

December 8th



Advent 2024

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—L.S. Chafer,
Systematic Theology

—CHRISTMAS & CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY—

“Soteriology”

Introduction: Theology & the Birth Narratives

- The best theology is biblical, systematic, contemporary, and practical. This Advent, we are considering together how some of the most familiar accounts in our Bibles reinforce some of the most important truths of Christian theology.

Anthropology— Though mankind is affected in every way by sin and is in need of salvation, we can still experience the goodness of God’s original design for us as men and women in the world.

Key Point: The incarnation of the Lord Jesus is central to the saving work of God on our behalf so that we might be _____ from our enemies and _____ of our sins.

Soteriology Defined

“Soteriology is that portion of Systematic Theology which treats of *salvation*. The word salvation is a translation of the Greek word *sōtēria*...and is derived immediately from the word *sōtēr* which means *Savior*...when thus employed, it represents what is evidently the most comprehensive one doctrine of the Bible.”—L.S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology*

Salvation: Forgiveness & Deliverance

- The birth narratives affirm the necessity of salvation for sinful humanity.

1. The words of the angel to Joseph concerning the Lord Jesus.

Matt. 1:20-21— *20 But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”*

“Jesus”— The Gk. “*Iēsous*” is a transliteration of the Hebrew and Aramaic *Yeshua* or “Joshua.” This word combines *ya*, an abbreviation for the name *Yahweh* (the name of Israel’s God, often rendered “the LORD” in our Bibles), and the verb *yasha*, meaning to “save” or “deliver.” Thus, the name means “the LORD is salvation” or “*Yahweh* saves.”

⇒ In the OT, this name is associated with individuals used of God to deliver His people (Joshua the son of Nun—Jos. 24:14-14) and to cleanse them of sin and mediate on their behalf (Joshua the son of son of Jehozadak—Zech. 3:4).

Key Point: The Savior’s name associated Him with great _____ and _____ works of deliverance in the OT, anticipating the greater work He had come to accomplish.

2. The words of Zechariah concerning the work of his son John & the coming of Messiah.

Luke 1:68-69— *68 “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people 69 and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David,*

Luke 1:76-79— *76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, 77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, 78 because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high 79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”*

Key Point: Deliverance from _____ is a necessary prerequisite in order for the fullness of salvation to be experienced by God’s people.

3. *Mary's words of praise.*

Luke 1:46-48—*46 And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, 48 for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;*

Luke 1:54-55—*54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, 55 as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever."*

Key Point: Although the saving work of God is accomplished on behalf of all of His people, it is received _____ and is to be acknowledged _____ by each us.

The Incarnation & Salvation

- The words of Isaiah the prophet anticipated the _____ and _____ of Messiah nearly 800 yrs. before the events described in the birth narratives.

1. *It was necessary for the Savior had to take unto Himself a truly human body in order that He might _____ in the place of sinful humanity as our substitute.*

Isa. 53:4-10a—*4 Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.*

7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth. 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away; and as for his generation, who considered that he was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? 9 And they made his grave with the wicked and with a rich man in his death, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

10 Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him; he has put him to grief;

2. *In order that sinful humanity might be delivered from death, the Savior had to _____ again from the dead so that we might truly have the hope of everlasting life.*

Isa. 53:10b-12—*when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.*

"It was by surrendering to death the body which He had taken as an offering and sacrifice free from every stain, that He forthwith abolished death for His human brethren by the offering of the equivalent"

—Athanasius of Alexandria, *On the Incarnation* (AD 4th c.)

Christmas & Christian Theology

1. This time of year, it is good that we reflect upon both our need for a Savior and God's _____ for us through the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Christ has come to deliver us from our enemies of _____, _____, and _____.

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