

GOD'S WAY OF SALVATION

Elder Ralph Harris

The Scriptures show very clearly that both God and Christ are omniscient or all-knowing (See I John 3:20 & John 4:13). This is a very profound truth, with very far-reaching implications. It is obvious that a being who knows all things can never meet with unforeseen events or circumstances. Neither can He fail in anything He purposes to do. He knows the outcome of every event before it even begins. This enables Him to declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. It also enables Him to declare, "*My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure*" (Isaiah 46:10).

Now in view of this, how can anyone think that God established a method or way of salvation that He knew beforehand would be a colossal failure, with untold millions of humanity being finally lost that He wanted to save? How can anyone think that He is trying to get everyone to believe on Him when He knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray Him (See John 6:64)? In other words, how can anyone believe that He set up a system under which He is trying to save those that He foreknew would never believe? How can anyone believe that Christ died for those that He knew would never receive Him? How can anyone believe that the Father laid the sins of every human being on Christ and required Him to suffer for them when He knew that untold millions of them would later be required to suffer the same penalty for the same sins in hell? And how can anyone believe that God would thus require judgment to be executed twice for the same sins—once at the hands of Christ (the Surety), and again at the hands of many for whom He died?

None of these things would be consistent with that wise, holy, good and supreme Being we read of in the Scriptures known as God. The God of the Bible chose an innumerable host in Christ before the foundation of the world and predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rev. 7:9, Eph 1:4 & Rom. 8:29). They were given to Christ in the covenant of grace and He says, "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise it up again at the last day*" (John 6:37-39). This is God's method, system, or way, of salvation, and it is worthy of His Godhood and consistent in every way with His omniscience.

At some time between their conception and their death the Holy Spirit visits each one of the heirs of promise, without exception, and quickens them into divine life. According to covenant promise God puts His law in their inward parts, and

writes it in their hearts, and says, "*I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a people*" (See Jer. 31:33, Heb. 8:10 & 10:16-17). Then those of them who are blest to be instructed by the gospel are taught to "*be careful to maintain good works,*" not in order to gain eternal life, but because "*these things are good and profitable unto men*" (See Titus 3:8). These are all Biblical truths, but man's unenlightened notions cannot be supported by divine inspiration. —Elder Ralph Harris