

# I Will Be Their God

The question is sometimes asked about how people were saved before Christ came into this world and died on the cross. After all, if salvation is by faith in Christ or believing in Him, then how could anyone have had faith or believed? This dilemma is actually a big red flag that something is seriously wrong with the gospel message being preached. But once our message is right, there's nothing left to question.

Several times Paul called "God our Saviour" (1Ti 1:1,2:3; Tit 1:3,2:10,3:4), "the living God, who is the Saviour of all men" (1Ti 4:10). Yet he also called both God and Jesus Christ our Savior, "God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ" (1Ti 1:1), "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Tit 2:13), "God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour" (Tit 1:4). And Jesus Christ Himself taught that God is our Savior because He sent Him to save us, "**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son**, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. **For God sent not his Son** into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him **might be saved.**" (Jhn 3:16-17). Although Jesus Christ certainly is our Savior because He did the work for which He was sent, ultimately God is our Savior for sending His Son to do the work.

Before Christ, God's people were saved by God their Savior: "They forgat **God their saviour**, which had done great things in Egypt" (Psa 106:21); "Verily thou *art* a God that hidest thyself, **O God of Israel, the Saviour**" (Isa 45:15); "*there is* no God else beside me; a just **God and a Saviour**; *there is* none beside me" (Isa 45:21); "**I the LORD *am* thy Saviour** and thy Redeemer" (Isa 49:26,60:16); "Yet I *am* the LORD thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no god but me: for ***there is* no saviour beside me**" (Hos 13:4).

The writer of Hebrews stated, "**Now faith [faithfulness] is the substance of things hoped for**, the evidence of things not seen. **For by it the elders obtained a good report.**" (Heb 11:1-2). The repeated "By faith [faithfulness]" phrase for the people listed—Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sara, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, and Samuel, and others not listed—is that the accounts of their faithfulness to God recorded in the Scriptures is the "good report" from Him. God witnessed that their deaths in hope of resurrection to eternal life will be substantiated or actualized because they were faithful to Him.

Salvation is about pleasing God, "**But without faith [faithfulness] it is impossible to please him**: for he that cometh to God must believe [*trust*] that he is, and *that he is* a **rewarder** of them that diligently seek him" (Heb 11:6). And this faithfulness to God our Father is what Jesus taught: "That thine alms may be **in secret**: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall **reward thee openly**" (Mat 6:4), "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is **in secret**; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall **reward thee openly**" (Mat 6:6), "That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is **in secret**: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall **reward thee openly**" (Mat 6:18). God will reward those faithful and pleasing to Him.

God progressively revealed Himself since the beginning, and faithfulness to Him before Christ came meant submitting to whatever He had revealed and required at that time. But faithfulness to Him after Christ has come means submitting to His requirement to submit to His Son. Submitting to His Son is faithfulness to God. After healing people, Jesus would sometimes say "thy faith [faithfulness] hath made thee whole" (Mat 9:22; Mar 5:34,10:52; Luk 8:48,17:19). This wasn't about faith or belief but faithfulness to God in receiving Him as the Prophet foretold by Moses, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee **a Prophet** from the midst of thee, of thy brethren ... I will raise them up **a Prophet** from among their brethren" (Deu 18:15,18); "This is of a truth **that prophet** that should come into the world" (Jhn 6:14), "Of a truth this is **the Prophet**" (Jhn 7:40).

Salvation is ultimately about the one true God being the God of our lives: "I will be their God" (Gen 17:8; Jer 24:7,32:38; Eze 11:20,37:23; Zec 8:8); "will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer 31:33); "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God" (Jer 32:38); "ye shall be my people, and I will be your God" (Eze 36:28); "I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Eze 37:27); "I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2Co 6:16); "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people" (Heb 8:10); "God is not ashamed to be called their God" (Heb 11:16); "they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God" (Rev 21:3); "I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev 21:7). And being the God of our lives is that because we're obeying the commandments of His Son Jesus Christ and living by the truth He taught, then we can trust God to provide for us, protect us, defend us, and save us. It's living faithfully to please to Him.