America's Hope Monthly

February 1996

Salvation for the Kingdom

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" . . . My salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished" (Isaiah 51:6). Both the Old and New Scriptures teach that the Lord's righteousness purchased and provided salvation for the Kingdom of God as well as for the church, the body of Christ.

In Isaiah 51:7-8 we read, "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation."

There is something very startling in this 51st chapter of Isaiah because in verse 5, verse 6, and again in verse 8 the Almighty refers to "My righteousness" and "My salvation." He says that it will be from generation to generation, that it will never be abolished, that it is gone forth, and that it will endure.

The first question we must consider is what people the prophet has in mind when he states, "Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law . . . " Note that he does not say "the people who are righteous." No, he addresses himself to a people who know what is right. In other words, people who have the Word of God. Then he says, "the people in whose heart is my law." Here again, he did not say, "the people in whose heart is My Spirit or My grace."

This is not addressed to the church — the body of believers, because no one becomes a Christian by knowing what is right and no one becomes a Christian by the law. As the context shows, this Scripture is addressed to one particular nation, called Zion in verse three. Therefore verses 7 and 8 are directed to the people of this great end-time Kingdom nation, the United States of America.

Let us look at a few references from the Old Scriptures to show that there is a civil righteousness or righteousness in and for a nation.

For example in Deuteronomy 4:8 we read, "And what nation (not church) is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Here we have the righteousness of the nation because of the righteous laws, statutes, judgments and commandments which God gave to the nation.

Many Christians find it difficult in their theology to distinguish between the national laws that God gave to the nation for civil administration and the fact that people have never and can never be saved by the law. Personal salvation and personal righteousness has never been by the law. It was not by the law in the Old Scripture, nor was it by the law in the New Scripture. And it never can be.

The apostle Paul dealt with this repeatedly in his writings, yet it seems that people are continually confused regarding the purpose of the law. As far as the nation is concerned, God gave these laws and statutes for righteous civil administration. If you once understand this, you will not get mixed up over law and grace. One cannot be saved by grace and then try to please God by the law.

In Deuteronomy 6:24-25 we read: "And the LORD commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness (not personal salvation, but civil righteousness) if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us."

So the law was given that the nation might live, prosper, be preserved and have God's blessing, wisdom and guidelines. Before going further, let me call your attention to the fact that our nation was the first and only nation in the past 2500 years that has been established upon these righteous laws, statutes, judgments and commandments.

That does not mean that every one in the nation is saved but it does mean we have civil administration that is more in harmony with the laws of God than any other nation during the past 2500 years. This has tremendous significance and meaning.

Let me give you a few examples of the civil righteousness to which Isaiah refers to in Isaiah 51:7 when he said he said, "Ye that know righteousness; the people in whose heart