

## **So Great Salvation**

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### ***Chapter Five***

#### ***DELIVERED FROM THE POWER OF DARKNESS***

When Lucifer rebelled against GOD and said that he would set himself above the stars of GOD and be like the Most High he was, in the wisdom of GOD (which is hard for man to understand) permitted to set up a kingdom of his own over which he became the supreme ruler. It might well be called a government in opposition to that of GOD.

In creating man, GOD added a new creature to His domain. Man was a subject of GOD's government. To man GOD gave power to rule over the restored earth and subdue it to himself. Man was subject to GOD alone. The earth might well have been considered as a province of GOD's greater domain, the universe.

But only for a short time did man remain in that state of allegiance to GOD. He, too, rebelled. As was seen, Satan deceived man to disobey GOD's command. By that one act man declared his independence of GOD and his dependence upon himself. It was a rebellion against the government of GOD. In listening to Satan man yielded himself to his influence and came under his power and rule. He shifted his allegiance from GOD to Satan. Man also thereby surrendered to Satan the earth over which he had dominion. From thenceforth, man has been a part of the opposition government against GOD.

Satan's rule over the kingdoms of this world cannot be questioned. When JESUS was tempted in the wilderness, Satan offered Him all these kingdoms and their glory if He would fall down and worship him "**Again, the devil**

**taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me"** (Matthew 4:8-9). JESUS did not contradict the claim of Satan to possession of the kingdoms of the world. They became his when man yielded himself to him. That is why John could write, **"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness"** (I John 5:19).

Satan's realm is characterized first of all by falsehood. Of him JESUS said, **"He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in Him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it"** (John 8:44). It was by a lie that he won the allegiance of man.

His realm is repeatedly referred to as darkness. **"And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not"** (John 1:5); **"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me"** (Acts 26:18); **"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"** (II Corinthians 4:6); **"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"** (Ephesians 6:12), and others. The deeds of man, as a subject of Satan's realm, are called the works of darkness **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"** (Ephesians 5:11).

Men, because subjects of Satan's realm, are called children of disobedience and children of wrath **"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others"** (Ephesians 2:2-3).

They are this because they are children of Adam who listened to Satan and disobeyed GOD. They are called **"The children of the wicked one"** (Matthew 13:38) and also **"children of the devil"** (I John 3:10). This term is applied to all who are in Satan's realm and under his power. It is not a term that designates a specially wicked group as men judge wickedness. JESUS said to the highly respectable and honored Pharisees, **"Ye are of your father the devil"** (John 8.44).

Contrary to popular conception, Satan is described as a very beautiful and accomplished being. Of him it is written "**Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering . . . the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou was created**" (Ezekiel 28:12-13). Even in his fallen condition he can transform himself into an angel of light "**And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works**" (II Corinthians 11:14-15). It is therefore not inconsistent with his being that his subjects be accomplished and refined and appear perfect in the sight of men.

The condition of the human subject of Satan's realm is variously described. Of them it is said that ". . . **the god of this world hath blinded the minds . . . lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ . . . should shine unto them**" (II Corinthians 4:4). They live "**according to the prince of the power of the air (Satan), the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience**" (Ephesians 2:2). They are called darkness (Ephesians 5:8). These are not man's words. They are GOD's description of mankind in the domain of Satan and under his power.

From this it is clear that man's disobedience in the garden of Eden was more than a turning away from GOD and a state of dependence upon Him. It was a definite turning toward Satan and an acceptance of his sovereignty for himself and his posterity. The whole human race became involved and thereby all men became subjects of Satan's realm of darkness.

Because of this condition of man, it became necessary for GOD to make a provision to save man from the dominion of Satan that He might save him unto Himself. That which took place when man sinned in the Garden had to be reversed.

It is significant that the first statement in the Bible that has bearing on man's salvation is a promise of One to come Who should crush the power of Satan. This promise is found in the judgment of GOD pronounced upon the serpent immediately after he had caused man to sin. It is in these words; "**And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel**" (Genesis 3:15). The head is the seat of intelligence and authority, the power to dominate and rule. When the head of Satan is bruised his power is broken and thereby comes deliverance from the power of darkness.

The Seed of the woman is the One born of a virgin. All others (who have been born) are of the seed of the man. "**Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel**" (Isaiah 7:14). When JESUS was born of the virgin Mary the promise of a deliverer from the power of Satan was fulfilled. He came to "**give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death**" (Luke 1:79). This refers to none other than mankind in the darkness of the realm of Satan.

As JESUS entered upon His public ministry, on a certain Sabbath day he went into the synagogue. He was handed the Book of Isaiah the prophet from which He read "**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because . . . he hath sent me . . . to preach deliverance to the captives (of Satan) and recovering of sight to the blind, (them that are in darkness) to set at liberty them that are bruised**" (Luke 4:18).

JESUS, the seed of the woman, did bruise the head of the serpent but when He did so, as was also foretold, the serpent bruised His heel (Genesis 3:15). This refers to the death of JESUS on the Cross, for it was through death that He brought to nought him that had the power of death, the devil. In His last public discourse before His death JESUS said: "**Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world (Satan) be cast out**" (John 12:31). "**The Son of God was manifested (as the seed of the woman) that He might destroy the works of the devil**" (I John 3:8).

When Saul (later called Paul) was stopped on the road to Damascus he heard a voice which said "**I am Jesus . . . I have appeared unto thee . . . to make thee a minister and a witness . . . to turn them (the Gentiles) from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God**" (Acts 26:15-18).

In salvation, then, GOD delivers from the power of darkness and translates into the kingdom of His own Son (Colossians 1:13). All who are saved thereby become "**fellow citizens with the saints**" (Ephesians 2:19). Their "**conversation (i.e., citizenship) is in heaven**" (Philippians 3:20). They are no more of the present world system, or cosmos, ruled over by Satan. They are no more darkness, but are the children of light (I Thessalonians 5:5).

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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