

UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but this is my one aim:
to forget everything that's behind, and to strain every nerve to go after what lies ahead.
I press on toward the finish line, where the prize waiting for me is the upward call of God*
IN KING JESUS.

(Philippians 3:13-14)

#08-1406

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Love of God—A Song for All by F. Lehman

Recently, we were with some brethren in Christ, and we sang the well-known song, *The Love of God*, written in 1917 by Frederick M. Lehman. The roots of his song are in the Jewish poem *Haddamut*, written in Aramaic during the eleventh century in Germany.

The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
**It goes beyond the highest star,
And reaches to the lowest hell;
The guilty pair, bowed down with care,
God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled,
And pardoned from his sin.**

Refrain

Oh, love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure—
The saints' and angels' song.

When hoary time shall pass away,
And earthly thrones and kingdoms fall,
When men who here refuse to pray,
On rocks and hills and mountains call,
**God's love so sure, shall still endure,
All measureless and strong;
Redeeming grace to Adam's race—
The saints' and angels song.**

Refrain

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;
**To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.**

Evidence of its Jewish roots is made clear in the last stanza, as shown in this excerpt from the *Haddamut*.

Were the sky of parchment made,
A quill each reed, each twig and blade,
Could we with ink the oceans fill,
Were every man a scribe of skill,

The marvelous story
Of God's great glory
Would still remain untold,
For He, most high
The earth and sky
Created alone of old.

It is no secret I believe the good news of scripture is that God's Son is truly the Savior of the world and that, as Savior, He takes away the sin of the whole world, that is, all the sin, none excluded. This is based on the belief that the cross was and is an absolute, 100% success in the salvation of all mankind, none excluded; not all at the same time but all eventually, each in their own order or rank or troop. *In Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order* (1 Corinthians 15:22-23). It pleased God the Father to crush His Son on a cross (Isaiah 53:10), for Jesus the man was delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God (Acts 2:23). A savior is one who saves those unable to save themselves, meaning a savior delivers, rescues, or saves them from something that they were unable to do on their own, and, in the case of all of us, it is sin and death. This is exactly what Jesus, the begotten Son of God, did for all mankind, all born of Adam's race. Jesus came not to judge the world, but to save it (John 12:47). *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners* (1 Timothy 1:15), and all have sinned (Romans 3:23). *For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly* (Romans 5:6). In other words, Jesus has rescued Adam's entire helpless and ungodly race from sin and death and, ultimately, is going to lead the entirety of the same race into life, free of sin and death and full of the righteousness and love of God. The Savior of the world is the way, the truth, the resurrection, and the life.

Well, this is only the tip of the iceberg, so to speak, of the scriptural evidence of the salvation of all. I realize that those who oppose, even vehemently oppose, this truth have their own pet verses, just as I do, to refute it, but, taken on the whole, I have concluded that the evidence is irrefutable.

Now, back to the song; frankly, I have come to the conclusion that true Christians, that is, those who have an earnest of the spirit or the spirit of Christ residing within them, know *God is love* means that, in His love, He is eventually going to reach the heart of every human that has been or will be born on earth. They may deny it outwardly, even fight against it with great agitation, but it is deep within them, perhaps no more than in germ form, but it is there nonetheless, and they cannot escape it. I have heard too many Christians that vehemently deny the salvation of all make statements that are so close to the truth that it is a wonder they are not stopped dead in their tracks as if hit by a train. The logic of things they might say or even sing, as in this song by Frederick Lehman, leaves them with only one logical conclusion; and yet, they cannot make it all the way to its rightful conclusion, as if blindness has set in or a veil has been draped over the eye of their understanding. I believe God has placed this blindness on most of His people as the second advent of Christ is on the horizon, much like He blinded Judah at the first advent of Christ. But, I also believe that the day is coming when God is going to lift this veil and remove this blindness, and, when He does, the world will finally see a people who truly know the love of God and how to express this love as it has never been expressed to and among mankind.

If you are a skeptic regarding this great truth, I ask you to read this song or, better yet, search for it on the Internet and listen to it. Do you believe that God's love reaches to the highest star and to the lowest hell (however you view hell)? Do you believe that God's Son came to win, to reconcile, and to pardon? Do you believe that God's love is so sure, enduring, measureless, and strong that it extends His redeeming grace to Adam's entire race? Do you believe that there is any limit to God's love; is it infinite love to you? If in His infinite love, God through His Son has saved you and continues to save you who once was a helpless transgressor, dead in your trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1), don't you think God knows how to reach the heart of all and overwhelm them with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 1:13-14), just as He did for you? You didn't save yourself, so why do you think that man must save himself by his own volition and that the vast majority will not do so? Think about it!

Dear saints, *eonian* life is to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He sent (John 17:3). God is love! Isn't it time to know that the immeasurable love of God cannot fail to love all of His creation back to Himself?