

Eleutheros Newsletter **April 2017**

News of Interest

Feel free to check out the Eleutheros Books Global Fund:

<https://www.purecharity.com/eleutheros-books-global-fund>

News that pertains to the Eleutheros Books Global Fund:

Christian books to very needy people: Africa, India, Russia, the Middle East, and Spanish speaking countries! Also, “a book and a Bible” to US troops!

<http://www.eleutherosbooks.com/>

God willing, a Spanish translation of *The Ramifications of Our Salvation* will be “print ready” in a few weeks. In addition, that same book will be made available in an eBook format.

In late March 80 copies were printed and distributed to a pastor in Kenya.

The Ramifications of Our Salvation will be used as a textbook in soteriology at Taongi National University in Liberia!

God willing, this book will soon become available in Ghana!

The Father's Role in Our Salvation

Part 1

As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him ([John 17:2](#)).

When most Christians think about their salvation, they tend to ponder what Jesus did for them when He died on the cross, when they consider what has happened since they were saved, many times the ministries of the Holy Spirit come to mind.

What is often left out is the role of God the Father.

With that in mind, let us consider what great things He has done for us regarding our salvation.

Although there is consistent agreement among Christians that God has devised a

plan of salvation in general, there is considerable debate about its specific details.

On these points all agree: God the Father sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world. He was virgin born, lived a sinless life, bore the sins of the world in His body while dying on the cross, shed His blood to pay for man's salvation, and rose from the grave on the third day to make the offer of eternal life legitimate.

After all, how could a dead Savior offer everlasting life to others?

Those who repent of their sins and place their faith solely in Him are immediately saved by the grace of God, and an eternity in heaven with Him and others who have believed is assured.

That having been said, several questions arise. Did God plan ahead of time the salvation of every believer? Is He *sovereign* in the choices He has made? If so, does this mean only certain ones will be saved? Can such a plan be considered *fair*? Can such a plan be demonstrated Biblically?

It is not the intent of this writer to offend anyone who may come from backgrounds in which they were taught differently (and therefore may disagree with him on certain points), but rather to present the truth in love. There are many on both sides of these issues, and in reality the only way to resolve them is to look closely at what Scripture teaches.

Consider first the sovereignty of the Father. *In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth* ([Genesis 1:1](#)). Since God is the Creator of all things it is reasonable to believe that he has the *right* to tell mankind what to do, what to be, and what to believe.

When a person makes a product, he has the right to do with it as he pleases; and this same principle applies to the Father. Consider what the Apostle Paul said on this subject:

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For He hath said to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy ([Romans 9:14-16](#)).

The thought becomes even clearer in verses [18-21](#) of the same chapter:

Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will? Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the

thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, over the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another vessel unto dishonor?

The Apostle Paul asks a very significant question in verse [20](#): *who art thou that repliest against God?* What man is there who has such authority, intelligence, of holiness to question the integrity, power, or holiness of God the Father? Or to put it another way, what legal body in all the universe has the moral standing to tell the eternal God of all creation what is and what is not is not “correct” regarding issues of sin and salvation?

Consider the case of Ezekiel: *As I was among the captives by the river Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God* ([Ezekiel 1:1](#)).

At this point Ezekiel began to understand something of the power, holiness, awesomeness, and sovereignty of God. In chapter 1 he sees a whirlwind, a great cloud, and fire ([1:4](#)) and the likeness of four living creatures ([1:5](#)) who had amazing characteristics about them ([1:6-28](#)).

This vision surely captured Ezekiel’s attention in such a way that he knew he must obey his sovereign God (consider also the reaction of Isaiah to a similar vision in [Isaiah 6:1-5](#))!

In chapter 2 God tells Ezekiel, *I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against Me...* ([Ezekiel 2:3](#)). No doubt young Ezekiel would not have readily chosen to minister among *impudent children and stiff hearted* ([2:4](#)), but having seen quite a bit about God earlier, who was he to argue with Him?

In chapter 3 God reveals His will even more obviously: *And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprove; for they are a rebellious house. But when I speak with thee, I will open thy mouth, and thou shalt say to them, Thus saith the Lord God...* ([Ezekiel 3:26-17](#))

In chapter 4 God insists that Ezekiel lie on his left side for 390 days and on his right side for 40 days ([Ezekiel 4:4-7](#)) and explained to him that He would place bands on him so he could not turn over all those days ([4:8](#))! Moreover, he was to eat very little food (and the food of a beggar at that!) that was to be prepared over a fire that was fueled by cow dung! He was to drink barely enough water to survive ([Ezekiel 4:9-17](#))!

Was there any doubt that God was *insisting* that Ezekiel do His work His way?

Why would God insist on such things?

Answers: because He is sovereign and has the *right* to do so! Also, He wanted Ezekiel, now several hundred miles away from his home, to tell and show Israel how disgusting their sin was to a holy God!

At this point the reader might well ask, “What does this have to do with the Father’s involvement in my salvation”?

Here is the point: Religions all over the world have for thousands of years invented their ideas on how people should behave, what they should believe, and in some cases how they could make it to their promise of heaven.

Their ideas may be well intended, but they are surely wrong!

Because God is sovereign, He has the right to explain to us in no uncertain terms, how awful our sin is, how holy and loving He is, and how one can be saved!

Furthermore, He has exercised that right! *For God so loved the world that He have His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life* ([John 3:16](#)). He planned for His Son to come; He insists that faith in Him is the only way for salvation (see [John 14:5](#); [Acts 4:12](#)); and that the Gospel message is never to be altered in any way ([Galatians 1:6-9](#))!

We will look further at the Father’s role in our salvation in next month’s newsletter.

Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise

Walter Chalmers Smith

*Immortal, invisible,
God only wise,
In light inaccessible
Hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious
The Ancient of days,
Almighty, victorious,
Thy great name we praise!*