

# Saved From What?

(by Bob Pulliam)

What is all of this talk about salvation? From what do I need to be saved? I can understand the need to be saved if I'm on a sinking boat, or deserted island. But I feel fine, have my life under control, have friends I can rely on, and never go hungry.

The above illustrates the deceptive nature of this life. It is easy for someone to look around and say, "This is all there is to life." Not only is it easy, it is much more convenient. If this life is all there is, then I cannot be punished beyond what I might suffer in the flesh. But the truth is, this life is not all there is. As Solomon wrote, "Do not let your heart envy sinners, But be zealous for the fear of the Lord all the day; For surely there is a hereafter, And your hope will not be cut off." (Prov 23:17f) He also wrote of the death of man, "Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And the spirit will return to God who gave it." (Eccl 12:7) After death, we enter eternity, and an eternal fate forged by the kind of life we lived here upon earth. Paul wrote, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." (II Cor 5:10)

But I still haven't told you what you need to be saved from. When you sin (transgress God's law), you bring condemnation upon yourself (this is also called *death* (Rom 6:23) - referring to spiritual death). No amount of good that we do will erase the bad. The only way that sin can be erased is by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; Rom 5:9). Bible speaks of it as being *washed* (Acts 22:16; I Cor 6:11; Eph 5:26; Titus 3:5; Rev 1:5). The condemnation that results from sin involves eternal punishment (Mt 25:46; Rev 14:11). This is where you ordinarily hear about *hell*. Hell is the place of eternal punishment prepared for the devil and his angels, and will be the abode of the wicked.

## ***How Does Jesus' Blood Save Us?...***

Since "the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23), someone must die. The principle behind sacrifice is that of substitution. Rather than take the life of a human, an animal was sacrificed instead. The life of the animal was in the blood (Lev 17:11). That blood was poured out before the altar of the Lord in place of taking the human's life. These sacrifices, however, could never actually take away sin (Heb 10:1-4). They were used until the perfect sacrifice could be made to remove all sins (Heb 9:15). Now, rather than offer animal sacrifices, which never actually removed sin, we rely on the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

But how could the life on one human being atone for the sins of many human beings? There are two reasons His sacrifice worked on behalf of all men.

- 1) He was sinless. If He had sinned, he would have needed someone else to atone for Him.
- 2) He was the Creator. He is the origin of all mankind (Jn 1:1-4; Heb 1:1-3).

Muslims often ask this, claiming it to be unreasonable. But then, they deny the second reason, saying that Jesus was just another prophet of Allah. Not just anyone could have stepped up to the cross and died for all mankind. The one who created all mankind could. His perfect life, and perfect sacrifice has given all hope through faith and obedience to Him.