

## Paul the Apostle

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The book of Hebrews 6:13 tell us that God swore by himself.

*Hebrews 6:13 (KJV) 13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself,*

The Lord said if they would enter into the blood covenant he would be their salvation. But it's not just the covenant it is his saving grace purchased through the shedding of his blood that makes his grace available to us. He made himself the salvation of the old covenant by the blood of the sacrificial lamb. The Lamb of God is the sacrificial lamb of the new covenant by the shedding of his blood at Calvary.

When we agree to the terms of his covenant we are to receive the benefits or his saving grace. It was not earned by our works but by his saving grace. Abraham did no work except to leave Babylon. He didn't have to do anything but believe and in his heart and make a covenant with his mouth before Melchizedek.

*Romans 10:9-10 (KJV) 9 That if thou shalt confess (make a binding agreement or covenant) with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved (made whole). 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession (covenant) is made unto salvation.*

When I look back at things in my life I knew nothing about covenant at that point and I was being saved by grace. I have been shot at, partially paralyzed, my son was raised from the dead, and people have tried to kill me that was grace that saved me. As I grew and began to understand I learned about covenant but that was all grace. I am an example as are many others that experienced the benefits of salvation without understanding covenant; it wasn't dependent on how righteous we were; how good we were; how religious we were it was strictly the grace of God. Unmerited favor purchased at Calvary by our Savior who swore by himself that he would be all things to us. It is hard to fathom the depth of his grace. We don't deserve it but it is ours anyway.

*Psalms 23:6 (KJV) 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

Even when people aren't walking right the Lord still has mercy on them. Look at the prodigal son; you can't play games with the Lord, but you can get healed and get your sins forgiven. Why? It's because of his mercy and saving grace.

*Psalms 67:2 (KJV) 2 That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.*

We need to go through the scriptures and see how many times it says the covenant keeping God the creator of Israel. When they read the Hebrew that is what they heard over and over.

*Luke 21:19 (KJV) 19 In your patience possess ye your souls.*

Patience doesn't mean sitting around inactive. It's an act of expecting it is going to happen. It is saying in your patience be in control of your own life.

### **What about Paul's thorn in the flesh?**

When it comes to Paul's thorn in the flesh people say he had pus in eyes. People have taught Paul's thorn in the flesh was an eye disease. They get this from where Paul said see what large letters I write. People teach he had bad eyes so he had to write in large in letters. According to the scripture the Lord healed his eyes. When he was blinded the scripture says his eyes were healed. Paul's thorn in the flesh meant the people were a pain in the neck. There were men who made an oath to kill Paul. They said they would not eat or drink until they killed him. If they would have stuck to their oath they would have starved to death. God says my grace is enough. When people are trying to kill you my grace is sufficient.

*Ezekiel 28:24 (KJV) 24 And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn of all that are round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I am the Lord GOD (the Covenant Keeping God).*

Term thorn in the flesh was not a new one. The messenger of Satan an angel/spirit followed him around and caused people to give him problems but God's saving grace is sufficient.

*2 Corinthians 11:23-26 (KJV) 23 Are they ministers of Christ (the Anointed One)? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. 24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; It says abundant in stripes meaning you can beat to death and God's grace is sufficient; in deaths often and he didn't die.*

He said in your patience be in control of your own life. Paul was once stoned which is faith in the word because he stood by while others were stoned holding their coats. He had to have that picture in his mind while he was being stoned. It would have been gruesome. They throw stones until that person is on their knees. They are busting their head and ribs and everything else with rocks. Their noses were twisted out of place and eyeballs hanging out. When he knew he was going to get stoned who's report is he going to believe. Will he believe what he witnessed when others were being stoned to death or God's word that his grace is sufficient?

*Isaiah 53:1 (KJV) 1 Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?*

Paul's disciples stood around while Paul was being stoned. When people were stoned it was to stone them to death. They saw his stoning happen. They saw a great man of faith and power stoned and left for dead. After Paul was stoned he got up. The covenant keeping God told Paul that his grace was sufficient; and he believed the covenant keeping God and so in his patience he was in control of his own life through faith in what the Lord said. The Lord said my grace ( which is saving health), the ongoing process of salvation is sufficient. His saving grace is for every day.

Paul is the one who preached Romans 10:9 about making a binding agreement you'll receive rescue, safety, physically or morally and be made whole. He believed what he preached. Satan through people was a pain in the neck to Paul. Paul's thorn in the flesh had nothing to do with sickness or blind eyes. I went to a meeting in Kentucky and there was a man in a wheelchair. I gave him my literature. He said you're trying to get me healed. He said he prayed for this because he ran the streets and knew better. He believed by being wheelchair bound he couldn't sin since he was now unable to run the streets. He believes he is saved because of his infirmity. I was told by the Lord I was going to minister to a spirit of infirmities. I met a twenty-one year old woman with severe epilepsy and she received her deliverance, her healing; saved; saving health. Years later on I asked her pastor's son how she was doing. He said she moved in with a man and was living above a bar. He said had she not been healed she would still be saved. There are times you need some saving health. It is an ongoing process. I was listening to Andrew Wommack say it is better to live in the blessings than by living on miracles. When you live in the blessing you are redeemed from the curse of the law. You don't get sick but if you are you need the prayer of faith. If you are sick there is saving health and forgiveness.

The Lord's grace is not based on our shining performance but based on His love and commitment to be our saving health. People can receive deliverance and then backslide.

The Lord knows what you are going to do before you do it. It is his grace that sets us free. You cannot write people off. They may backslide but they may come back like the prodigal son. Once you are born again you are sealed until the day of redemption. You can be disinherited but you are sealed with the spirit of the Lord.

*Ephesians 4:30 (KJV) 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

When you act like a nut you are grieving the indwelling spirit. There are certain things that can cause your name to be taken out of the book of life. The law was hard to live by but what he did for them in the old covenant was still his grace. A poor innocent lamb that had not committed sin was sacrificed their sins. That is grace. The man that brought the lamb to the priest would press his hand on the head of the lamb transferring his sin onto the lamb. The lamb dies and they were set free from their sins.

Then the Lamb of God comes who wants you to cast all your cares and sins on him. He cares for you. That is a real good deal.

*1 Peter 5:7 (KJV) 7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

*1 Corinthians 15:2 (KJV) 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.*

David kept God's word in his memory. He meditated day and night. Paul kept in memory where the Lord told him he was going. No matter how good you are you just aren't good enough. We've been offered a deal from God that you cannot afford to turn down. One time I was in a mess. I was trying to hear from the Lord about a bunch of things. Things weren't going well. I went through a period of fasting and searching. After I fasted I decided I was going to hear from the Lord and everything is going to go perfect. I ended up with seven flat tires. I thought I was going to be so righteous. You can't count on your righteousness. It's not about how good I am.

*Colossians 1:13 (KJV) 13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

His grace has already delivered us. We're already there. He delivered us and set us in heavenly places. Colossians isn't talking about predestination or who he selects. It's talking about those who have said yes and your predestination is to be in heavenly places. Calvinism teaches it's only those who he draws and calls. That is wrong. Jesus said I be lifted up I call all men. All men don't say yes but when you say yes you have a destiny. The Amish and Presbyterians also teach this. The Amish teach they never know if they are saved.

*Psalm 103:1-5 (KJV) 1 Bless the LORD (YAHWEH), O my soul (me; myself; I): and all that is within me, bless his holy name. 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: 3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; 4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; 5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles.*

We have the sure mercies of David. He was an adulterer and murderer. Peter swore and lied under oath three times that he didn't know Jesus. All of our sins have been taken away. He healed all of our diseases.

*Psalm 103:12 (KJV) 12 As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*

*Psalm 68:19-20 (KJV) 19 Blessed be the Lord (Adonai the Blessor), who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God (El the Almighty) of our salvation. Selah. 20 He that is our God (El) is the God of salvation; and unto GOD (El) the Lord belong the issues from death.*

It is not the Lord's intention that we die prematurely. He went through a whole lot that we might have saving health. Don't let it go to waste.

*Psalm 23:6 (KJV) 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*