in their context. There is absolutely no ground for "a good case" for universal reconciliation, outside of misuse of context, and extending things such as "all the world" beyond each context. To have a good case, one would have to deny many straight biblical statements, some of which are found above.

CONVERTED

Conversion (Strong's 1994-5) is about turning back to love and obedience. It does have, of course, a strong connection to "salvation", but every verse carries the sense of "turning back" or "turning from to turning towards", and in all cases it is connected with "His own", that is, those described as being God's people.

Acts 15:3 *And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the **conversion** of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren.*

Mark 4:12 *That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should **be converted**, and their sins should be forgiven them.*

Luke 22:32-4 *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou **art converted**, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.*

Acts 3:19 *Repent ye therefore, and **be converted**, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.*

The connection between salvation and conversion is shown in the word "heal" in the following verses.

John 12:40 *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.*

Acts 28:27, *The heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.*

The word "heal= *iaomai* is used 22 times of physical treatment, and thus is closely linked to "salvation", although it is not a synonym.

RECONCILED

There are three words so translated. The first word is Strong's 1259 *diallasso* and is about making a necessary change in a course of action which results in oneness. This is shown in the verses below:

Matt 5:23-4 *Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

Romans 5:10 *For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

The second is Strong's 2643 and 2644 *katallasso* which is from the same root word. It is about making an exchange on an equal basis to become in favour again. This is the word translated as "atonement" in Romans 5:11.

1 Corinthians 7:11 *But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.*

2 Cor 5:18-19 *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

Colossians 1:21 *And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.*

The word essentially is about a change from enmity to friendship.

PROPITIATION.

Propitiation is what God accomplishes, exercising grace towards sinful man on the grounds of the death of Jesus on their behalf, so that judgement and justice is satisfied. It is man that is reconciled to God through God's action, not God to man through man's action. God removes man's hostility to Himself, as love and hostility cannot co-exist.

Strong's 2433-5 *hilasmos* and derivatives are about appeasement, or the means of doing so. It typifies the blood sprinkled on the Holy of Holies by the expiating victim on the day of atonement.

Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.

1 John 2:2 And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Just as this was for Israel in the wilderness, the process equally has the same confines today. This is "the whole world" of those identified by "us" as "brethren", including those who were not John's "children"-("1 John 2:1).

CONCLUSION.

We do not find these words used outside of the context of Israelites and the New Testament references flow from the Old Testament.

Religion thinks up ways to try to extend the application to include all other races in a non-biblical manner by misusing words such as "adoption", "grafting in" (which is grafting "back again"), and giving the Roman Catholic meaning to "Gentiles" (who in this case are the House of Israel –please see 1 Cor. 10:1-4 that they could not be other than Israelites). So when people read, "*The God of the whole earth shall he be called*" as above, it sounds as if this includes all races, but the word "whole" is not there, and when we look into this, we may be shocked to find that each race had its own "earth" or land. Thus the meaning of this phrase is about the Redeemer being the God of that earth of the context, which of course is that of Israelites and the "Holy one of Israel".

Religion that stems from Judaism (that which Jesus condemns roundly), uses these words "all", "every", "whosoever" etc., extending this beyond each context to include "all" else beyond the context, to try to leaven the understanding of Scripture. Yes, translators did not translate many verses well....they wrote in what they believed at times, as in Isaiah 54:5 above. So now we can see why Jesus says we have to "dig deep" to find the treasure the treasure, "hid in a field". A field is only part of the entire globe. If we take "all" (of the context) to mean "all of everything" (outside of the context) we will find we have an irreconcilable bible.