

## Saved From What? Tim Fleeman

The Proprietor of a business once asked me, "Are you a saved man?" I responded that I was saved at the age of fifteen. Perhaps someone who is interested in your spiritual well being has talked to you about being saved. It is God's will or desire that all men be saved. "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim 2:4) It was for this purpose that Jesus instructed his apostles to preach the gospel to every creature. (Mark 16:15, 16) Paul and Silas were in prison in Philippi, and the jailer asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30) When a person asks this question, it is logical to infer that man must be saved from something. Occasionally, a person will be honored for saving someone from drowning. It was for this reason that Peter cried out to Jesus, "Lord, save me!" (Matt 14:13) It is always newsworthy and heartwarming when someone is saved from injury or death by a daring rescue. At this present time you may not need to be saved from some physical peril, but you are in need of being saved spiritually. Man is in need of being saved. But from what is man in need of being saved?

**MAN NEEDS TO BE SAVED FROM HIS SINS** "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen 1:1) On the sixth day God created man in his own image. (Gen 1:26, 27) "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Gen 1:31) God did not create man as a sinner. He created man upright, but man sought out ways to sin against God. (Eccl 7:29) Adam and Eve sinned by partaking of the forbidden fruit. (Gen 3:1-6) Paul shows that Adam introduced sin into the world and that all men have followed his example by sinning against God. (Rom 3:23) It is God whom we have sinned against and whose forgiveness we need. God has made provisions to save us from our sins through Christ Jesus, our Lord. (John 3:16, 17) The angel Gabriel informed Joseph that Mary was with child conceived by the Holy Ghost. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save His people from their sins." (Matt 1:21) Peter preached Christ to the Jewish council saying, "Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31) All men are in need of being saved from their sins.

**WE NEED TO BE SAVED FROM AN UNTOWARD OR CROOKED GENERATION** On the day of Pentecost Peter preached to the Jews who were guilty of crucifying the Son of God upon the cross and convicted them of sin. This sermon cut them to the heart prompting them to ask Peter, "Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said to them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:37, 38) This is what every responsible person needs to do in order to get into Christ and to receive the remission or forgiveness of their sins. "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation." (Acts 2:40) The word "untoward" means crooked or perverse, that which is in opposition to God. Disciples of Christ are in the world, but they are not to be of the world. (John 17:14-16) "That you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world:" (Phil 2:15) Peter's statement, "Save yourself from this crooked generation,"

shows the freewill of man in the matter of salvation. God has made the provisions for salvation, but man can choose to obey or disobey the gospel. Will you save yourself from this untoward or crooked generation through Christ?

**MAN NEEDS TO BE SAVED FROM THE WRATH OF GOD** "Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." (Rom 5:9) God made it possible for man to be saved from his sins avoiding the wrath of God. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness:" (Rom 1:18) The God of heaven does exhibit righteous wrath against sin. God has made provisions for man to be forgiven and escape this wrath. We are creatures of choice with a God given right to exercise free will. We can harden ourselves against those provisions, if we desire to do so. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God:" (Rom 2:5)

**MAN IS NEED OF BEING SAVED FROM THE FIRES OF HELL** Man might ask the question, "What difference does it make, if I stir up the wrath of God by my sin?" The answer is the punishment connected with that decision. Being saved from our sins, a crooked generation and the wrath of God bears greater significance when we consider the end of those who are lost. Folks who are not saved from their sins will spend eternity in the fires of hell. Jude informs us that we are to have compassion, making a difference. "And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (Jude 23) Jude gives examples of those who will suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. (Jude 7) Jesus taught that those who offend and practice iniquity will be cast into a furnace of fire where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. (Matt 13:42, 50) "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" (Matt 25:41) "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Matt 25:46) - Adapted from the July 2009 issue of the Elk Fork Messenger

#### A Psalm of David

In You, O LORD, I put my trust; Let me never be ashamed; Deliver me in Your righteousness. Bow down Your ear to me, Deliver me speedily; Be my rock of refuge, A fortress of defense to save me. For You are my rock and my fortress; Therefore, for Your name's sake, Lead me and guide me. Pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me, For You are my strength. Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O LORD God of truth. Ps 31:1-5

Editors note: I spent a great deal of time Saturday morning shoveling seventeen inches of snow from my driveway as did many of you. Snow fell constantly for the first hour. I thought of Gamaliel's words recorded in Ac 5:39 "but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to fight against God." Nature reminds us daily of God's existence and His awesome power. Gamaliel understood that God's power extended beyond this natural creation. Recall that the disciples facing a storm at sea feared for their lives. After Jesus rebuked the wind they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!" (Mark 4:41) - KJF