

Salvation Universal.

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I.

The greatest of all the gifts of God unto his children, is the gift of salvation.*

The greatest of all his works, to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man, which constitutes his glory.†

For this grand and glorious purpose, worlds are created by him and peopled with his children. He gives to them his commandments, granting the power to choose for themselves whether or not they will obey. Those who obey him in all things he has promised great blessings, they shall be added upon in his celestial kingdom for ever and ever, and shall be crowned with the fulness of his glory. But to those who reject his laws, and become a law unto themselves in unrighteousness, shall punishment be meted out according to their evil deeds.

The plan of salvation, or code of laws, which is known as the gospel of Jesus Christ, was adopted in the heavens, before the foundation of the world was laid. It was appointed there that Adam our father should come to this earth and stand at the head of the whole human family. It was a part of this great plan, that he should partake of the forbidden fruit and fall, thus bringing suffering and death into the world, even for the ultimate good of his children. By many he has been severely criticized because of his fall, but Latter-day Saints, through modern revelation, have

* Doc. and Cov. 6: 13.

† Book of Moses 1: 39.

learned that such was necessary in order that man should have his agency and, through the various vicissitudes he has to pass, receive a knowledge of both good and evil, without which it would be impossible for him to gain the exaltation prepared for him.

It was also necessary because of Adam's transgression for the only Begotten Son of the Father to come to redeem the world from Adam's fall. This also was a part of the plan chosen before the earth was made, for Jesus is called the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world.* He came and redeemed us from the fall—even all the inhabitants of the earth. Not only did he redeem us from Adam's transgression, but he also redeemed us from our own sins, on condition that we obey the laws and ordinances of the gospel.†

“And now, behold,” said the Prophet Lehi to his son Jacob, “if Adam had not transgressed, he would not have fallen; but he would have remained in the Garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were, after they were created; and they must have remained for ever, and had no end. And they would have had no children; wherefore, they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.

“And the Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because they are redeemed from the fall, they have become free for ever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves, and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the law at the great and last day, according to the commandments which God hath given.

“Wherefore, men are free according to the flesh; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great mediation of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to

* Rev. 13: 8.

† Heb. 5: 9; Matt. 7: 21; John 1: 3-6.

the captivity and power of the devil; for he seeketh that all men might be miserable like unto himself.”*

The primary and fundamental principles of this plan of salvation are:

First: Faith in God the Father, in his Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost. We must accept them as the presiding authority in the heavens, who govern and control all things, who are omnipotent, just and true.

Second: We must accept the infinite atonement of Christ, believing that he is the Redeemer of the world, both from Adam’s transgression and from our individual sins on condition of our repentance.

Third: We must repent of all our sins, giving our hearts to God, with the full intent of serving him.

Fourth: we must be baptized in water for the remission of our sins, by one who is called of God and clothed with divine authority to administer in the ordinances of the gospel.

Fifth: We must have the hands of those holding authority placed upon our heads, and through their ministration receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost,—the Spirit of Truth and Prophecy that guides us in all truth.

Sixth: We must be willing to serve the Lord with all our heart, mind and strength, keeping his commandments even unto the end.

Upon these laws, salvation is based, and the promised blessings are unto all men. These conditions are not severe, nor grievous, and are within the power of the weakest of the weak, if they will only place their trust in their Redeemer.

All who repent and obey these laws, will be redeemed and saved from the sins of the world; but they who refuse and repent not, will have to suffer for their own sins. The Lord says: “He created man, male and female, after his own image and in his own likeness, created he them, and gave unto them commandments that they should love and serve him, the only living and true God, and that he should be the only being whom they should worship. But by the transgression of these holy laws, man

* II Nephi, 2: 22-27.

became sensual and devilish, and became fallen man. Wherefore the Almighty God gave his Only Begotten Son, as it is written in those scriptures which have been given of him. He suffered temptations, but gave no heed unto them; he was crucified, died and rose again the third day; and ascended into heaven, to sit down on the right hand of the Father, to reign with almighty power according to the will of the Father, that as many as would believe and be baptized in his holy name, and endure in faith to the end, should be saved: not only those who believed after he came in the meridian of time, in the flesh, but all those from the beginning, even as many as were before he came, who believed in the words of the holy prophets, who spake as they were inspired by the gift of the Holy Ghost, who truly testified of him in all things, should have eternal life, as well as those who should come after, who should believe in the gifts and callings of God by the holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and of the Son; which Father, Son and Holy Ghost are one God, infinite and eternal, without end. Amen.”*

Moreover, he further says: “And surely every man must repent or suffer, for I God am endless: * * * Therefore I command you to repent—repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore—how sore you know not! For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent, but if they would not repent, they must suffer even as I, which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both in body and spirit: and would that I might not drink the bitter cup and shrink—nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men.” †

These principles were taught to Adam after he was driven from the Garden of Eden, who repented and was baptized in water for the remission of his sins, and received the Holy Ghost. And Eve, when she heard the gospel plan, rejoiced, saying: Were it not for our transgression, we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption,

* Doc and Cov. 20: 18-28.

† Doc. and Cov. 19: 4, 15-19,

and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. "And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God, and they made all things known to their sons and daughters."*

Thus the principles of the gospel were taught from the beginning among the children of Adam. Some believed and accepted them, many others rejected them, bringing down upon their heads the wrath of God, for his anger was kindled against them because of their rebellion. In course of time, when the inhabitants of the earth were sufficiently corrupt, he caused the floods to come upon them, sweeping them off the earth. Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness, continued to preach these saving principles. The gospel was also taught to Abraham, and has always been among men when they were prepared to receive it.

Latter-day Saints have been severely criticised by many professing Christians for believing it necessary to comply with these first principles of the gospel. We are told that such views make us narrow and illiberal, for we reject and damn all who do not accept "Mormonism" and the ministration of our elders, while they, on the other hand, give a broader interpretation of the scriptures, holding it but necessary to believe in Christ—to confess him with the mouth and to believe in the heart that Christ was raised from the dead.

Or, as it is expressed,

Nothing, either great or small,
Remains for me to do;
Nothing—Jesus paid it all,
All the debt I owe.

Nevertheless, there is but one plan of salvation, and one door into the sheepfold, "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." †

We have not made the way narrow nor the gate strait, that few there be that find it! Nor was ours the edict, "Not every

* Book of Moses 5: 11-12.

† John 10: 1.

one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of the father."*

The fact that certain laws must be observed, and ordinances complied with, is not the ruling of the Latter-day Saints, but the divine mandate of the author of our salvation, who has said he will judge all men according to their works and opportunities. We are merely complying with the teachings of the Master which we have received, and which are requisite to salvation.

If belief alone were sufficient, then even the devils, who fear and tremble, would be saved. They recognized the Savior and declared on several occasions that he was the Son of God.† And the devils in the days of the sons of Sceva declared that they knew Jesus and Paul, yet they were far from the road to salvation.‡

Notwithstanding the apparently narrow construction of the Latter-day Saints pertaining to the scriptures—and we most emphatically declare that all men must obey these laws if they would be saved, excepting those who die without law, and therefore are not judged by law§—we are broader and more liberal in our teachings than the believers in the faith-only theory of salvation, who would save all who profess a belief in the name of the Redeemer, but reject all others, consigning them to everlasting destruction without one ray of hope, simply because they did not confess that Jesus was the Christ. This view condemns all who lived at a time or place that the knowledge of the Redeemer of the world could not reach them. They would reject this vast majority of the human family, men, women and children, to eternal damnation, without the fault being their own!

With the Latter-day Saints this is not so. While it is true we teach that a man must comply with these principles of the gospel in order to receive salvation and exaltation in the kingdom of heaven—which is proved by many passages of scripture—nevertheless, we hold out the hope that all may be saved, excepting the

* Matt. 7th chapter.

† Mark 5: 2-9; Luke 4: 33-34.

‡ Acts 19: 15.

§ Moroni 8: 22.

sons of perdition—a class that wilfully rejects the atonement of the Savior: for the Lord intends to save all the workmanship of his hands, save these few who will not receive salvation. Our doctrine consigns none others to perdition, but holds forth the hope that all will eventually be saved in the kingdom of God at some time and in some degree of glory.

Little children are redeemed from the foundation of the world through the atonement, “Wherefore, they cannot sin,” the Lord has said, “for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children, until they begin to become accountable before me; for it is given unto them even as I will, according to mine own pleasure, that great things may be required at the hand of their fathers. And, again, I say unto you, that whoso having knowledge, have I not commanded to repent?” *

He that declares that little children are born in sin, and therefore require baptism, denies the mercy of the Father and does not understand the nature and significance of the atonement. The Savior said: “Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” The Prophet Mormon sums the whole matter up in the following words:

Little children cannot repent; wherefore it is awful wickedness to deny the pure mercies of God unto them, for they are all alive in him because of his mercy.

And he that saith, that little children need baptism, denieth the mercies of Christ, and setteth at nought the atonement of him and the power of his redemption.

Wo unto such, for they are in danger of death, hell, and endless torment. I speak it boldly, God hath commanded me. Listen unto them and give heed, or they stand against you at the judgment seat of Christ.

For behold that all little children are alive in Christ, and also all they that are without the law. For the power of redemption cometh on all they that have no law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, cannot repent; and unto such baptism availeth nothing.

But it is mockery before God, denying the mercies of Christ, and the power of his Holy Spirit, and putting trust in dead works.

Behold, my son, this thing ought not to be; for repentance is unto

* Doc. and Cov. 29: 46-49.

them that are under condemnation and under the curse of a broken law.

And the first fruits of repentance is baptism, and baptism cometh by faith, unto the fulfilling of the commandments; and the fulfilling of commandments bringeth remission of sins.*

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Salt Lake City, Utah.

The New England School.

(*Selected.*)

The morning came, I reached the classic hall;
 A clock-face eyed me, staring from the wall;
 Beneath its hands a printed line I read:
 YOUTH IS LIFE'S SEED-TIME; so the clock-face said.
 Some took its counsel, as the sequel showed,—
 Sowed—their wild oats, and reaped as they had sowed.
 How all comes back! the upward slanting floor—
 The masters' thrones that flank the central door—
 The long, outstretching alleys that divide
 The rows of desks that stand on either side —
 The staring boys, a face to every desk,
 Bright, dull, pale, blooming, common, picturesque,
 Grave is the master's look; his forehead wears
 Thick rows of wrinkles, prints of worrying cares;
 Uneasy lies the head of all that rule,
 His most of all whose kingdom is a school.
 Supreme he sits; before the awful frown
 That bends his brows the boldest eye goes down;
 Not more submissive Israel heard and saw
 At Sinai's foot the Giver of the Law.—*Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

* Moroni 8: 20-25.