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Seated in Messiah
2: 6b-10

Seated in Messiah DIG: Paul says you are seated in Messiah in heavenly places. What does that mean? What kind of authority do believers have in Messiah? How does the changed life of a believer serve as a display of God's grace and character? What is the formula for salvation? Why do we need God's grace to believe? Who can you tell this week?

REFLECT: What is the relationship between good works and salvation? What is the significance of the word "handiwork" in verse 10? How would thinking of yourself as God's handiwork affect the way you conduct your life? How have you seen God working in you lately? What good work is the Lord giving you to do, with His power, this week?

Saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Messiah alone.



That is, God . . . seated us with Messiah Yeshua in heaven (2:6b). We are not **raised** from **the dead** (**to see link click Ay – Raised in Messiah**) and left in the graveyard. Because we are **in Messiah**, we have been **lifted up** with **Him** and we are sharing **His** throne **in the heavenlies**. Our physical position may be on earth, but our spiritual position is **in heavenly places with Him.** Like Lazarus, we

have been called from the grave to sit with **Messiah** and enjoy fellowship with **Him**. **In order to display** (Greek: *endeixetai*) **in the ages to come how infinitely rich is His grace** (unmerited favor and loving kindness)**,** and **how great is His kindness toward us who are in Messiah Yeshua (2:7).** The verb **display** carries a stronger meaning than to merely make something known. All recipients of divine **grace** will be high-resolution **displays** of the many-faceted **grace** of **God** throughout all eternity.[97]

The right hand of **God's** throne is the center of authority and power in the entire universe. That power was given to the ascended **Lord**. The elevation of **His** children with **Him in heavenly places** means that we share **His** authority. We are made to **sit** with **Him** as heirs. **The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Messiah, if indeed we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory (Romans 8, 16-17).**

The significance of this can't be overstated. Many people won't experience freedom **in Messiah** feel as though they are caught between two equal and opposing forces. Satan on one side and **God** on the other, and poor little me hanging between the two like a pawn. If that is what you believe, then you are defeated. The truth is that **God** is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, kind and loving in all **His** ways. Satan is a defeated and we are **in Messiah**, **seated with Him in heavenly places**. See the parallel account in **Colossians 2:9-11, 13-15**.[98]

Included in this **grace** is **the gift** of having enough **faith** to believe the Good News of **Yeshua Messiah**. **For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast (2:8-9 NIV). Faith** is nothing that we do in our own power or by our own resources. In the first place, we do not have adequate power or resources. More than that, **God** would not want us to rely on them even if we had them. Otherwise salvation would be in part by our own **works**, and we would have some ground to **boast** in ourselves. **Paul** intends to emphasize that even **faith** is not from us apart from **God's** giving it. **Faith** is presented as a **gift** from **God** in **Second Peter 1:1**, **Philippians 1:29**, and **Acts 3:16**. Yet this **gift** is not restricted to a few, but is available to **everyone, "For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to everyone" (Titus 2:11 NIV).**

Church membership, baptism, confirmation, giving to charity, or being a good neighbor have no power to bring **salvation**. Nor does taking Communion, keeping

the Ten Commandments, or living by the Sermon on the Mount. The only thing a person can do that will have any part in **salvation** is to exercise **faith** in what **the Son of God** had done for him or her.

When we accept the finished work of **Messiah** on our behalf, we act by the **faith** supplied by **God's grace**. That is the supreme act of human **faith**, the act which, though it is ours, is primarily **God's** – **His gift** to us out of **His grace**. When a person chokes or drowns and stops breathing, there is nothing he can do. If he ever breathes again, it will be because someone else starts him breathing. A person who is spiritually dead cannot even make a decision of **faith** unless **God** first breathes into him the breath of spiritual life. **Faith** is simply breathing the breath that **God's grace** supplies. Yet, the paradox is that we must exercise it and bear the responsibility if we do not **(John 5:40).**

Obviously, since it is true that **salvation** is all by **God's grace**, **it is** therefore **not** a result of **works**. Human effort has nothing to do with it **(Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16)**. And thus, **no one should boast**, as if he had any part of it. All **boasting** is eliminated in **salvation (Romans 3:27** and **4:5; First Corinthians 1:31)**. Nevertheless, **good works** have an important place, as **Paul** is quick to affirm.[99]

To the extent that we are **trusting**, **God** can mold us, so that we become **God's workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (2:10 NIV).** Our English word poem comes from the Greek word translated **workmanship.** You are **God's** handcrafted work of art. You are not an assembly-line product, mass produced without a thought. You are a custom-designed, one-of-a-kind, original masterpiece.[100]

If there is no **good works**, no **good spiritual fruit** in a person's life then it shows that they are not really a believer (see the commentary on **Jude Ah – Godless People Have Secretly Slipped In Among You**). After all, **a good tree bears good fruit (Matthew 7:17).** So, on the one hand, there is no such thing as **faith** apart from **works** to which **faith** must lead; **faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26). Trusting** that does not lead to **good works** cannot save and is not a channel for **God's grace**.

But on the other hand, **works** without **faith** cannot save the one who does them. Non-Messianic Judaism implicitly recognizes that **good works** alone do not buy **salvation**, as the British Messianic Jew Eric Lipson points out by writing that in Judaism "great stress is laid on doing **good works**, privately and corporately; but

the prayers pleading for forgiveness quote **Isaiah's** admission: **All our righteous deeds are like filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6)**. So **Isra'el** prays: *'Avinu malkenu,* our **Father**, our **King**, be gracious unto us and answer us, for we have done no good things of any worth. Deal with us in charity and lovingkindness and save us."

No work is a **good work** in relation to rewarding its doer (even though others may benefit) if it does not stem from **faith** in **ADONAI**, which today demands **trusting** in **His Son Yeshua Messiah**. The crowds in Galilee asked **Yeshua, "What should we do in order to perform the works of God?" His** answer was: **Here's what the work of God is . . . to trust in the One He sent (John 6:28-29).**[101]

If I asked you if you were a **sinner**, what would you say? **Romans 3:23** says: **For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.** That includes you and me, doesn't it? Most people feel that being good gets you into heaven and being bad keeps you out. That simply is not true; **we all have sinned**. What would you say **sin** is? I think we can agree that we are both **sinners**; now let's define **sin**. Some have said, "I'm not perfect," or "I have made some mistakes." But what do you think the Bible means by **sin**? Well, the Bible says that **everyone practicing sin breaks God's law – indeed, sin is lawlessness (First John 3:4).** Have you ever disobeyed your parents? Have you ever misused the name of **God**? Have you ever told a lie? This is what **sin** is. It's breaking **God's law**. And any time you break **a law** there is a penalty. If you run a stop sign, the penalty is a fine. If you rob a bank, the penalty is jail. What is the penalty for breaking **God's Torah**?

The Bible teaches us that **the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23a). The wages** of work is money, but the wages of **sin** is **death**. In other words, what I earn – the penalty, the punishment of **sin – is death**. **Death** is separation. The Bible speaks of two kinds of **death** that are two kinds of separation. The first **death** is separation of the body and the soul. If I were to die right now my body would fall to the floor, but my soul, the real me, would go somewhere else. But the Bible speaks of another **death**, one it calls **the second death**. This is separation of the soul from **God**. Now, the penalty of **sin** is **death**, spiritual **death**, and separation from **the LORD**. To put it simply – hell. All this is really bad news. But there is good news.

But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8). We were spiritually dead and unable to make the first move toward **God** because we inherited Adam's **sin** nature that rebelled and separated us from **Him**. So, **God** made the first move toward us by sending **His** one and only **Son** to die in our place for the payment for our **sins**. We

stand before **the Son of God**, guilty of **sin**, and facing a **death** penalty. But **Yeshua**, as **judge (John 5:27)**, comes down from behind the seat of judgment, takes off **His** judicial robe and stands beside us. It is there that **He** says to us, "I will take your place. I will die for you." And if you were the only person in the world, **He** still would have died for you. The penalty for **sin** is **death**, but **Messiah** died and paid for **sin** so we do not have to go to hell.

It is not what you do for **God** that saves you, it is what **God** has already done for you.
You don't get to heaven by what you do; you get to heaven by what you **believe**.

What is it that I need to **believe** in, to **trust** in, to have **faith** in, to be **saved**?

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son who died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16 and **First Corinthians 15:3b-4).**

If you **believe** this, you are **saved**.
Nothing else matters.

Salvation = **faith** + nothing (not baptism, not **good works**, nothing means *nothing*). **Without faith it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. Now is the day of salvation (Hebrews 11:6** and **2 Corinthians 6:2c).**

Would you like to be **saved** right now?

Pray this simple prayer in **faith**. But before you do, I want you to remember that saying a prayer does not save you, **trusting** in **Yeshua Messiah** does. **God, I admit that I have sinned. I believe Yeshua Messiah died for my sins and I want to trust Him to save me right now. Lord, please come into my heart and make me a new person. I accept your gift of salvation.**

If you were to die right now, where would you go? That's right . . . heaven.

Why should **God** let you into **His** heaven?

That’s right, because **Yeshua** died to pay for your **sins**.[102]

If you prayed that prayer in **faith** see my commentary on **The Life of Christ Bw – What God Does for Us at the Moment of Faith**.