

Christ Our Covenant Head

Isa 49:8-9 Thus says the Lord: "In an acceptable time I have heard You, and in the day of salvation I have helped You; I will preserve You and give You as a covenant to the people, to restore the earth, to cause them to inherit the desolate heritages; That You may say to the prisoners, 'Go forth,' to those who are in darkness, 'show yourselves.'

In this passage this morning we shall learn that our salvation is certain. And we shall see that his hope we have is because of our standing "in Christ". When I did a word search on this phrase, 87 times Paul speaks of the believer's standing "**in Christ**". On the other hand "Christ in you" is used once where it does not speak of Christ in us in a personal manner but as now being among the Gentiles whereas before they were without Christ and without hope being in the context of the Gentiles being added to the church, where it can properly be translated, "Christ among you." On this same subject Paul say in Ephesians 2:13, "But now **in Christ Jesus** you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ." Two questions I want to consider this morning, first, what is this "day of salvation" and secondly, what does it means when we read that the Lord will give Christ as a "covenant to the people".

- A. The Father here is saying to our Lord, His Son: "*In an acceptable time I have heard You, and in the day of salvation I have helped You.*"
1. Christ, being a priest forever, after the order of Melchizadek, (cf Ps. 110:4) having from eternity occupied the place of Mediator now receives this promise
 - a. We learn here that we have eternally been in the prayers of our Great High Priest
 - b. Thus the Father says to the Son, in an acceptable time, in that time that I have purposed from all eternity I have heard You
 2. In a time appointed, a time, purposed by God, Christ, has fulfilled every promise, every shadow, every type that has been revealed in the Old Testament regarding the salvation of God's elect
 3. Thus it is properly called "the day of salvation"
 - a. at day when the means of our salvation was fully satisfied
 - b. Absolutely nothing can be added to and nothing taken away from the work of Christ
 - c. When Jesus prayed in John 17:4 "I have finished the work which You have given Me to do," nothing more was needed in regards to our salvation
 - d. When Jesus cried upon the cross, "It is finished" salvation was complete
 4. When Christ was given as a covenant to the people He fulfilled two important necessities
 - a. He provided a full and complete covering for our sin
 - b. By His perfect obedience He provided an imputed righteousness which fulfills all righteousness in our behalf
 5. It is a promise such as this that gave hope to the saints of the Old Testament
- 1 Peter 1:10-11 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.*
- a. Not for them to know the times and seasons that God has put in His own hand (Dt. 29:29)
 - b. But in the fullness of time God did send His Son
- Gal 4:4-5 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*
6. What is being spoken of here is that time that was purposed by God from all eternity as to when in time God would send forth His Son (cf. Eph 1:4-6) - *He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world . . . according to the good pleasure of His will*
 - a. When God would provide a means to redeem those who were under the law
 - b. To do what the law could not do
- Rom 8:3-4 For what the law could not do in that it was **weak through the flesh**, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.*
- c. Weak through the flesh – because of our fallen nature
 - d. There is none who understand none who seek after God
7. The only thing the law can do is condemn us
 - a. The only means whereby the law could redeem us would be by our perfect obedience
 - b. But we have all fallen short of that perfection the only thing the law can do is condemn us

Rom 3:19-20 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, **for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**

8. In Heb 10 verses 1 thru 4 we learn that the law was but a shadow of good things to come
 - a. Had the O T sacrifices been sufficient they would have been offered once and for all
 - b. For the worshippers once purified would have no more consciousness of sins
 - c. Rather those sacrifices were but a yearly reminder of their sins
 - d. For it was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sin

9. Therefore God sent His Son to redeem us

Acts 13:39-40 **By Him everyone who believes is justified** from all things from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses.

10. Although in this passage God is speaking to His Son yet we know that that this speaks not only of Christ but of our standing in Christ

- a. Paul makes this clear when He applies this statement to the whole Church.

2 Cor 6:2 For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

- b. Paul is saying here that our hope is Christ, for He has provided for our salvation

- B. What then does God mean when He says to His Son, *I will give You to be a covenant*, since this applies to Christ how can it be applicable to us?

1. Calvin say by realizing that Christ is not so much His own as ours;
 - a. Christ did not come to die and rise again for Himself.
 - b. He was sent for the salvation of the Church,
 - c. He sought nothing for Himself nor did He have want of anything.

Mark 10:45 *Even as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

2. Thus God makes these promises to the whole body of the Church.
 - a. Christ, who occupies the place of Mediator, as our covenant head receives these promise in our behalf
 - b. He does not plead on behalf of Himself as an individual, but of the whole Church, for whose salvation he was sent.
3. Thus when God says to His Son I have heard you, He has heard the Son as He prays in our behalf.
 - a. Calvin writes, It is a most undeserving mercy and grace the Father bestows upon us, when he listens to His Son in our behalf
 - b. Think of it saints of God when He speaks thus to His Son it is in relationship to our salvation.
 - c. Calvin adds here, "Hence we see how close the connection between us and Christ is."
 - d. Christ is our Advocate and the Father listens to our cause.
4. When God says in the day of salvation **I will help you**, Paul in quoting this verse uses a Greek word that speaks of one who "**runs to the cry of those in danger.**"
 - a. Our Lord has come to save us in our greatest need, the salvation of our eternal souls
 - b. We are fully helpless, God alone is our helper

Ps 121:2 My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Conclusion: We are saved, not because we please God, not through our worthiness or merits, but by His free grace alone

Secondly we learn here that our salvation is certain, for in these promises we have a clear proof of the saving grace of our Lord.

All doubt ought to be removed, when the Lord testified of His work, "I have helped you"