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Volume 2 – 2009

Does the Book of Revelation Teach Salvation by Works?

Dr. Tankiso Letseli

Senior Lecturer - New Testament Studies

Helderberg College Faculty of Theology

Former President, Southern Africa Union Conference of the
Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Bloemfontein, South Africa ¹

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¹ Letseli holds a DLitt et Phil from University of Johannesburg, see letselit@adventist.org.za and sau.president@adventist.org.za.

Introduction

The purpose of this work is to try to test if there is a basis to conclude that the book of Revelation teaches “salvation by works.” The study will also endeavour to briefly cover the motif of “judgement” to determine its role within the view of “salvation by works” in the framework of the Book of Revelation.

How did the New Testament Church, Early Church Fathers, and the leading Reformers (Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Zwingli) relate to the topic at issue in the context of the book of Revelation? What was their understanding of the book of Revelation, within the framework of “salvation by works?” The study will also focus on Rev. 20:12 simply because the text has been used to conclude that the book of Revelation grounds or base salvation on good works.

A. Brief Introductory Matters Around the Book of Revelation

One needs to admit that the book of Revelation is one of the difficult books of the Bible, and also one that challenges one’s understanding. Morris’ statement is quite instructive. He writes,

Revelation is possibly the most difficult to all the books in the Bible to interpret. Its symbolism is strange to modern readers. Its beasts and bowls and trumpets come from thought world that is not ours. Though doubtless all this was familiar enough to Christians of the first century, Christians of the twentieth century have lost the key to its interpretation. The result is that the book becomes the happy hunting ground of all sorts of religious cranks. They make it foreshadow strange prophetic schemes, whose strangeness is equalled only by the confidence with which their exponents claim to be able to interpret this ancient writing. Confronted with this mixture of baffling symbolism and confident claims to the only correct interpretation most Christians are confused and inclined to be suspicious. They generally leave the book alone in consequence. Which is a great pity, for, while much of the symbolism of the book is obscure, a very great deal of its teaching is both plain and valuable and relevant to our needs.²

One needs to add that the book of Revelation is a New Testament piece of literature, and it is written from the perspective of the Cross of Jesus Christ. Bierce gives an interesting and ironic view of the book of Revelation. He said that the book of Revelation is "a famous book in which St. John the Divine concealed all that he knew. The

² Leon Morris, *The Cross in the New Testament*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), pp. 353, 354.

revealing is done by the commentators, who know nothing."³ Bierce gives an impression that John veiled the truth or message of Revelation (although his view is against the title of the book), and he asserts that commentators of the book of Revelation are also doing a lousy job of deciphering the meaning of the text.

The views of Chesterton, in addition to those of Bierce, are worth mentioning in that they are more scathing particularly to the commentators and scholars. He remarked, "Though St. John the Evangelist saw many strange monsters in his vision, he saw no creature so wild as one of his own commentators."⁴ To a certain extent, Chesterton and Bierce, assist readers to appreciate the difficulty of reading and understanding the book of Revelation. There are quite divergent views and teachings emanating from different interpretations of the book of Revelation.

It is generally accepted among scholars that the Book of Revelation, together with "Fourth Gospel" (Gospel of John) and "Three Epistles of John," came from the same pen of "John the beloved" or commonly known as "John, the son of Zebedee." The author of Revelation has some Jewish background in that the material he used is largely derived from the Old Testament.⁵

Interestingly, there is a huge collection of Old Testament sanctuary language or imagery or terms or scenes in the Apocalypse of John.⁶ The function of the sanctuary in the Old Testament was to deal with the problem of purging or covering sin and means and mode

³ Ambrose Bierce, *The Devil's Dictionary* (New York: Dover Publications, [1911] 1993), pp. 107.

⁴ G K Chesterton, *Orthodoxy* (New York: John Lane Company, 1908), p. 29.

⁵ Richard Backham, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*, (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, [1993] 2003, p. 4. See also Jan Paulien, "The Role of the Hebrew Cultus, Sanctuary, and temple in the Plot and Structure of the Book of Revelation," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, Autumn 1995, Vol. 33, No. 2, pp. 245-264. See also Jon Paulien, "Dreading the Whirlwind Intertextuality and the Use of the Old Testament in Revelation," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, Spring 2001, Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 5-22.

⁶ "His blood" (Rev 1:5); "blood of the lamb" (5:9; 12:11); "slain" or *sphazo* used in the context of sacrifice and persecution of saints (5:6, 9, 12; 13:8; 18:24); "golden lampstands" (1:13, 20); "golden censer" (8:3); "incense" (5:8; 8:4); "altar" of incense and burnt offerings (6:9; 8:3, 5; 9:13; 11:1; 14:18; 16:7); "trumpet" (1:10; 4:1; 8:13; 9:13, 14; cf. Num. 10:8-10); "door" or *thura* – often used in connection to the Old Testament sanctuary door in Greek OT (LXX) (4:1); "ark of his testament" (11:19); "temple" used in the context of Old Testament sanctuary's "holy of holies" or a portion or room in the "tabernacle" (3:12; 7:15; 11:1, 2, 19; 14:15, 17; 15:5, 6, 8; 16:1, 17; 21:22); "tabernacle" (13:6; 15:5; 21:3); "clothed with a garment down to the foot" in connection to the Old Testament priestly attire (1:13); "precious stones" found on the breastplate of Old Testament priests (4:3; 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:19; cf. Exod. 28:17-21).

of salvation/redemption. The author of the book of Revelation is also writing from a New Testament Cross perspective in that he highlights “grace” expressed in the story of Jesus Christ’s life and death at the cross, and yielding “peace” and reconciliation to all.⁷

The book of Revelation was intended to comfort saints who were under stressful situation as highlighted by a letter to Seven Churches in Asia Minor (Rev. 1:11). Saints are encouraged to remain faithful until death (Rev. 2:10), emulating an example set by Antipas (Rev. 2:13). Some saints are entreated to be loving and Christ-like when dealing with each other (Rev. 2:4-5). Several promises are made to those who persevere until the end.⁸ The book of Revelation presents itself as “three-in-one,” namely, an Epistle (Rev. 1:11), a Prophecy (Rev. 1:3; 22:19), and Apocalypse (Rev. 1:1).

The book is also a culmination of salvation history. One can accurately term the book of Revelation “the climax of operation salvation.” Morris has this to say,

Chapter 7 introduces us to a multitude ‘which come out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb’ (v. 14). The expressive imagery emphasizes that the blood of Christ is the effective cause of salvation. The same idea seems to be in mind when the saints are said to be clothed in white linen (Rev. 19:14). Naturally we might be held to be unrighteous and hence filthy. But we are washed clean from every defilement through the blood of Christ. Our robes are spotlessly white.⁹

Notice that salvation, in Morris’ view, comes from what the blood of the Lamb has accomplished on behalf of His people - not from what His people have manufactured or man-made salvation or salvation earned by good works.

B. Brief Survey of Salvation Motif in Scriptures (OT & NT)

The theme of salvation is a thread that spirals throughout the Bible, and holds together all stories of God’s dealings with human beings – with the aim of drawing humanity back to a saving relationship with Him. The salvation story begins in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 1, 2), and it ends in heaven (Rev. 21, 22).

⁷ Note also the usage of words “grace” and “peace” (Rev 1:4; 22:21). The “death” and “blood” of Jesus Christ in the Apocalypse of John function as our substitute and means of salvation and victory (Rev 1:18; 12:11);

⁸ See Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21.

⁹ Morris, p. 358

1. Old Testament Salvation Motif

Following the fall of humanity in the persons of Adam and Eve (Gen 3), the world was plunged into a state of separation from and rebellion against God. The plan to save humanity was also revealed immediately after the results and punishment had been revealed. Moses records a promise made by God to Adam and Eve. God says, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,” (Gen 3:15 ASV). The passage, not only describes humanity’s fall, but it also introduces God’s divine salvific response and promise.

Moses records, “And Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them,” (Gen 3:21 ASV). Notice that God, offended by violation of His Law, takes an initiative to reach out to humanity by making a covering for both of them. Breaking God’s Law results to nakedness and guilt, and God provided a sacrificial covering. The act of providing a sacrificial covering anticipated the sanctuary’s daily sacrificial services of Leviticus in which sins were atoned for through a spotless or “without blemish”¹⁰ lamb sacrificial offering as a substitute.

The Exodus story is a salvation story in that God chooses to save the Israelites from Egyptian slavery through miraculous means (Exod. 3-12). The exodus motif in the book of Revelation is an allusion to the Old Testament Exodus story. Paul reports to us that Abraham was declared justified by faith, but not by the works of the Law (Rom. 4:2). The

2. New Testament Salvation Motif

The critical question is: “What was a reason for the Cross of Jesus Christ if salvation could be manufactured through our human

¹⁰ See Exod. 12:5 (male sheep or male goat “without blemish”); For atoning priests’ sins, “two rams without blemish” (Exod. 29:1) and “a bullock without blemish” (Lev 4:3); sins of ignorance were atoned for by a “ram without blemish” (Lev 5:15, 18); for “sin offering” first yearlings of calf, goat, and lamb “without blemish” (Lev. 9:3; Num. 6:14). Whatever sacrifice offered to God needed to be “without blemish” (Deut. 15:21), and it was deemed to be “an abomination unto the Lord God” (Deut. 17:1). Any sacrifice needed to be “without blemish” so as to be a perfect symbol of the Lamb of John 1:29. Of interest is that even priests had to be “without blemish” (Lev21:17); Moses enumerate kinds of blemishes that excluded one from occupying a priestly role: blindness, lame, flat nose (Lev 21:18), crookback, dwarf, blemish in his eyes, scurvy or scabbed, or has stones broken (Lev. 21:20). Priests “without blemish” should be understood within a context of a perfect, “without blemish” blood of Saviour and Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:19). Priests had to eat a sin offering as a sign of them carrying the sin in their conscience

meritorious works?” The New Testament writings teach and are centred on and reveal Jesus Christ as the agent of salvation, procuring it (salvation) for humanity through His life, death, resurrection, and Second Coming (judgment).

Gerhard F. Hasel, one of the leading Old Testament scholars, summarises his study of salvation in the entire Scriptures thus,

A comprehensive and full biblical picture of salvation and atonement of which we could give only glimpses in this essay contains (1) an objective atonement achieved by God in Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross in which (2) He vicariously died in behalf of all humankind as (3) our Substitute, in our place, (4) through which He propitiated by His blood Divine justice – something no human could ever achieve by himself and live on. (5) Christ provided the supreme demonstration of the love of God which fills us with gratitude and wonder at His mercy and grace. (6) Christ also provided through His substitutionary sacrifice the means for humankind to live in harmony with God and fellow human beings.¹¹

Hasel’s summarised conclusion simply places salvation as an event or provision initiated and completed by God through His agent, Jesus Christ, outside and independent of humankind, but to the full benefit of humankind. This seems to be the general message and teaching of the Scriptures. He (Hasel) also admits that the subject or topic of salvation in the Scriptures “is extensive, covering nearly every page of the Word of God.”¹² According to Ryrie,

Soteriology, the doctrine of salvation, must be the grandest theme in the Scriptures. It embraces all of time as well as eternity past and future. It relates in one way or another to all of mankind, without exception. It even has ramifications in the sphere of the angels. It is the theme of both the Old and New Testaments. It is personal, national, and cosmic. And it centers on the greatest Person, our Lord Jesus Christ.¹³

One can safely conclude that the story of salvation and redemption fill the passages of the Scriptures – from Genesis to Revelation. Paul’s Epistles, namely Romans, Galatians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, etc., provide an unbroken thread which points to salvation procured and accomplished in and through Jesus Christ, in

¹¹ Gerhard F. Hasel, “Salvation in Scripture,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 3/2 (1992), p. 42.

¹² Hasel, p. 17.

¹³ Charles C Ryrie, *Basic Theology*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1987), p. 277.

dependent and separate from human participation, but intend to benefit all who accept it by the hand of faith.

Paul's theology and basis of salvation is quite resolute. Paul does not mince his words as to the source and means of salvation. The two passages gleaned from his Epistles to Galatians summarised and concludes the matter of salvation thus:

Gal. 2:16 (MKJV) "knowing that a man is not justified by works of the Law, but through faith in Jesus Christ; even we believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith in Christ, and not by works of the Law. For all flesh will not be justified by works of law."

Gal. 3:11 (MKJV) "But that no one is justified by the Law in the sight of God is clear, for, "The just shall live by faith."

A careful reading of the Epistle of James reveals that James does not teach salvation that is earned by doing righteous works, but his emphasis is on works as a visible sign of indwelling faith and saving relationship with Jesus Christ.

James says, "But someone will say, You have faith, and I have works. Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith from my works. You believe that there is one God, you do well; even the demons believe and tremble." James 2:18, 19 (MKJV)

Notice that James emphatically states that faith is revealed and demonstrated through good works, as a sign of a strong saving connection with Jesus Christ. Faith that is void of good works is not better than that of demons because they also believe, but their faith is not a saving faith, because it does not trigger or lead to good works.

The New Testament has one method of salvation (salvation received freely through God's grace), and it is presented from different standpoints, perspectives and emphasis. Both Old and New Testament present a united theme of salvation – salvation that is outside of, independent, and separate from humans' contribution and participation. Humans simply receive a gift of salvation through the hand of faith.

C. Salvation by Works in the Writings of the Early Church Fathers with Reference to the Book of Revelation

The subject will not be complete without including the views of Early Church Fathers with reference to the motif of salvation by works within the context of the book of Revelation. The reason for

surveying the views of the Early Church Fathers is simply because they ministered within first 500 years after the ascension of Jesus Christ, and also closer to the authorship date and content of the book of Revelation.

There were two school of thought among the Early Church Fathers. One school (a minority) believed and taught a salvation based on faith and works.¹⁴ The other school (a majority) believed and taught a salvation by faith only.¹⁵ Some would marry and embrace opposing views of the two schools of thought because they perceived some merits and strengths of arguments in both. John Chrysostom, among others, represents this group.

It is instructive to note that the Early Church Fathers argued their understanding of the basis for their salvation on several scriptural passages, but none of them used any passages from the book of Revelation. They used Old and New Testament passages, but not passages from the book of Revelation. Suffice to say that the book of Revelation was not popular among the Early Church Fathers.

D. Salvation by Works in the Writings of the Reformers with Reference to the Book of Revelation

Of interest is that the Reformation was largely predicated and fuelled by a tension on the understanding of the basis or foundation of salvation for humanity. The thrust of the discussions between Reformers and Roman Catholic Church was on two points, namely, (1) God's grace and salvation independent and outside of, but for the benefit of human beings and (2) salvation based on human good and meritorious works yielding or resulting to salvation and God's favour.

On one hand, the Roman Catholic Church taught that "sanctification leads to justification," and the Reformers, on the other hand, protested and taught that "justification leads to sanctification."¹⁶ This section will not delve deeper into the theology of the Reformers,

¹⁴ The list includes, among others, Origen (185-254), Gregory of Nyssa (330-294), and John Chrysostom (349-407). See <http://carm.org/early-church-fathers-salvation>, 2014, Accessed 29 April 2014.

¹⁵ The list is represented by Clement of Rome (?-110), Irenaeus (120?-200), Augustine (354-430), Justin Martyr (100-165), Hilary of Poitiers (300-368), Didymus the Blind (313-398), Basil of Caesarea (329-379), Jerome (347-420), and John Chrysostom (349-407). See <http://carm.org/early-church-fathers-salvation>, 2014, Accessed 29 April 2014.

¹⁶ Alan D. Strange, "Reformation in the Sixteen Century," (http://www.opc.org/new_horizons/NH01/10b.html, 2001). Accessed 29 April 2014.

but will be limited to their views of salvation or justification in relation to the book of Revelation. The critical question is: What role did the book of Revelation play in Reformers' views of salvation or justification?

1. Martin Luther

Martin Luther, one of the leading Reformers, discovered and championed the doctrine of “justification by faith.” Initially Luther viewed the book of Revelation as “neither apostolic nor prophetic,” a book that is not Christian.¹⁷ Luther would use the book of Revelation to attack what he perceived to be unbiblical doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church.¹⁸

Luther's commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians 5:13 - with reference to the role of works in relation to salvation is instructive. He wrote,

Now come all kinds of admonitions and precepts. It was the custom of the apostles that after they had taught faith and instructed the conscience they followed it up with admonitions unto good works, that the believers might manifest the duties of love toward each other. In order to avoid the appearance as if Christianity militated against good works or opposed civil government, the Apostle also urges us to give ourselves unto good works, to lead an honest life, and to keep faith and love with one another. This will give the lie to the accusations of the world that we Christians are the enemies of decency and of public peace. The fact is we Christians know better what constitutes a truly good work than all the philosophers and legislators of the world because we link believing with doing.¹⁹

Notice that Luther places “good works” after apostles “had taught faith and instructed the conscience.” He emphasises that “the believers might manifest the duties of love toward each other.” Luther is simply interpreting Pauline Corpus to be saying that good works are an out-flow of or a by-product of faith in Jesus and/or a conscience

¹⁷ Alan Johnson, *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, Vol. 12, Frank E. Gaebelin, general editor. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers, 1981), pp. 404, 407.

¹⁸ Quoted from T. Fornberg, “Interpreting the Book of Revelation in our Times: A quest for adequate principles for the Lutheran Church,” *Theology for Life* [Hong Kong] 13-14, 1991, pp. 89-93.

¹⁹ Martin Luther, *Luther Commentary on Galatians*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishers & Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1939), p. 118. Martin Luther's Public Lectures were delivered in 1531, and later translated by Theodore Graebner, and then compiled into a book.

that has been instructed about salvation received by faith in what Jesus Christ accomplished at the Cross for humanity.

Germane to our topic, Luther did not believe that the book of Revelation has anything to do with Jesus Christ. The words of Guthrie are worth noting in describing Luther's view of the book. He wrote, "Luther relegated the book (Revelation) to a minor place in the canon because he could not find Christ in it. It was for this reason that he regarded the book as a dumb prophecy, having nothing to say to him."²⁰

One wonders as to what eclipsed Luther's mind to seeing *soteriology* motif, together with a critical role of Jesus Christ, in the book of Revelation. The name or word "Jesus" in the book of Revelation is used 14 times in 12 verses.²¹ It is (the name "Jesus") used in the very first verse (Rev. 1:1) of the book of Revelation. The name or title "Christ" appears 7 times in 7 verses.²² Luther would develop and teach his theology of salvation outside of the book of Revelation. One of the reasons why Luther ignored the book of Revelation was that its canonicity, together with those of Hebrews, James, and Jude, was scrutinized and questioned by the Early Church Fathers.²³

It is generally accepted that the seeds of Luther's theology of salvation germinated and blossomed from, among other reasons, his reading and understanding of Paul's polemic on the question of salvation in general, and the righteousness of God in his letter or book to the Romans. Paul wrote,

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith.'" (Rom. 1:16-17 MKJV)

²⁰ Donald Guthrie, *The Relevance of John's Apocalypse*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987), p. 37.

²¹ Rev. 1:1, 2, 5, 9; 12:17; 14:12; 17:6; 19:10; 20:4; 22:16, 20, 21.

²² Rev. 1:1, 2, 5; 11:15; 12:10; 20:4, 6.

²³ See an American edition of *Luther's Works*, vol 35 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1963), pp. 395-399. During and towards the end of the 3rd Century, the canonicity of Revelation was debated, questioned, and doubted by Dionysius of Alexandria, Cyril of Jerusalem, Caius of Rome, Marcion, and in A.D. 360 by the Synod of Laodicea.

Luther was led to understand that “the righteousness of God” as stated in Rom. 1:17 had nothing to do with God’s condemnation of struggling sinners, but it had all to do with God’s righteousness freely-given and unmerited – to benefit sinners who will reach-out through the hand of faith to receive it (God’s righteousness). Obviously, Paul quoted or alluded to Hab. 2:4 (MKJV), “Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.” Luther’s new interpretation of Rom. 1:17 would precipitate and fuel the winds of Protestant Reformation in the 1500s. Luther grappled with the concept of “predestination,” but to him simply meant that a “belief in predestination was the fruit of experience rather than the results of speculation.”²⁴

Luther’s interpretation and commentary of Rom. 3:28 is quite educative, and begs for our attention. Luther remarked (in the context of Rom. 3:28), “For we hold, recognize and affirm, we conclude from what is said that a man is justified, reckoned righteous before God, whether Greek or Jew, by faith, apart from works of the law, without the help and necessity of the works of the Law.”²⁵ This position almost defined the position of the Reformers in general, and would cause, not only a thick tension, but would also precipitate a parting of ways between Protestant Theologians/Reformers and the Roman Catholic Church in the 1500s.

Luther’s statement on “the works of the Law” in relation to his comments on Rom. 3:38 might give the impression that he was opposed to the Law. Actually Luther was not necessarily opposed to the Law. His attitude and perception of the Law is highlighted by his discussions, commentary, and lectures on Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians. The following statement from Luther is not only instructive, but captures his view of the Law. He wrote,

The matter of the Law must be considered carefully, both as to what and as to how we ought to think about the Law; otherwise we shall either reject it altogether, after the fashion of the fanatical spirits who prompted the peasants’ revolt a decade ago by saying that the freedom of the Gospel absolves men from all laws, or we shall attribute to the Law the power to justify. Both groups sin

²⁴ Arthur Cushman McGiffert, *Protestant Thought before Kant* (London: Duckworth Publishers, 1919), p. 29.

²⁵ Martin Luther, “Lectures on Romans,” *LW 25* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1974), p. 33.

against the Law; those on the right, who want to be justified through the Law, and those on the left, who want to altogether free of the Law. Therefore we must travel the royal road, so that we neither reject the Law altogether nor attribute more to it than we should.²⁶

Notice that Luther's zeal to understand and benefit from a God's freely-given salvation to anyone who believes, apart from the works of the Law, did not cause him to reject the Law. Luther presents a balanced view of salvation, a salvation that is not derived or received from obeying the Law, but also a salvation that does not motive its recipient or beneficiary to disobey the Law.

One can safely conclude that the teachings and theology of justification, as understood and taught by Luther, were premised on two witnesses, namely, Scriptural passages from both Old and New Testaments (Rom. 1:16-17; Hab. 2:4). As mentioned earlier, Luther did not initially base or support his theology from the book of Revelation. The following statement succinctly captures Luther's view of the book of Revelation. He wrote,

About this book of the Revelation of John, I leave everyone free to hold his own opinions. I would not have anyone bound to my opinion or judgment. I say what I feel. I miss more than one thing in this book, and it makes me consider it to be neither apostolic nor prophetic. First and foremost, the apostles do not deal with visions, but prophesy in clear and plain words, as do Peter and Paul, and Christ in the gospel. For it befits the apostolic office to speak clearly of Christ and his deeds, without images and visions. Moreover there is no prophet in the Old Testament, to say nothing of the New, who deals so exclusively with visions and images. For myself, I think it approximates the Fourth Book of Esdras; I can in no way detect that the Holy Spirit produced it.²⁷

Of interest, apart from the fact that the Church Fathers did not see light in canonizing the book of Revelation, Luther, in the 1520s, had also deemed that the book of Revelation was void of the Holy Spirit, but his thinking would change in the 1530s. He would not only write a longer preface, but also ventured into deciphering images and figurative language found in the book of Revelation. In any case, his theology of justification was derived from other parts of the Scriptures than the book of Revelation.

²⁶ Martin Luther, "Lectures on Galatians," LW 26 (St. Louis: Concordia, 1963), p. 343.

²⁷ This extract was released in September Testament in 1522 by Martin Luther as a preface to the book of Revelation. See also Martin Luther, "Luther's treatment of the 'Disputed books' of the New Testament." <http://www.bible-researcher.com/antilegomena.html> Accessed 27 December 2013.

2. John Calvin

John Calvin wrote commentaries of several New Testament books of the Bible, but not on the book of Revelation.²⁸ Calvin summarises the issues thus, “For unless you first of all grasp what your relationship to God is, and the nature of his judgment concerning you, you have neither a foundation on which to establish your salvation nor one on which to build piety towards God.”²⁹

Calvin’s view of salvation included his belief on predestination, and vehemently argued that if one does not emphasize predestination, one does not recognise the power of God to save outside of human’s participation. Calvin’s view of predestination did not necessarily preclude a human choice and decision to accept salvation through faith, and resulting works of faith. He wrote,

We never dream either of a faith destitute of good works, or of a justification unattended by them; this is the sole difference, that while we acknowledge a necessary connection between faith and good works, we attribute justification, not to works, but to faith.³⁰

Calvin’s view of salvation resonated well with that of Luther, except that he added an element of predestination which would distinctly define his and followers’ theology throughout the years. McGiffert’s view of Calvin’s understanding of “predestination” assists in providing a summarised version of Calvin’s view of predestination. He wrote, “But Calvin gave (predestination) an essential place in a system whose controlling principle was the majesty and might of God. As a result to reject or even to minimize it seemed to limit God and throw contempt upon Him.”³¹ Notice that Calvin’s emphasis was

²⁸ Guthrie, p. 37. Some scholars argue that the reason why John Calvin did not write any Commentary on the book of Revelation (together with or including the 2nd & 3rd Epistles of John) was that he was still coming to write them. Rayburn says, “The most likely explanation as to why he did not is that he didn’t get around to them before his life’s work was done.” (Robert S. Rayburn, “The Revelation,” <http://www.faihtacoma.org/content/2008-08-24-am.aspx> Accessed 20 December 2014. The reason for Rayburn’s explanation is that he wrote commentaries on Ezekiel, Daniel, and Zechariah – books that share the same genre with the book of Revelation. Calvin had no problem with deciphering and decoding figurative and symbolic language.

²⁹ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, J. T. McNeill, ed., F. L. Battles, trans., (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 3.11.1.

³⁰ H T Kerr, *A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1939), p. 115.

³¹ McGiffert, p. 87.

God's power and prerogative of salvation, independent to human's response or participation.

Lastly, Calvin based his views of "justification"³² and "predestination"³³ largely on the Pauline Epistles, Gospel of John, and Acts, but not on the book of Revelation.

3. Ulrich Zwingli

The seeds of Reformation were planted in Zwingli through the lectures of Thomas Wittenbach, which included a section on criticism of the system of indulgences. Wittenbach presented his lectures twelve years prior to Luther's arguments against a system of indulgences.³⁴

Zwingli's short and several articles advocated for, among other topics and themes, the view that the source of the Gospel is not the church, salvation is by faith alone, rejecting the sacrificial character of the Mass, questioning the meritorious value of good works, the fallacy and unfounded teaching of saintly intercessors, that the monastic vows have no binding value, and criticised the teaching of purgatory. He argued that Jesus Christ is the only Head of the church, and he also criticised celibacy.

His positional statements were based on the Scriptures and writings of other Reformers, but not on the book of Revelation. Arnold mentions that "Zwingli objected only to the Book of Revelation (Apocalypse), and made no doctrinal use of it because he did not feel it was written by the Apostle John."³⁵ Notice that Zwingli had a problem with the authorship of the Apocalypse of John, and his stance disadvantaged him from appreciating many other themes, including *soteriology*, found in the book itself.

One needs to note, but not discuss due to limitation of space and focus, the criticism which recent scholarship has levelled against

³² Rom. 4:6-7; 5:19; 2 Cor. 5:18-21.

³³ See Acts 13:48, John 1:12-13; Phil. 1:29; Rom. 8:29-30; Eph. 1:5, 11.

³⁴ Skip Knox's Essay on Ulrich Zwingli, "The Reformers: Ulrich Zwingli." <http://europeanhistory.boisestate.edu/reformation/reformers/zwingli.shtml>, Accessed 2 May 2014.

³⁵ Jack L Arnold, "The Theology of the Reformers and Anabaptists: Reformation Men and Theology," *IMM Magazine Online*, vol. 1, Number 12, May 17 – May 23, 1999. (<http://www.thirdmill.org/files/english/html/ch/ch.arnold.rmt.11.html>, 1999), Accessed 20 April 2014.

Protestant Theologians/Reformers for what is perceived to be flaws in their (Reformers) understanding of Paul's theme of justification.³⁶

The Reformers, in general, did not see the book of Revelation as a text on which to premise their themes of salvation/justification/sanctification. They built a foundation for their treatise on other biblical texts and passages, but not the book of Revelation. As mentioned earlier, the book of Revelation was used only to criticise the doctrines espoused by the Roman Catholic Church, but not to build their theology of justification/salvation.

E. Salvation (*soteriology*) in the Book of Revelation

The Old Testament sanctuary motif seems to be the framework of the book of Revelation. As mentioned earlier, there is a huge collection of Old Testament sanctuary language or imagery or terms or scenes in the Apocalypse of John.³⁷ This simply means that the writer of the book of Revelation had submerged himself into the Old Testament Scriptures, including symbolic ceremonial systems intended not only to teach salvation, but also to highlight the unity of the Scriptures on the theme of salvation.

One needs not be naïve as to think that every reader sees a salvation motif in the book of Revelation. For example, C. H. Dodd, wrote:

The God of the Apocalypse can hardly be recognized as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor has the fierce Messiah, whose warriors ride in blood up to their horses' bridles, many traits that could recall Him of whom the primitive

³⁶ See the work of J D G Dunn, "The Justice of God: A Renewed Perspective on Justification by Faith." *Journal of Theological Studies* NS 43, 1992, pp. 1-22. For fresh discussions on the subject, see also D A Carson ed., *Right with God: Justification in the Bible and the World*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker and Carlisle: Paternoster, 1992). See also E Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul*. (London: SCM, 1971), pp. 68-78. See also *Rechtfertigung bei Paulus* (Münster 1967), quoted from P T O'Brian, "Justification in Paul and Some Crucial Issues of the Last Two Decades," *Right With God: Justification in the Bible and the World*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker and Carlisle: Paternoster, 1992), p. 78. See also S K Williams, "The 'Righteousness of God' in Romans," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 99, 1980, pp. 241-290.

³⁷ "His blood" (Rev 1:5); "blood of the lamb" (5:9; 12:11); "slain" or *sphazo* used in the context of sacrifice and persecution of saints (5:6, 9, 12; 13:8; 18:24); "golden lampstands" (1:13, 20); "golden censer" (8:3); "incense" (5:8; 8:4); "altar" of incense and burnt offerings (6:9; 8:3, 5; 9:13; 11:1; 14:18; 16:7); "trumpet" (1:10; 4:1; 8:13; 9:13, 14; cf. Num. 10:8-10); "door" or *thura* – often used in connection to the Old Testament sanctuary door in Greek OT (LXX) (4:1); "ark of his testament" (11:19); "temple" used in the context of Old Testament sanctuary's "holy of holies" or "tabernacle" (3:12; 7:15; 11:1, 2, 9; 14:15, 17; 15:5, 6, 8; 16:1, 17; 21:22); "tabernacle" (13:6; 15:5; 21:3); "clothed with a garment down to the foot" in connection to the Old Testament priestly attire (1:13); "precious stones" found on the breastplate of Old Testament priests (4:3; 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:19; cf. Exod. 28:17-21).

kerygma proclaimed that He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil because God was with Him.³⁸

Notice that Dodd sees the God of John 3:16 as different from the God revealed in the book of Revelation. He also sees a different Messiah in Revelation than the One whose history is portrayed by the Four Gospels. In the thinking of the renowned Rudolf Bultmann, the book of Revelation is nothing more than a “weakly Christianized Judaism.”³⁹

Some draw a sharp distinction in the book of Revelation between the “Lamb” of Revelation and the Jesus of the Gospels. The Lamb of the book of Revelation is understood in the context of a Jewish faith, separate, distinct, and different from the “Jesus Christ” of the New Testament.⁴⁰ This view compromises and undermines the unity or a thread that spirals throughout the entire New Testament Scripture with reference to the means of our salvation.

It is clear that the book of Revelation remained a veiled thick bush, void of justification material and narrative. It has been demonstrated earlier that the book of Revelation (Rev. 1:1-3, 5-7; Rev. 5) introduces Jesus Christ as an object and subject, means and agent of securing and procuring our salvation.

F. Christology in the Book of Revelation

Bible scholars have furnished us with tons of material in relation to the Christology in the book of Revelation. Suffice to mention a few for the purpose of enriching our discussions. Jesus Christ is the centre, agent, subject, and object of the book of Revelation.⁴¹ He is introduced in Rev 1:1 as the subject and object of Revelation. In his presentation of a paper during a Tyndale Fellowship, at Tyndale

³⁸ C. H. Dodd, *The Apostolic Preaching and its Development*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1963), 3rd Edition, p. 49.

³⁹ R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*. Two volumes, (London: SCM, 1955), p. 175.

⁴⁰ Sarah A. Edwards, “Christological Perspectives in the Book of Revelation” in *Christological Perspectives*, edited by R. F. Berkey and S. A. Edwards, (New York: The Pilgrim Press, 1982), pp. 139-154.

⁴¹ Leon Moris, *Revelation: An Introduction and Commentary*, edited by R V G Tasker, (London: The Tyndale Press, 1969), p. 45. Moris mentions that *apokalupsis* was made by, or is about, or is of, or belongs to Jesus Christ. See also Merrill C Tenney, *Interpreting Revelation*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B Eerdmans, [1957], 1980), p.117 suggests that “The very name of the book of Revelation means that its content is intended to be a disclosure of the person of Christ. He is not incidental to its action; He is its chief subject.”

House, Hillyer expounded on the usage of the Lamb in six critical themes or topics, namely, “as Redeemer, as Supreme object of worship, as Ruler, as Judge, as Pastor, and in His relation with His Church.”⁴² Ford argues that the hymns of Revelation encase Christological themes.⁴³

Jesus Christ is introduced as a sacrificial Lamb in the book of Revelation, particularly in Rev. 4 and 5, where we find a large collection of Old Testament sanctuary language or terms, as mentioned earlier. Jesus Christ’s title, “Lamb,” appears 29 times in the book of Revelation, and the Lamb is a hinge that holds other themes together.⁴⁴

A spotless and flawless lamb in the Old Testament did not only atone and substituted for the sins of the Ancient Israelites, but it also prophetically and symbolically anticipated the coming of Jesus Christ, the real Lamb. The Lamb of Isaiah 53 is the Jesus Christ of the New Testament, including that of the book of Revelation.

Isaiah (53:4-5 MKJV) writes,

Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He *was* wounded for our transgressions; *He was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace *was* on Him; and with His stripes we ourselves are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, each one to his own way; and Jehovah has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

⁴² Norman Hillyer, “‘The Lamb’ in the Apocalypse,” *Evangelical Quarterly*, (Year?), pp.232-236. Hillyer offers an extensive discussion on the six themes which specify the role of the Lamb in the book of Revelation, and also in the life of the Christian community of Revelation. (This article was originally read by Hillyer during the Tyndale Fellowship, and then published in *Evangelical Quarterly*.)

⁴³ Josephine Massyngraerde Ford, “The Christological Function of the Hymns in the Apocalypse of John,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, 1998, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 207-229. See also Christological themes in the book of Revelation in the work of Ekkehardt Mueller, “Christological Concepts in the Book of Revelation: Jesus in the Apocalypse,” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society*, 21/1-2 (2010), pp. 276-305. Mueller’s work has three parts. Part 2 deals with “Christ’s Divinity,” and part 3 focuses on “The Lamb Christology.” See also the work of David M. Williams, “The Christology of the Book of Revelation,” <http://www.oocitie.org/davidmwilliams/ntb519b.html> Accessed 23 September 2014.

⁴⁴ See Donald Guthrie, “The Lamb in The Structure of the Book of Revelation,” *Vox Evangelica* 12 (1981), pp.64-71. Guthrie argues that “the Lamb” is a significant character in the book of Revelation, and also “for determining the purpose and meaning of the whole book” (p. 64). In this article, Guthrie traces the occurrences of “the Lamb” from when He is introduced in Rev 4 and 5 within a worshipping community, and throughout the book and climaxes at the victory of the sacrificial Lamb, and also setting up a kingdom of righteousness on behalf of his followers or witnesses.

Notice that Isaiah predicts Jesus Christ's suffering as a sacrificial lamb as our substitute, carrying our sins in order to cause healing and peace to us. His death was not simply an accident, but in the context of Genesis 3 (falling into sin).

The Old Testament sanctuary sacrificial systems pointed to the concept of substitution in that their sins were not atoned for or substituted for by their good works, but were transferred to the spotless and flawless lamb, and that was the burden and message of the book of Leviticus.

With reference to the salvation motif, in the context of the Lamb, in the book of Revelation, Hubbard remarked,

The Lamb is worthy of praise because its shed blood ransomed 'believers from all nations (5:8-9). The language appears to compare Christ to the Paschal lamb whose blood delivered the Israelite firstborn (Exod. 12; Mark 14:12-25, par.; cf. John 1:29) and to the lamb (i.e., the Suffering Servant) whose atoning death purchases believers from eternal death.⁴⁵

Notice that the blood of the Paschal lamb, prefigured or symbolised the Lamb-Jesus which atone or cover the sin of the world (John 1:29), and also the slain Lamb of Rev. 5, atones for the sins of all. This is a substitutionary and redemptive death of the Lamb. It has been mentioned earlier that the Old Testament sanctuary services are a framework of the book of Revelation. For example, the usage of the word "temple,"⁴⁶ "Tabernacle,"⁴⁷ "blood,"⁴⁸ "salvation,"⁴⁹ "redeemed,"⁵⁰ "faith,"⁵¹ "grace" and "peace"⁵² which are part of or illusion to the Old Testament venue (sanctuary) for sacrificial

⁴⁵ R.L. Hubbard, Jr., "Redemption" in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. by T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D.A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000), p. 720.

⁴⁶ See Rev. 3:12; 7:15; 11:1, 2; 11:19; 14:15; 14:17; 15:5, 6; 15:8; 16:1; 16:17; 21:22.

⁴⁷ See Rev. 13:6; 15:5; 21:3. Note that there is a distinction between the word "temple" and "tabernacle". A temple is a portion or an apartment of the Tabernacle, and it is often referred to as the Most Holy Place based on the Old Testament Sanctuary services in the book of Leviticus.

⁴⁸ Rev. 1:5; 5:9; 7:14; 19:13.

⁴⁹ Rev. 7:19; 12:10; 19:1.

⁵⁰ Rev. 5:9; 14:3, 4

⁵¹ Rev. 2:13; 12:19; 13:10; 14:12

⁵² Rev. 1:4; 22:21. Notice that these two salutations are part of or similar to or follow a pattern and tradition of Paul's greetings in his Epistles (Rom. 1:7; 16:20; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; Phm. 1:3). Peter also followed that tradition of greeting the recipients of his Epistle (1 Pet. 1:2; 2 Pet. 1:2). See also John's Epistles (2 John 1:3).

services, and also part of the New Testament Cross of Jesus Christ and Apostolic/Early Church language.

G. Does Rev. 20:12 Teach Salvation by Works?

Rev. 20:12 is often used as a basis to conclude that the book of Revelation teaches salvation by works. The verse reads,

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” (Rev. 20:12 KJV)

Notice that the text at issue specifically states that “the dead were judged out those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” This passage does not say that the dead were *saved* (but judged) “... according to their works.” It needs to be stated on the onset that a careful survey of the Scriptures reveals that salvation is based only on what Jesus Christ has accomplished through His life, death, and His resurrection.⁵³ Judgment, on the other hand, is based on good works.⁵⁴

A thorough study of this text will help throw more light to our discussions. This text should be studied within its broader & immediate context, including witnesses from both Old and New Testaments, comparing Scripture with Scripture, and also allowing the Scriptures to interpret themselves.

1. The Structure of Rev. 20

Rev. 20 can be divided into Four Sections:

1. Rev. 20:1-3 A description of events at the beginning of millennium;
2. Rev. 20:4-6 A description of events during the millennium;
3. Rev. 20:7-10 A description of events at the end of millennium;

⁵³ See Eph. 2:8-10; Rom. 4:2-4, 5, 9-11; Titus 3:5. See for example, Paul in Gal 2:16 (KJV) has this to say, “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. In the Old Testament, Abraham’s justification is linked to his faith (not his good works) in God. For an example, a phrase “the just shall live by faith” in KJV comes from both the Old and New Testament (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:38). This phrase implies that our trust and faith in God yields justification and righteousness. Those two qualities are not derived from or a reward for our obedience to the Law/Decalogue.

⁵⁴ See Matt. 25:32-35 – the parable of the goats and sheep; Heb. 5:9.

4. Rev. 20:11-15 A description of judgment at the Great White Throne.⁵⁵

The following is a summary of events in Rev. 20:

Firstly, Rev. 20:1-3 the Devil is imprisoned at the beginning of millennium by an angel, and this action renders the Devil helpless with the effect of having no one to tempt or mislead.

Secondly, Rev. 20:4-6 the saints and righteous martyrs are resurrected and then assume a role of reigning and judging as priests together with Jesus Christ for a period of one thousand years. They have been loyal to Jesus Christ and never worshipped the beast and its image. There is a blessing attached to those who share in the first resurrection, and the second death will not touch or harm them.

Thirdly, Rev. 20:7-10, at the end of or after one thousand years the Devil will again be loosed from his chains, and will tempt, mislead, and mobilise those who will participate in the second resurrection mentioned in Rev. 20:5. The Devil will mobilise them to attack and take over the City of God. Their attack of the City of God triggers their demise through the fire from God.

Lastly, Rev. 20:11-15, the events of Rev. 20:11-15 point to a judgment that takes place before the Great White throne. The scene includes records in form of books (including a Book of Life). Everyone from different places (sea, earth, hell, and etc.) was judged according to what was recorded in those books. Those whose names are not recorded in the Book of Life are cast into a lake of fire to join death.

From a surface reading, it appears that events of Rev. 20:11-15 are disconnected, unrelated, and out-of-sync with those of Rev. 20:1-10. Shea's explanation locates these events of Rev. 20:11-15 within and as part of those of Rev. 20:1-10. He argues,

“One final scene of Rev 20 remains to be discussed, and that is the Great-White-Throne scene of vss. 11-15. On the basis of its contents, this scene is both connected with and yet separate from, the preceding narrative about the millennium. The "lake of fire," which is mentioned in vss. 14- 15 of this scene, has already been referred to previously, in vs. 10, in the third descriptive scene of the millennial narrative. These two references obviously have in view the same "lake of fire." Thus, to put the Great-White-Throne scene in correct

⁵⁵ See a thorough discussion on the structure of Rev. 20 in the work of William H. Shea, “The Parallel Literary Structure of Revelation 12 and 20,” *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, Spring 1985, Vol. 23, No. 1, pp. 37-54.

chronological order, one would have to insert it between vs. 9a and vs. 9b, because the fire which goes to make up that lake comes down at that point in the narrative.”

One would conclude that those events of Rev. 20:11-15 are part of those of Rev. 22:1-10, but they have been separated as a way of highlighting some aspects of judgment and salvation.

2. What Kind of “Works” Recorded in Rev. 20:12?

According to the teachings of Paul, good works are direct outcome of and a response to God’s grace and justification (Eph. 2:8, 9). The absence of good works points to the absence of faith. For example, love can only be demonstrated by good and kind works. Jesus Christ said, “If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.” (John 15:14 ASV) Keeping commandments demonstrate the love that is a driving force. The same applies to a relationship between faith in God and accompanying good works. The latter is a concrete evidence of the former.⁵⁶ Judgment is based on concrete, external works, but salvation is based on Jesus Christ has accomplished at the Cross for humanity.

The book of Revelation alludes to “works” in different places. For example, a phrase “I know your works” is used in connection with the “Seven Churches.”⁵⁷ A careful study of works within the context of the “Seven Churches” reveals that these are works that should be demonstrated as a sign that Churches are in saving relationship with Jesus Christ, but not to earn salvation. The “works” are an indicator or a by-product of or visible signs that one has already been “justified by faith.”

The Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, are and have been consistent in placing good works as a demonstration of indwelling faith in what Jesus Christ’s meritorious, saving work at the Cross. Sylianopoulos maintains that there has not been a deviation from Paul’s view on the subject of works in relation to justification, and the

⁵⁶ For a discussions of types of works to be subjected to judgment, see Kyoung-Shik Kim, *God Will Judge Each One According to Works* (New York: Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Company, 2011), pp. 254-256.

⁵⁷ Rev. 2:2; 2:5; 2:9; 2:13; 2:19; 2:23; 2:26; 3:1; 3:2; 3:8; 3:15.

book of Revelation also follows the same tradition and teaching of the Scriptures.⁵⁸

The “works” in Rev. 20:12 are not works leading to or intended to buy salvation, but they are the means to test if one had a living, saving relationship with Jesus Christ. “Works” are a subject of judgment, but not of securing or achieving or earning salvation or justification. Salvation, justification, and righteousness are based on what Jesus Christ has accomplished at the Cross, and are freely given to anyone who will but receive them.

Conclusion

Does the book of Revelation teach Salvation by works? The Answer is a big NO. It is clear from this work that “justification by faith” is a thread that binds, organises all biblical themes, and unify its messages and theology. It has been demonstrated that the leading Early Church Fathers built and argued their views on the “justification by faith” in relation to good works – using both the Old and New Testament Scriptures, but not the book of Revelation seeing that it was canonised later. The Reformers of note (Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ulrich Zwingli, to a certain extent, not only premised their theology and teachings of “justification by faith” on other books of the Bible, but not on the book of Revelation. They were also very suspicious of the book of Revelation seeing that it was not only well received by the Early Church Fathers, but was also difficult to read in that the role of Jesus Christ was eclipsed by symbolism and figurative objects in the book.

It was also demonstrated that the Old and New Testaments’ sanctuary language and ceremonial systems form a strong base, foundation, and framework toward understanding the book of Revelation in relation to salvation and works. The substitutionary, sacrificial lamb of Leviticus figuratively points the Lamb of John 1:29 – “the Lamb which taketh away the sin of the world.” And the slain Lamb of Rev. 5:6 is the same Jesus Christ who broke the Seven Seals which encased a plan to save fallen humanity.

⁵⁸ For an extensive of “works” in Pauline Corpus and the book of Revelation, See Theodore Sylianopoulos, “I Know Your Works”: Grace Judgment in the Apocalypse,” *Apocalyptic Thought in Early Christianity*, edited by Robert J. Daly (Ada, Michigan: Baker Publishing House, 2012), pp.17-32.

The book of Revelation is a climax of all themes found in the Scriptures – the main theme being how God dealt with the problem of sin – the means (Jesus Christ and the Cross) He used in securing and procuring salvation. The theme of “justification by faith” permeates the entire Scriptures, and climaxes in the book of Revelation. Good works have been and continue to be, both in the Old and New Testaments, a result of a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

John writes the following in the book of Revelation,

“And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.” (Rev 1:5-7 KJV)



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