

# THE HIGHER CALLING

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**Taken From *Your Heritage***

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Plus Critical Notes

As Christians, we all look forward to another life, the doctrine of resurrection is fundamental in Christianity. However, this is not the final answer to our questions, it is only the starting point for many questions. What will this other life be like, are there different grades and levels in that life? How can you know what your earned place in that life will be? The only gospel preached in the Christian churches today, is the gospel of personal salvation. Is this the all inclusive answer? No, for some churches regard salvation as a temporary, changing thing. These churches say you can be saved today and lose your salvation tomorrow. I presume they believe you can regain salvation the day after tomorrow. If this is true, you had better be careful on which day you die! Other churches teach, once you have salvation, you have it forever. Which teachings are correct? Let's find out just what salvation is, and what benefits it implies.

In the Old Testament, three words are commonly translated salvation. These words are yeshuah (yesh-oo-aw), yeshah (yeh-shah), and rarely teshuah (tesh-oo-aw). The root meaning of the three words is basically safety, varying through rescue to health. All of these words mean deliverance from danger. In the New Testament, two Greek words are translated salvation, these are soteria (so-tay-ree-ah) and soterion (so-tay-ree-on). Their meaning is identical with the three Hebrew words I mentioned. All five of these words can be used, very correctly, to describe the rescue of a person from drowning or any other danger in his life. In our Christian doctrines, they have a special usage, to describe our rescue from a permanent death. This doctrine is not something new, it is clearly stated in both the Old and New Testaments.

In Hosea 13:14 Yahweh promises us this deliverance from death. In the Hebrew it is clearer than in the King James Bible. "From the hand of the grave I do ransom them, from death I redeem them. Where is thy plague O death? Where thy destruction, O grave?" In the New Testament John 11:25-26 states it clearly. "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die." Hebrews 2:9, 1 says, "But we see Yahshua, who was made for a little time lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He, by the grace of Yahweh, should taste death for every man. And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

Needless to say, this immortality only comes to Christians. It is clearly promised only to those who claim it in the only possible way, by faith in Yahshua, this is recorded in Exodus 12:12-13. This was demonstrated as far back as the first Passover in Egypt. None would be spared, even among the Israelites, except those who put the blood of

the lamb on the door posts, outside the front door of their houses. This was a public proclamation of their faith that by the blood of the real Lamb of Yahweh, they would be saved. The same truth is confirmed in the New Testament in Acts 4:12 and Hebrews 2:3. Salvation comes not just from being an Israelite, one of the chosen people and one of the sons of Yahweh, but only to those that believe in Yahshua.

Carefully note this fact, just being saved promises you nothing more than that you will escape eternal death. It does not say that your future life will be in any particular rank. Will you be among those who are great in the kingdom of Yahweh? Or will you be only a sort of low man on the totem pole? This is another question that we will take up the answer to in detail, a little later. Is even this much uncertain, will Yahweh, after having given you eternal life, change His mind and take it away again? No, you need not fear this. Salvation is not something that you have earned, or could possibly earn, no man is good enough to achieve that. It is purely the gift of Yahweh, and He doesn't take back His gifts. We are assured in Romans 11:29, "Yahweh does not change his mind about those to whom he gives his blessing or sends his call." So we may safely conclude that **nobody ever loses his redemption**. However, this is not the full answer to our problem.

We find the great apostle Paul highly worried that he might lose something very precious. Remember that Paul had been selected and called by Yahshua, personally. Paul had received direct revelations from time to time, he had even been caught up into the third heaven for these revelations. Surely, Paul had no fear of losing his **redemption**. No one understood more clearly than he that his **redemption** had been bought for him on the cross, given to him by Yahweh. Nothing could frustrate the will of Yahweh to save him. Let's therefore carefully examine Paul's words, to see what he feared he might lose.

In I Corinthians 9:24-27, as it reads in the Greek, Paul says, "Know you not that those in a race course running, **all** indeed run: **but one receives the prize?** Thus run, that you may obtain. And everyone therein contending, in all things has self control: they indeed, therefore, that they may receive a perishable wreath; but we, an imperishable. I therefore thus run, as not uncertainly; I thus, box as not beating the air. But I severely discipline my body and keep it under control: lest possibly, having as a herald summoned others, I myself should be disapproved."

Paul's reference was to the well known Greek games. The winner was crowned with a wreath of olive, laurel, pine or parsley. The contestants were kept under strict training rules, just as modern athletes are. When the games opened, a herald sounded a trumpet and summoned the contestants.

Paul knew he was in a contest wherein there could be losers, as well as winners, and he was determined not to lose. What was this contest in which he was entered? In Philippians 3:11-15 Paul explains this. It is much clearer in the Greek than in most translations. "If possibly I may attain to the resurrection out **from among the dead**. (exanastasis, resurrection out, nekros, out from the dead) Not that I have already received it, or have already been perfected; but I pursue, if indeed I may lay hold on that for which Christ also laid hold on me. Brethren, I do not reckon myself to have laid hold on it; but one thing I do: forgetting the things behind, reaching out toward the

things ahead, I pursue along the line toward the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ. As many, therefore, as are mature should be of this mind; and if in anything you think differently, even this will God reveal to you.”

Paul knew he was certain to be at least in the resurrection out of the dead (anastasis nekros): but he was trying hard to be in a special resurrection **out from among** the dead, leaving most of the dead behind. **This was not a gift, he had to win it**, and this he might fail to do. This higher calling was a great prize, if he obtained it. Paul knew very well what our Savior had said, “Many are called but few are chosen.” With the calling went a heavy responsibility. Failure to meet this responsibility would surely lose him the great prize, although he would still retain his salvation and his resurrection along with the other dead. This responsibility was repeatedly emphasized by Yahshua.

For example in Luke 12:48, “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required.” Paul states his realization of this duty in I Corinthians 9:16-17. “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.”

This same responsibility was placed upon the prophet Ezekiel to whom Yahweh said, “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die and thou givest him not warning, now speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity: **but his blood will I require at thine hand**. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity: but thou hast delivered thy soul.”

We see that salvation alone, is not the answer for everyone. He who aspires to be rewarded with a special place, a higher calling, must earn it. He must expect to have his performance judged with a critical eye. The churches have almost completely overlooked the requirement of earning your rewards. You can also lose these rewards, if you fail to meet the requirements for them. The clergymen, in these churches, concentrate on teaching only the gospel of personal salvation. As usual, this is because they won't read and study the Bible. This principle of **rewards to be earned** is emphasized in many parts of the Bible.

For example in Isaiah 40:10 we read, “Behold, Yahweh will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His **reward** is with Him, and His work before Him.” The New Testament also consistently states this theme. In Matthew 16:27 Yahshua says, “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to **his works**.” Revelation 11:18 states, “And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth.”

I know most of the ministers, and their unfortunate congregations, who have been misled by them will say, but this can't apply to us, because we have been told

that Christians are no longer subject to any judgment. This is a mistaken and false doctrine. The clergymen would know this if they only studied their Bible, even just the New Testament.

The apostle Paul tells us this plainly in II Corinthians 5:10. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The best Christians that have ever lived judged. Not a judgment of condemnation for punishment, but a judgment to decide how small or how great his reward shall be.

This is what Paul was speaking about when he said in I Corinthians 9:24-27, "Know you not that those in a race course running, all indeed run: but only one receives the prize? Thus run that you may obtain. And everyone therein contending, in all things has self control: they indeed, therefore, that they may receive a perishable wreath; but we, an imperishable. I therefore thus run, as not uncertainty; I thus box, as not beating the air. But I severely discipline my body and keep it under control: lest possibly, having as a herald summoned others, I myself should be disapproved."

Paul knew that the prize of the higher calling could be won or lost. He would do nothing that would risk its loss. John also gives the warning in II John verse 8. "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward."

Faith alone cannot bring you the great rewards. Habbakuk 2:4, which Paul quotes in Romans 1:17 records, "The just shall live by his faith." Notice, merely life is all this promises. If you want more than that, it is up to you to show yourself worthy of it. Therefore Paul, who stressed the value of faith more than any other writer in the Bible, **worked for his reward**. He finally felt that he had gained it, for he says in II Timothy 4:7-8, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which Yahweh, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

Yahshua discussed this idea quite thoroughly. Of course there are many varieties of good deeds, each of them has its own value, some great, some small. In Matthew 10:42 Yahshua said, "Whosoever shall give drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his reward." We certainly cannot compare the reward for this simple deed with the reward of such works as those of Matthew, John and Paul. The higher quality of the work done, the reward must be proportionately just.

The cost of the great deeds is high, men will hate you for it. Even those men who are receiving the most benefit from what you are doing. It will take more and more of your time and effort, crowding out many things which you formerly liked to do. It will become your life itself. The claims of this world are strong, it is not easy. Can you take it?

In Luke 14:27-34 Yahshua gives the warning. "Whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after Me, cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or

what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple. Salt is good: but if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?"

The path to salvation is smooth and easy, faith is all that it requires, not much in the way of deeds. This way has been left open for those who could not climb the steep and rocky path, which is the only way to the great rewards. If you are satisfied merely to be in the kingdom of Yahweh, but not to be a part of Yahshua's administrative staff with which He governs the world, then salvation may be all that you need. If you aspire to a higher calling, then you must prepare for it in this life, as the next life will be too late to begin.

If you consider taking the difficult and thorny path to the higher calling, then count the cost and frankly estimate your own ability to pay the price, as Yahshua warned. Be sure that you will be tested, to see what sort of metal you are made of. Only the finest steel will make a good sword blade, not all can take it. Remember what Yahshua said, "Many are called, but few are chosen." In Luke 9:61-62 we read, "And another also said, Master, I will follow Thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house, And Yahshua said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of Yahweh."

Is it worth it? Yes, it is. In this world, it means plenty of trouble. To make a fine sword blade, the metal is heated red hot, then laid on an anvil and heavily beaten with a hammer, forging it into shape and compressing the metal to give it strength it could never get any other way. Then it is again heated red hot and suddenly plunged into cold water to harden it. Finally, it is heated again, to draw the temper enough that it will not be brittle, no longer easily broken.

So your troubles, when you seek to become a follower of Yahshua, may well be compared to the making of a fine sword blade. After this you will be really fit to do battle with the devil and his children. It certainly isn't a pleasant process, but don't you want to become the man which this process will make? There is no easy, cheap, financially profitable way. If you start on this hard path, be sure to hold out to the end. Hebrews 10:38 sums up the whole point. "Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him." Don't be laughed to scorn because you have started to build, but could not finish.

Paul reviews all of this in 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Yahshua. Now **if any man build upon this foundation**, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a **reward**. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet through the very fire."

**If you are really one of Yahweh's elect, then build something which can stand the fire, and receive your reward!**

**Critical note** by Clifton A. Emahiser: Along the same topic as Comparet's thesis here, the following is a small portion of what I wrote in a brochure entitled *Resurrection Life, How, When and For Whom?*:

There is probably no other Biblical topic with so many and varied concepts as the Resurrection. Each little splinter-group has its own interpretation, and usually applies it to their own sect. But at 2 Peter 1:20 he says: “**Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.**” To this we must ask, “Does the Resurrection fall under the category of prophecy?” It would appear that it might be a good idea to see what Scripture has to say on the subject. When studying a topic in Scripture it is always a good idea to use the rule of first mention. The first mention alluding to eternal life is found at Genesis 3:22: “**And Yahweh *singular* Elohim said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever.**” The only tree through which we can receive eternal life is Yahshua the Messiah, and Yahshua was no more a physical wooden tree than “... the tree of knowledge of good and evil ...” (Gen. 2:9). This is metaphorical language for living entities (Yahweh and Satan). The Bible uses the metaphor “dry tree” for a eunuch (Isa. 56:3). Yet there are those who demand that every Biblical tree be a wooden tree. They even demand that Eve ate from a wooden tree! Thus, at Genesis 3:22 we have the first allusion to eternal life. (Also cross reference Rev. 2:7; 22:2.)

It is amazing, but there are many who don't believe in a bodily resurrection, that somehow it will be only spiritual. There is probably no other Biblical doctrine so twisted entirely out-of-shape. Let's read John 5:28: “**Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice ...**” Would not this be similar to when Yahshua Christ called Lazarus from the dead, except he was resurrected only to die again; John 11:43? However, this passage is resurrection to life eternal. And, as we shall see later, the term “all” must be qualified.

Continuing at verse 29: “**And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.**” Well, how many resurrections do we have here? Two, of course. There are a lot who teach a general resurrection. Just think of the amount of confusion that would cause. These are two different resurrections at two different times. And the first of these two resurrections is not going to happen just at the beginning of a so-called “rapture”, followed by a so-called “seven years of tribulation” as the futurists claim! Rather, life will be continuing on, similar to how we observe it today, and as Paul describes it at 1 Cor. 15:51-52: “<sup>51</sup> **Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,** <sup>52</sup> **In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**”

This will be an interesting period of time to experience for all those who will go through it. It will be a judgment in itself. Imagine all the embarrassed pastors who were teaching false doctrine, not receiving a glorified body while some in their congregations do! Consider the spouse who receives a glorified body, but the mate who does not because of having a tinge of racial impurity! Envision the surprise of many who had

family or friends who recently died who everyone considered outstanding Christians who are not resurrected, while many who were not considered Christian are. Ponder why some are not included, even though racially pure, simply because they dealt deceitfully, confiscating someone else's valuable lawful possessions. Also, contemplate the wonderment of people when some will suddenly appear to be about 30 rather than 70 or 80. And think of the amazement, when it is discovered, that not a single member of a non-white or half-breed are included. So the "all" at John 5:28 does not include "all" races! William Finck's translation of Phil. 2:14-15 reads: "<sup>14</sup> **Do all things apart from murmuring and disputing,** <sup>15</sup> **that you would be perfect and with unmixed blood, blameless children of Yahweh in the midst of a race crooked and perverted - among whom you appear as luminaries in the cosmos ...**"