

## Chapter 2

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### ***Second Opportunity, Not By Chance***

Again, before moving on to specific Scripture supporting the all of God, it is needful to address a few issues first, one is the matter of a "second chance," which is covered in this chapter, and the other is the matter of "free will," which is covered in Chapter 3.

It is not uncommon to hear it said that mankind has only one chance to believe on Jesus and that once one dies it is all over; there is no second chance to be saved. It is almost as if the old saying "You made your bed now lie in it" applies.

#### **That No One May Boast**

Personally, I believe that many Christians believe they saved themselves by a work of faith, as if they figured out salvation on their own and therefore deserve to be saved. Consequently, those who do not do it their way in this life deserve to be cast into a place of torture called *hell* forever and ever and ever.

I think Paul would have a major problem with many believers in our day who think like this. Consider what Paul had to say about his, as well as everyone's, salvation experience.

**(8) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; (9) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.** (Ephesians 2:8-9 NASB)

If we have any boast in our salvation experience, then it is a result of our own work. We think it is *our* faith that saved us, not the grace and faith of the Lord Jesus that is given to us.

**(12) I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, (13) even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; (14) and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus.** (1 Timothy 1:12-14 NASB)

The *New Living Translation* seems to best capture the heart of verse 14.

**Oh, how generous and gracious our Lord was! He filled me with the faith and love that come from Christ Jesus.** (1 Timothy 1:14 NLT)

In other words, we cannot manufacture faith and love on our own; it comes from Jesus Himself. It is the faith *of* the Son of God, not faith *in* the Son.

**I am crucified with Christ, and no longer live, I, but Christ lives in me; but in that I now live in flesh, I live by faith, the faith of the Son of God, who has loved me and given himself for me.**  
(Galatians 2:20 DNT)

**(15) But when God, who set me apart even from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, (16) was pleased to reveal his Son in me....** (Galatians 1:15-16 DNT)

Paul claimed no personal credit whatsoever for his calling and the revelation of Christ within him. It was all of God. But God!

### **Nothing By Chance**

As stated already, without doubt, many Christians probably believe that there is **no** second chance for an unbeliever. After all, it is commonly taught from the pulpits that when one dies in unbelief, there is no second chance to be saved. As the teaching goes, there are only two choices for mankind, heaven or hell. "Make up your mind in this life or toast in hell." Simply, when one dies, it is all over.

But is this true? Does Scripture support such thinking? Does the history of the Lord's people and the nations support such thinking? I say no. God has left nothing to chance, for everything is being worked out according to His plan to achieve His ultimate purpose of *All*. The fact of the matter is that Scripture, as well as history, reveals a mighty and loving God who continually reaches out to His people and to all mankind, for He loves the world.

A verse that is often quoted in support of "no second chance" is Hebrews 9:27: **And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this [comes] judgment.** However, one must read into this that there is no second chance for salvation, for it says nothing about how many chances one might have.

When one dies, judgment follows. It doesn't say when judgment occurs but that it occurs sometime after death. Obviously, in the case of those who are raised from the dead to appear before the Great White Throne Judgment, it occurs at the end of the Lord's Day right before God's Day.

### **A Second Passover**

The Old Testament is filled with types and shadows of God's plan, and there is one type in Scripture that makes it quite clear that God reaches out to mankind more than once; it is the Passover experience of justification by faith. Consider the sons of Israel and the keeping of Passover.

**(9) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, (10) "Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'If any one of you or of your generations becomes unclean because of a dead person, or is on a distant journey, he may, however, observe the Passover to the LORD. (11) 'In the second**

**month on the fourteenth day at twilight, they shall observe it; they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.** (Numbers 9:9-11 NASB)

There were two things that might have kept an Israelite from keeping Passover, touching a dead body and being away on a long journey. In these cases, they were allowed to keep it in the second month. In other words, they had a second opportunity, not so much a second chance.

We see the same opportunity applying to mankind.

In Adam, we all occupy mortal bodies or bodies of death (Romans 7:24). Essentially, we are like the dead person in verse 10. Mankind is unclean in this condition. Consequently, unbelievers remain unclean in their dead bodies; that is, they touch death. On the other hand, when we believe on Jesus, we pass out of death into life (1 John 3:14), and the Word of God cleanses us (John 15:3). We will still die physically, but Jesus' blood cleanses us from all sin.

**Passover** is the first step in a believer's journey with the Lord, for it speaks of **justification by faith** as we apply Jesus' blood to the door of our heart. Thus, in type, we see that one is afforded another opportunity to apply the blood of Jesus to his heart. It even states that in the second month, the Passover can be observed—a second opportunity.

The other reason for a second opportunity is seen through an Israelite who was on a long journey and could not return in time for Passover. He also could keep Passover in the second month. This is like the prodigal son who wandered from his father's house and was given a second opportunity to be part of his father's house (Luke 15:11-32). Thus, men might wander their whole lives, but a day will come when they will be invited into the Father's house to keep the Passover, that is, to be justified by faith.

### **All Israel Saved**

I hesitate injecting this thought into this discussion because of Christian Zionism that is so rampant among many Christians today and that has blinded so many to the truth of God's *true* Jew and *spiritual* Israel. However, I will take the risk with the caveat that the Israel Paul speaks of is based on much more than a **gene pool**; it is based on a **heart pool**.

**For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?** (Romans 11:15 NASB)

**(25) For I do not wish you to be ignorant, brethren, of this secret—that ye may not be wise in your own conceits—that hardness in part to Israel hath happened till the fulness of the nations may come in; (26) and so all Israel shall be saved, according as it hath been written, 'There shall come forth out of Sion he who is delivering, and he shall turn away impiety from Jacob, (27) and this to them is the covenant from Me, when I may take away their sins.'** (Romans 11:25-27 YLT)

Studying the history of ancient Israel reveals one glaring fact: They do not deserve to be saved or given another opportunity to believe in Christ as their Savior. And yet, Paul declares that they will be given this second opportunity when the fullness of the nations has come in.

Don't you find it rather odd that so many Christians expect all of Israel to be saved and yet reject any notion that all of mankind will be saved? Have you studied the history of ancient Israel lately? Have you studied the history of a people that sacrificed their children to false gods and broke their covenant with God to the point that God divorced Himself from them and scattered them to the nations? If God can and will save this rebellious lot, do you not think He can and will save the rest of the rebellious lot of mankind? Logic demands it; Scripture proves it!

### "Re" Words

Now, another facet of the question of more than one opportunity can be seen in what could be called the *re* words that are commonly bantered about by Christians. Many cry out to God to "re us," for they know the condition of God's people is not what it should be; and yet, they fail to make the connection to the rest of mankind who are just like us in so many respects.

There are at least seven words that begin with the letter *r* and the prefix *re* that, over the years, have been stressed among certain Christian groups: ***reconciliation, restoration, recovery, revival, reformation, restitution, and redemption.***

The common denominator of each of these words is the prefix *re*, which means "back, again, anew, over again." In music, *re* is "a syllable representing the second tone of the diatonic scale." We could say that *re* indicates a second time or opportunity.

Just so you do not miss my point: Christians are all the time speaking of second opportunities for the ecclesia, but when it comes to the rest of mankind, there is no such thing. Let us humble ourselves before the mighty hand of God. Perhaps, He will remove the blinders of pride from our eyes in order to see as He sees. We are in bondage to our own pride, which leads to the letter *r* itself.

### Out of Bondage, Into Freedom

The letter *r* is the 18<sup>th</sup> letter of the English alphabet. The number **18** signifies ***coming out of bondage and into spiritual freedom.*** This is seen in type in Judges 10:8 where the sons of Israel had been afflicted and crushed for 18 years so that Israel was greatly distressed. They cried out to the Lord and they put away the foreign gods from among them and served the Lord, who could bear the misery of Israel no longer (Judges 10:16). The antitype of this is seen in the account of the Lord Jesus healing a woman who for 18 years had a sickness caused by a spirit.

**(10) And He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. (11) And there was a woman who for eighteen years had had a sickness caused by a spirit; and she was bent**

**double, and could not straighten up at all. (12) When Jesus saw her, He called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your sickness." (13) And He laid His hands on her; and immediately she was made erect again and began glorifying God. (Luke 13:10-13 NASB)**

This woman was doubled over, and, in a sense, she could not see straight, for, when she walked, all she could do was look down at the ground. Jesus was putting His finger on the spiritual condition of the Judahites that sat in the synagogue. Spiritually, they were doubled over and could not see straight, to the point that they could not discern that the Anointed One was in their midst, and that, at its root, His Kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, not a political one as the people had expected. Jesus came to free them from their soulical, religious bondage, but the religious leaders (elite) of the day rejected Him and, as a result, remained in bondage.

Most commentators look at the number **18** as *the number of bondage*, but, for most numbers, there is also a positive meaning. In this case, it is also *the number of freedom*, for, in both accounts, it was after 18 years that freedom came. So, the number **18** refers *to release from bondage into freedom*.

Given this understanding, it is easy to see that the letter *r* as the 18<sup>th</sup> letter of the English alphabet also points to coming out of bondage into freedom. And, in fact, this is exactly what is seen in the meaning of all seven words that begin with the letter *r*.

However, there is one big exception. Many see these *re* words as applying mostly to those who believe in this age; however, most of Scripture speaks forth God's heart to free all creation and to make all things new, and all mankind is included in this all.

Before proceeding further, there are a few points that need to be stressed.

**First**, as a group, these words speak of bringing mankind back onto some ground that has been lost, but they do not necessarily speak of something new. If we go back far enough in the history of mankind, we will discover the original state or condition that is being regained.

**Second**, it seems that the Lord's people divide themselves along one or more of these *re* words. Consequently, there are those who see everything that God is doing through the prism of restoration, others through revival, and others through recovery, etc. There is nothing wrong with this, for each can be explained according to Scripture. However, there is the potential danger of becoming so fixated on these things, some of which are described as moves of God, or simply movements, that one could lose sight of, or never even come into sight of, the glory of God's ultimate purpose. If we are not careful, we will begin to see these moves or movements as ends unto themselves and fail to see that they are merely part of God's plan. He reconciles; He redeems; He restores; He revives; He recovers, and He *will* retribute all things because this is part of His plan to bring about His purpose.

**Third**, as already stressed, there is another danger that must be guarded against, and that is seeing all in reference only to the ecclesia, as if the rest of mankind is destined never to come into the **all** of God.

Some speak as if when the last saint is saved in our age the so-called church has arrived. It is as if when the last saint comes in, the door of the good ol' gospel ship is shut and the Lord and His people go flying off into eternity, leaving everything else behind. No! We have just begun, for there is a greater work to do now and in the ages to come—to bring the rest of mankind and all of creation into the Presence of God through our Lord Jesus, the Son of God and the Creator of all. For God the Father to be all in all by making all new, all mankind and all creation must be included in His all and in His new.

**Fourth**, to reiterate, these *re* concepts are **not** the **all new of God**; they are simply part of God's plan that must be completed in order to bring in the **all new**. They are part of the plan, **not** the purpose. Another way of stating this is that these *re* concepts are part of God's **strategy** that drives God's plan to achieve His purpose. Or yet, another way of stating this is that these concepts are components of God's plan.

Now, separate chapters are devoted to some of the *re* words; nevertheless, it might be helpful to briefly mention each of them, even if it is to define them, recognizing that there are other *re* word that could be presented, such as *repentance* and *return*.

### **Reconciliation**

The word *reconciliation* means "to reconcile," which means "to make friendly again or win over to a friendly attitude; to bring into harmony; to make content; to make peace."

In order for the Father to be all in all, He must be reconciled or in harmony with all creation, and this is what the blood of the cross has accomplished, without exception (Colossians 1:19-20). All things must be and will be reconciled to God as He makes all new, for the cross is an absolute, 100% success in the reconciliation of *the all*. This is stressed in Chapter 7.

### **Restoration**

The word *restoration* means "reinstatement; a putting or bringing back into a former, normal, or unimpaired state or condition." The word *restore* means "to give back (something taken away, lost, etc.); make restitution; to bring back to a former or normal condition, as by repairing, rebuilding, altering, etc.; to put a person back in a place, position, rank, etc.: as, restore a king; to bring back to health, strength, etc.; to reestablish something that has passed away, as a custom, system of government, etc."

Restoration is an absolute prerequisite for achieving the purpose of God. All things must be restored back to God. This is stressed in Chapter 8.

## Recovery

The word *recover* means "to get back (something lost, stolen, etc.); to regain; to compensate for; make up for; to catch or save; to reclaim." Thus, *recovery* means to reclaim something that has been lost. *Recovery* is not as common a term in our day as restoration is.

**Then it will happen on that day that the Lord will again *recover* the second time with His hand the remnant of His people, who will remain, from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.** (Isaiah 11:11 NASB)

Those who hold to the concept of recovery see the visible or apparent church in declension and, as a whole, not coming out of this declension in our present eon. They see a remnant of believers or a remnant of grace that stand for what the *ecclesia* is in the heart and mind of God. The remnant, which speaks of the conquerors or overcomers, holds to the testimony of Jesus as a representative of the whole *ecclesia* of God.

## Revival

The word *revival* means "a bringing or coming back into use, attention, or being, after a decline; restoration to vigor or activity; a bringing or coming back to life or consciousness; a stirring up of religious faith among those who have been indifferent, usually by dramatic, fervid preaching and meetings." In the Hebrew, the word *chayah*, which means "to live," is often translated as *revive*.

**Will You not Yourself revive [chayah] us again, that Your people may rejoice in You?** (Psalm 85:6 NASB; also Isaiah 57:15)

Today, *revival* is used in reference to the church of our day being spiritually revived. There have been revivals in the history of the church, and there are some today that believe we are on the cusp of a great revival that will occur in our present age that will exceed all previous revivals. Time will tell if this will be so.

Many who are looking for revival also see the church rising to a place of glory in the earth as a precursor to the Second Coming of Christ. In other words, the visible, lukewarm church will be revived as preparation for the coming of the Kingdom of Christ. Some revivalists see the Kingdom being manifested through the church, which will have become without spot or wrinkle, prior to the arrival of Christ to the earth.

Personally, I see a revival coming that will follow the onset of the **Tabernacles Age** when the conquerors of Christ bring revival to the rest of the *ecclesia* that failed to conquer during our present evil age. The conquerors are the ones counted worthy to reign with Christ in His Kingdom (Revelation 3:21). They will be transfigured into immortal, glorified, celestial, spiritual bodies in the image of the Lord. Through their ministry, the rest of the *ecclesia* will be revived and the nations will learn righteousness.

## Reformation

The word (verb) *reform* means "1) to make better by removing faults and defects, correct; 2) to make better by putting a stop to abuses or malpractices; 3) to put a stop to (abuses, etc); 4) to bring (a person) by force or persuasion to give up misconduct and behave better." The word *reform* (noun) means "an improvement in character and conduct." Thus, the word *reformation* is about reforming.

The word *reformation* should immediately bring to mind the Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century that is attributed to the reformers, most notably, Martin Luther, and what is called the Protestant Reformation.

Studying the history of the church from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries reveals, without any doubt whatsoever, that the visible, institutional church was in great need of reformation. It is clear that the Lord raised up men to challenge the flagrant abuse and corruption that had gone on and was going on in the name of Christ. This led to a movement of God that established many of the mainstream denominational churches, many of which are with us today, at least in name.

If Revelation 2-3 is the history of the ecclesia from the time of John to the end of our present age, then there is need for reform, especially at the end of the age. Historicists believe the ecclesia in Laodicea most aligns with the modern-day church of the West that has been blessed with great wealth and has become lukewarm to the Lord, something He finds repugnant (Revelation 3:14-18). This church is in need of reform, a change of heart and action.

Now, some today would say that we are beyond this point and that the church is rising up to shine before the nations. Are we so sure of this? Has repentance, a great turning point come to the modern-day church? Have we truly heeded this call from the Lord to buy from Him? Or, have the Lord's people grown impatient in waiting for Him and are deceived into thinking they are ready to shine? What is the Spirit of God saying? Who is standing in the counsel of the Lord to hear His voice?

Many might be looking for revival or restoration, but perhaps, we need some reformation first. We need a change of behavior. We need a turning point in which we know that we are pleasing to the Lord and readied for the final days of our present wicked age and prepared for the Age to come. We need holiness, and we need humility!

**(14) As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, (15) but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; (16) because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY." (1 Peter 1:14-16 NASB)**

**Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.... (1 Peter 5:6 NASB)**



## Restitution

The word *restitution* means "a giving back to the rightful owner of something that has been lost or taken away; restoration; a making good for loss or damage; reimbursement; a return to a former condition or situation." This principle is discovered in **the laws of restitution** given to ancient Israel (Exodus 22; Leviticus 5:16; 6:5; Numbers 5:7, 8; 2 Samuel 12:6).

**(33) "If a man opens a pit, or digs a pit and does not cover it over, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, (34) the owner of the pit shall make restitution; he shall give money to its owner, and the dead animal shall become his."** (Exodus 21:33-34 NASB)

Depending on the translation, the Hebrew word *shub*, often translated as *restoration*, is also translated as *restitution*; consequently, the two words go hand-in-hand. The Hebrew word *shalam*, which means "to be safe, to be completed," is also translated as *restitution*. This meaning implies that *restitution* makes things complete as in restoring things to a safe condition or as they were intended to be.

Restitution will be a significant part of the chastening that will take place through the lake of fire. Paul tells us that the saints will judge the world and the messengers or angels (1 Corinthians 6:2, 3), and this judgment is for setting things right, which, obviously, encompasses the concepts of restoration and restitution. Simply, all debts will be paid. Do not confuse this with the one debt that our Lord Jesus paid for the sin of the world, which is explained by the word *redemption*.

## Redemption

Finally, the word *redemption* means "to redeem," which means "to buy back, to get back; to recover." Of course, the whole Christian faith rests on **redemption through His blood** (Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:12) and the fact that we have a **kinsman-redeemer**, but so does the destiny of all mankind rest on this same fact. This is covered in Chapter 9.

**For He .... transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.** (Colossians 1:13-14 NASB)

However, there is another aspect that should be of great interest to all believers who are waiting for the Son to come from heaven **who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory** (1 Thessalonians 1:10; Philippians 3:20-21).

**And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.** (Romans 8:23 NASB)

This verse is actually the closest in thought to God making all new, for the redeemed body is in the image of the Son of God, and this is the **New Creation in Christ**. With resurrection and

transfiguration, we do not get back our old mortal body; we receive an entirely new body constituted to traverse both the spirit (heavenly) and the physical (earthly) realms and one that is no longer subject to corruption and death and the sin that reigns in death.

**Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. (1 John 3:2 NASB)**

**(42) So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; (43) it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; (44) it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. (45) So also it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. (46) However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. (47) The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. (48) As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. (49) Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. (50) Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (1 Corinthians 15:42-50 NASB)**

Undoubtedly, many Christians have been taught that most of mankind is excluded from this glorious expectation. However, Paul's use of the phrase *the resurrection of the dead*, which refers to the resurrection of all the dead in the general resurrection, would argue otherwise. Resurrection *from among the dead* or *exanastasis* refers to the conquerors in the first resurrection (Mark 9:9-10; Philippians 3:11).

Consider this question: Why is it that the Lord's people expect God to give them a second, a third, a fourth, etc. opportunity to return to Him through such things as recovery, restoration, revival, and reformation, and yet, so many of His people are so adamant that the rest of mankind has only one chance to be saved or it is all over? The same question is asked in reference to Israel.

Of course, the answer to this question does not prove the point of this book; however, it does seem to speak to the heart of the church that doesn't see the inconsistency of their prideful thinking.

Again, let us throw off the shackle of pride that we saved ourselves through our own faith and humble ourselves before the mighty hand of God. Perhaps, just perhaps, He will reveal to His people in these last days His heart of love for all mankind and His plan to save all, just as He has saved us by grace through faith, the faith and love of His Son given to us, so that we have no boast.