

The Eternal Security of the Believer

Mankind lives in a natural "box," which encloses us within its walls of time and space. Outside this box is the supernatural, and somewhere deep within, we know its out there. But we don't know anything that's certain about it. So one day someone comes along and says, "We need to find out about the supernatural, the world "out there." And a new religion is born. Those who become interested run over to the edge of the box, get out their imaginative mental chisels and start trying to chip a hole in the edge of the box - through which they can crawl, or at least peer, out to discover the secrets of the other world.

Figuratively, this is what always happens. The Buddhist says that when you have worked and thought your way to Nirvana, suddenly you're out of the box. You have transcended the natural and found your way into the supernatural. The Muslim says basically the same thing, only in different words. So do all the other religions, Hinduism, Islam, or whatever it may be. They are all attempts to escape from the natural to the supernatural. To get out of the box. But our problem is . . . we can't get out by ourselves.

By definition, the natural man or woman cannot escape to the supernatural. We cannot go into a religious phone booth and change into a religious superhero. We cannot, in ourselves, transcend our natural existence. If we know anything about **God**, it will not be by escaping, or climbing, or thinking or working our way out to **Him**. It will only be by His coming to us . . . **His** speaking to us. We cannot, by ourselves, understand **God** anymore than an insect we may hold in our hand can understand us. Nor can we condescend to its level, or communicate with if we wanted to. But **God** can condescend to our level and **He** can communicate with us. And **He** has.

God became a man **Himself** and entered our box to tell us about **Himself**, more fully and completely than **He** was able to do even through **His** prophets. This not only was divine revelation, but personal divine revelation of the most literal and perfect sort. All of mankind's religions reflect an attempt to make their way out of the box. But the message of **Yeshua Messiah** is that **the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost (Luke 19:10)**.

A. The Meaning of Eternal Security: It is the continuous operation of **the Holy Spirit** in the believer by which the work of divine grace that is begun in the heart is continued and brought to completion. **Eternal security** means that once a person has undergone the real experience of **salvation** and has a truly experienced regeneration, that person cannot lose his or her **salvation**, either by committing a specific sin, or by ceasing to believe. It's not so much that we can undo what we have done, but we cannot undo what **God** has done for us. It is the work of **the Ruach HaKodesh** that keeps us secure, not our own works.

On the one hand, the New Covenant doesn't address how far we have to go before we have crossed the line from being a **child of God**, to being an **enemy of God (James 4:4)**. You would think that if you could lose your **salvation** that would be a pretty important thing to know. Actually, if **God** were going to banish you from **His** presence for all eternity, it would be cruel not to know. It's like the teenager going out on a date. Her father tells her, "Don't stay out to late," or I'm going to disown you. Alarmed, she questions, "What's to late - aren't you going to tell me?" And he says, "No . . . just make sure you're not home to late!" On the other hand, the Bible doesn't address the question of being re-saved. Are the requirements for re-salvation that are the same as **salvation**? The Scriptures do not give one example of anyone who lost their **salvation** and was re-saved. As important as this doctrine would be if it were true, you would think the Bible would give us some examples to go by. Should we build an entire doctrine around something that is not even talked about? No! It's an argument from silence. Can you play **God** and undo what **He** has already done (see **Bw - What God Does for Us at the Moment of Faith**)? Who adopts you? Who justifies you? Who indwells you? Who is in control of your life?

B. The Definition: The absolutely unfailing, and irrevocable condition of the present condition of **eternal life** granted by **ADONAI** to the true believer in both time and **eternity**.

C. The Meaning of the word Eternal: When you read your Bible, words have to mean something. If words don't mean anything, then the Bible doesn't mean anything. Basically . . . does **eternal** mean **eternal**? Believers are said to have **eternal** possessions (**Second Corinthians 4:17; Ephesians 3:11; Hebrews 9:12 and First Peter 5:10**); **eternal life** (**John 3:36, 4:14, 5:24, 6:27, 6:47, 6:50-51, 6:54, 10:28; First Timothy 1:16, 6:12 and First John 5:11, 13, 20**); and an **eternal** inheritance (**Ephesians 1:11, Hebrews 9:15 and First Peter 1:4-5**). Can you substitute the word "temporal" for these Scriptures? If **eternal** does not mean **eternal**, you must be able to substitute the word "temporal." Scripture cannot talk of us having **eternal** possessions now, **eternal** life now, and an **eternal** inheritance now unless it is true.

There is an **eternal purpose** that **God** has for our lives (**Ephesians 3:10-11**); **salvation**, as a result, is now **eternal** based upon what **Christ** has done (**Hebrews 5:9**); our redemption is **eternal** (**Hebrews 9:12**); we have an **eternal inheritance** (**Hebrews 9:15**); those who have this **eternal** salvation, inheritance and salvation are destined for **eternal glory** (**Second Timothy 2:10; First Peter 5:10**); there is an **eternal hope** because we have **the guarantee of eternal life** (**Titus 3:7; Hebrews 6:17-19**); **eternal hope**, in turn, provides **eternal comfort** (**Second Thessalonians 2:16 NASB**); **God** has made an **eternal Covenant** with us and by virtue of **Him** being **the Promise Keeper**, **He** will keep us saved (**Hebrews 13:20**); we are destined for an **eternal Kingdom** (**Second Peter 1:11**); we now do indeed have **eternal life** and we have it presently; it is not something we will receive later upon death, but we

have **eternal life** *right now* (John 3:14-16 and 36, 6:47, 10:28; Titus 3:7). It cannot be overemphasized that **eternal life** must mean what it says. If it is not **eternal** - if a person can lose it - then it is only temporary life.¹⁷¹¹

D. There are ten principles behind the concept of eternal security:

The first principle is especially emphasized by the fact that the verb to be saved is often used in the Greek aorist tense, which tends to emphasize a singular act (for example John 3:14-15, 4:13-14, 6:35 and 51). The point is that salvation is not something that is repeated. The Bible is silent on being "resaved." Since ADONAI is a loving God, we would expect a clear line of demarcation where He would show us exactly what to do if we lost our salvation. If you can be saved and lost, saved and lost, saved and lost; if ADONAI can flip back and fourth between being our Friend and our Enemy, our Friend and our Enemy, our Friend and our Enemy . . . it's difficult to trust a potential enemy. Assuming we could loose our salvation, how often, on average, does a person lose their salvation? How great is the risk? At what point do you lose our salvation? Unbelief? How much unbelief? Too much sin? How much sin? What kinds of sins would cause us to lose our salvation? Loss of faith? How much loss of faith? Did Peter lose his salvation when he denied Christ three times? Did he get "resaved?" Since we know that Adonai ELOHIM is a loving God, the only conclusion we can come to is that these questions don't need to be answered, because once gained, salvation cannot be lost. It is a singular act at the moment of faith.

The second principle is that true salvation will produce genuine works of righteousness in the life of the believer. Anyone who is truly saved will show it to some degree at some point in time. Somewhere in their life, if a person is truly saved, there will be some evidence of it. We are saved by faith alone, but that faith produces some kind of evidence. Salvation is not by faith and works, but true salvation produces good works (Mattityahu 7:17-20; Titus 2:11-12; James 2:14-24; Second Peter 1:5-10).

The third principle of eternal security is doctrinal consistency, which is a test of genuine faith (Colossians 1:22-23; Second John 1:1-12). When people saved, they may not know the Yeshua was born of a virgin. But when they do learn it, they will readily accept it. If they deny or reject this truth, then they probably weren't truly saved to begin with (First John 2:9).

The fourth principle is that the believer's works of righteousness are rewarded (Hebrews 6:10). We do not attain salvation by works (it is a free gift received by faith), but true salvation, true faith, will result in works of righteousness, and these works, in turn will receive their reward (see my commentary on Revelation Cc - For We Must All Appear Before the Judgment Seat of Christ).

The fifth principle of eternal security is that the exhortations in the Bible for godly living are based upon what God has done for us, not on the fear of losing our salvation. For example, the exhortation to godly living in **Romans Chapter 12** is based on what **God** has done for us in **Romans Chapters 1-11**, not on the threat of losing salvation. In **Ephesians Chapters 1-3** Rabbi Sha'ul deals with all that **God** has done on our behalf in the work of salvation. But in **Ephesians Chapters 4-6**, as he begins to deal with the practical applications he writes: **I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received (Ephesians 4:1)**. Therefore, based on what **God** has done (**Ephesians Chapters 1-3**), Rabbi Sha'ul says, "here's the way we should live" (**Ephesians Chapters 4-6**). Again, these exhortations are always based on what **God** has done, not based on the fear or threat of losing salvation.

The sixth principle of eternal security is to remember that sin in a believer's life severs fellowship (First Corinthians 5:1-13; First John 1:6-9), but does not result in loss of salvation. When we are born physically we are born into a family and will always be a part of that family. But the unity within that family might be strained and broken because of sin. The same thing is true in the family of **God**. You may have to break fellowship with a believer over their sin, but that person will always remain a part of the family of **ADONAI**. Sin severs fellowship but never severs salvation.

The seventh principle of eternal security is to remember that persistent life pattern of sin shows a lack of conversion. This is the point of **First John 3:6-10** where the present tense is used. A life pattern of sin does not show a loss of salvation. If anything, it may show that a person was never saved to begin with. Often people point to someone who goes to shul or church, but has never shown any evidence of being saved. Sitting in shul or church does not make you a believer any more than sitting in the garage makes you a car. The question really is, was he or she ever saved to begin with. Persistent sin without any works of righteousness may show a lack of conversion.

The eighth principle is that perfection is not achieved in this life. Believers will continue sinning for the rest of their lives. No one will reach perfection in this life (see B. B. Warfield's book, *Perfectionism*). If one must reach perfection in order to maintain salvation, then every believer is in trouble. In fact, if anyone could have attained perfection, it would have been Rabbi Sha'ul, but yet he wrote: **I am not yet perfect (Philippians 3:12-14)**. And in **First Timothy 1:15**, written towards the end of his life, he said: **Faithful is the saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.** He used the present tense, not "I was," but **I am**.

The ninth principle of eternal security is that there is a difference between position and practice; between justification and sanctification. When we are justified at salvation, our position in **Christ** is permanent, but because we still live in bodies of sin, our practice may

not always show it. One of the best examples would be the church at **Corinth**. Rabbi Sha'ul referred to the **Corinthians** church positionally as being a sanctified church: **But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption (First Corinthians 1:30 NASB)**. But, according to their practice, they were one of the worst churches in the B'rit Chadashah. That is the difference between position and practice. Bad practice does not mean that position has been lost.

The tenth principle of eternal security is our position in Messiah. At the moment of faith several things happen (see **Bw - What God Does for Us at the Moment of Faith**), and one of them is being placed in **Christ**. This doctrine teaches us that somehow **He** is placed in us, and we are placed in **Christ**, who sits at the right hand of **the Father (Mark 16:19; Romans 8:34; Acts 7:55-56, Ephesians 1:20)**. As a result, there is a permanent union with **Christ** and the believer that is set of eternity. **Messiah** cannot be taken out of us and we cannot be taken out of **Christ**.¹⁷¹² When **ADONAI** looks down upon us, **He** doesn't see our sin, **He sees His Son** (And there are no abortions in heaven).

D. The Trinity Points to Eternal Security: What are the evidences of the Trinity?

Eternal security is dependent upon God the Father. In relationship to **God the Father**, **eternal security** is based upon four evidences:

1. The sovereign purpose of **God**. **Romans 8:28-30** spells out one of these sovereign purposes of **God** when Rabbi Sha'ul said **those that have been justified will be glorified**. He does not say only some who have truly been **saved** are going to preserve to the end will make it; he does not say that only some who are **justified** will eventually be **glorified**. What is stated is that those who have been **justified** are also guaranteed to be **glorified** by **God the Father**. Another verse concerning the dependence of **eternal security** upon sovereign purpose of **God the Father** is in **1 Cor 1:8 NET: He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you will be blameless, and this is a promise all believers have - that all will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ**. Furthermore, **Eph 1:4, 11-12** states that **believers** have been **chosen** to bring **glory to God**. And by the fact of **God's** choice, if **ADONAI** knew one would lose it, **He** would not have chosen such a one to begin with. Our very choosing of **God** shows and guarantees **eternal security**. **Eph 2:7** develops the sovereign purpose of **God** even further: **In order that in the coming ages [God] might show the incomparable riches of His grace expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus . . .**

Those who have obtained the mercy of **salvation** from **God** in this life, in the coming ages, in the next life, will receive ever greater displays of **God's** mercy. This promise is a guarantee of **eternal salvation**. In addition, **Philippians 2:12-13** states that **God** is working in the believer to accomplish **His** will. Not only is the gaining of **salvation** the work of **God**,

but the retention of **salvation** is **His** work also. The reason we cannot lose our **salvation** is because the keeping of **salvation** is not dependent upon us, it's dependent upon **God the Father** and **His** sovereign purpose. Another verse concerning **His** sovereign purpose is **Hebrews 2:10**, which speaks of **His** purpose in **bringing many sons and daughters to glory**.

2. The second reason we are dependent on **God the Father** is based upon **His** ability to **keep us**. The fact that **He** has the power to **keep means** that **He** will **keep us**. **John 10:25-29** points out that **God** will give [**His sheep**] **eternal life**. The ones that have been **saved** have **eternal life**. And if the word **eternal** means anything, it means just that . . . it is **eternal**. And if someone can lose their **salvation**, they didn't have **eternal life**, only temporary life. Then to finish the verse the same idea is stated negatively, **and they shall never perish**. In **Rom 4:21** Paul says: **Being full convinced that God had power to do what He had promised**. And since **God** promised to **keep the believer**, **He** will do it. **Romans 8:28-30** states that **whom He predestined, called and justified, will also be glorified**.

Colossians 3:3 speaks about our life being hidden with **Christ in God**. According to **First Thessalonians 5:23-24** the power of **God** is demonstrated in that **He** will preserve, preserve to perfect sanctification of the whole spirit, soul and body. For **He** who called, **God the Father**, will be **the One** to do it. This verse also emphasizes that **eternal security** is guaranteed because of **God's** power to preserve it. Then, **Hebrews 7:25** points out that **believers** have been **saved** completely. And one more example of **God's** power to keep us is seen in **Jude 24**, which teaches with all confidence that **God** is **able to keep us from falling away** and will bring us with great joy into **His** glorious presence without a single fault.

3. A third reason we are dependent upon **God the Father** is because of **His** infinite love. **Romans 5:7-10** states that if **ADONAI** sent **His Son** to die for us when we were **His** enemies, **He** would certainly **keep us** now that we are **His** children. What's more, **Ephesians 1:4** states that we have been chosen before **the creation of the world, predestined for adoption through Jesus Christ**. And by **His** love **He** has chosen us in order to **keep us**.

4. The fourth reason we are dependent upon **God the Father** for **eternal security** is based upon the promise of **God**. **He** made a specific promise about **eternal security**, and the promises of **God** can never be rendered null and void. So **John 3:16** states that **the believer shall not perish but have eternal life**. If **believers** can lose their **salvation** and end up in hell, then obviously a believer can perish. But according to that passage, once a person accepts **Messiah** as **Savior and Lord**, they simply **shall not perish**. Then **John 5:24** teaches that **the believer** has already **crossed over from death to life** and the promise is that we already have **eternal life** because we have passed from spiritual **death** to spiritual **life** and from spiritual **life** to **eternal life**. The Scriptures always emphasize that **believers** have **eternal life** now, and if it could be lost it was not **eternal**, but only temporary. In **Hebrews**

6:16-19, the writer based His argument upon the promise of God and the oath of God. As if the promise of ADONAI was not enough, He added His oath to His promise. The essence of the promise and the oath is that believers are going to be kept safe.

Eternal security is also dependent upon God the Son. One of the critical passages for understanding this is Romans 8:34-39 (see below **Positive Passages for Eternal Security**). Aside from that there are six evidences with regard to our eternal salvation and Messiah.

1. The Bible teaches that Yeshua died, and when He died, He paid for all of our sins past, present and future. ADONAI said to [Jesus], **You are My Son. Son though He was, He learned obedience from what He suffered and once made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation for all who [believe in] Him (Hebrews 5:5, 8-9).**

2. We are dependent on God the Son because Messiah has risen and believers share in His resurrection to life (First Corinthians 15:20-24). This points to the fact that our eternal salvation cannot be lost. **And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6).**

3. The third reason we are dependent on God the Son is the ministry of Messiah as our advocate. **My dear children [of God], I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One (First John 2:1).** So when Satan comes before God and accuses us of our sins day and night (Revelation 12:10), Yeshua, acting as our defender, champions our cause and says, "Yes, Father, those accusations are true, but I have paid for every one of those sins on the cross." So Christ advocates for us . . . He does not threaten us with loss of our salvation.

4. Another reason we are dependent on the Son of God for our eternal salvation is His ministry of intercession. He interceded while still on earth (John 17:1-26), and He is still interceding for us. **Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died - more than that, who was raised to life - is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us (Romans 8:34).** Therefore, He is able to save completely those who come to God through Him, because He always lives to intercede for them (Heb 7:25).

5. We are dependent on God the Son based on Christ's role as **the Good Shepherd (John 10:27-30).** There we are taught once again, that we have **eternal life.** If that life is **eternal,** then it's **eternal.** If one can lose it, it's not **eternal,** merely temporary. We **shall never perish** no matter what we do. Why? Because **no one will snatch [us] out of [Christ's] hand. Jesus concludes by saying: My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and the Father are one.**

6. The sixth reason we are dependent on **God the Son** for our **eternal security** is because of **Messiah's** redemptive work. What is the purpose of **His** redemptive work? **Ephesians 5:25-27** teaches us that **He** died to purify **the body of Christ, the Church, so that she will be without stain or blemish, but holy and blameless**, and that is what **He** intends to do. Certainly, if any part of **His body** loses its **salvation**, that is a **stain**, that is a **blemish**. **Hebrews 5:9** teaches us **ADONAI** made **Messiah** the source of **eternal salvation**. It is a **salvation** believers now possess, and since it is **eternal**, it cannot suddenly become temporary. **First Peter 3:18** declares that **Yeshua** **suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring [us] to God**. If we can lose our **salvation** and be **saved** again, then **Christ** would need to suffer more than once. The Bible, however, tells us that can never happen. Consequently, **Messiah** has brought us to **God** permanently, **eternally**.

And eternal security dependent upon the Ruach haKodesh. There are five evidences with regard to our eternal salvation and **the Holy Spirit**.

1. First is **the Ruach's** ministry of regeneration. **Second Corinthians 5:17** states that **all things have become new**. **Ephesians 6:15** declares the believer to be a **new creation**. **Galatians 2:10** teaches that believers have been **created in Christ**. So **the Spirit's** work of regeneration makes us a **new creation**. This work of redemption cannot be undone. We are born into the natural world by a natural birth. Once that happens, it cannot be undone. We can die, but we can't be "unborn." We cannot become a fetus again and re-enter our mother's womb. Once we're born, we're born. The same thing is true in the spiritual realm.

2. The ministry of **the Holy Spirit** is one of indwelling. When the Bible speaks of the **Ruach HaKodesh** indwelling **the believer**, it emphasizes that once **He** comes to indwell that believer, **He** indwells permanently and eternally. **And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to help you and be with you forever** (**John 14:16**; also see **1 Cor 6:19**; **Ephesians 2:22**; **First John 2:27**). **The Holy Spirit** takes up residence in the believer **forever**. If **He** is not there **forever**, that it wasn't "forever;" it was only temporary.

3. By **Spirit** baptism the believer is vitally joined to **Messiah** and becomes a member of **His body**, and there is no implication that it is ever possible to ever be aborted out of that body. **For we are all baptized in/by/with one Spirit so as to form one body - whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free - and we were all given the one Spirit to drink** (**First Corinthians 12:13**).

4. The ministry of **the Ruach HaKodesh** is one of **sealing**, and the purpose is to **seal** the believer up **in Christ** so that we can never be lost. The emphasis is clearly that the believer has been **sealed**, not just temporarily, not just until we stop believing, but has been **sealed** until the day of redemption. Having been **sealed**, the final redemption is **guaranteed**: **Now it**

is **God** who makes both us and you stand firm in **Christ**. He anointed us, set His seal of ownership on us, and put His Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. The deposit is a down payment with the intention to purchase. **ADONAI** has given us *Himself* as the down payment; He has given us the Ruach HaKodesh (**Second Corinthians 1:21-22**; also see **Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30**).¹⁷¹³

E. Doctrinal Proofs: Here are several doctrinal proofs:

Regeneration: The instantaneous sovereign act of **God the Holy Spirit** whereby eternal life is imparted to **believers** at the moment of faith. We are transformed from spiritual death to spiritual life. It involves a complete inner recreating spiritually wherein our fallen human nature receives a new nature and we become interested in and concerned with "the things of **God**," rather than "the things of the world."

Propitiation: The averting of **God's** wrath by means of the vicarious (substitutionary; performed by another) and efficacious (producing the desired result) sacrifice (death) of **Jesus Christ** (the atonement). It is the work of **Messiah** that satisfies every claim of **God's** holiness and justice so that **ADONAI** is free to act on behalf of sinners.

Adoption: Passing from the family of **the Adversary** and being brought into the personal family of **ADONAI**. We are therefore placed as an adult son or daughter.

Imputation: This means that all the righteousness of **Christ** is transferred to our spiritual account at the moment of **faith**. The Bible teaches us that we have **all** inherited Adam's **sin** nature. But because of the death of **the Meshiach** on the cross we have a perfect, absolute, **righteousness** that **God the Father** transfers to our spiritual account through **His Son**. Because of our **faith**, we have passed **ADONAI's** final exam of the universe with a hundred percent. We are in **the Holy One**, and **He** is in us. The only way we get to heaven is a result of the perfect **righteousness** of **Jesus Christ**.

Justification: The act of **Ha'Shem** whereby, negatively, **He** forgives our sins and, positively, **He** declares us **righteous** by imputing the obedience and **righteousness** of **the Meshiach** to us through **faith**.

Reconciliation: A change of personal relations between **God** and mankind wherein a state of hostility and estrangement is justly replaced by one of peace and fellowship. **ADONAI** accomplishes this on our behalf.

Union with Christ: Through the baptism of/by/with **the Holy Spirit**, the believer is actually united to **Christ** in such a way that what is true of **Messiah** becomes true of **the believer**, minus **His** deity.

Therefore, only two possibilities are open to us. We can lose our **salvation**, or we cannot lose our **salvation**. If we can conclusively establish one, then by definition, since **God** cannot contradict **Himself**, all other scriptures must be interpreted in light of that truth.

F. Positive Passages for Eternal Security: When examined in their context they leave no room what so ever for doubting the **eternal security of the believer**. These verses would be the perfect place to temper the notion of eternal security and prove that we can indeed lose our **salvation**. But you don't find any of those qualifications in the logical places you would expect to find them.

Genesis 6:13-22: See my commentary on **Genesis Ce - The Ark is a Type of Christ**.

John 6:37-40: It is ever possible for **Yeshua** to lose **a gift** from the **Father**? **And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that I shall lose none of all those He has given Me, but raise them up at the last day (Yochanan 6:39)**. So if one true **believer** ever loses his or her **salvation**, **Jesus** would be out of the will of **ADONAI**. But that is impossible.

Yochanan 10:27-30: **Jesus** builds argument on top of argument to affirm our security in **Him**: **My sheep listen to My voice; I know them; and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and the Father are One.**

First John 4:16-18: **We will have confidence on the day of judgment.**

John 5:24: **Very truly I tell you, whoever hears My word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life.**

Romans 5:8-11 and 17: Since **Messiah** died for us while we were still sinners, how much more will **He** do for us now that we have been reconciled, adopted, **justified**, united with **Him**, and had all of **His righteousness** transferred to our spiritual bank account?

Romans 8:28-39: This is the strongest argument in the Bible for **the eternal security** of the believer. If this were the **ONLY** scripture supporting **the security of the believer** - you would have to say that it was established. **Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger of**

the world . . . No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation **(which includes you!)** will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

G. Problem Passages for Eternal Security: Various groups do use different verses to try to prove that it is possible to lose one's salvation. To be assured of our **eternal security**, we need to respond to these viewpoints.

Dispensational Misapplications: These scriptures are not dealing with the individual's salvation in the Dispensation of Grace (see my commentary on **Hebrews - The Dispensation of Grace**), but are dealing with Isra'el as a nation under the Dispensation of the Torah (see my commentary on **Exodus Da - The Dispensation of the Torah**), individual accountability, physical life and physical death (**Ezekiel 18:20-26** and **33:7-9**). A second passage that has been dispensationally misapplied is **Matthew 18:21-35** in which **Jesus** deals with the issue of forgiveness. The point here is that confessing sins is not going to gain family forgiveness if the confessor is not willing to forgive people that have wronged him or offended him. So this passage deals with family forgiveness, not **salvation** forgiveness. A third passage commonly misapplied dispensationally is **Matthew 24:13**. Here **Jesus** was dealing with the nation of **Isra'el** at the end of the Great Tribulation: **All Isra'el will be saved (Romans 11:26)**. None of these three passages teach that the individual **believer** who has been saved by grace through **faith** can lose his or her **salvation**.

False Teachers: These scriptures deal with false teachers and were not **believers (Matthew 7:15; Acts 20:29-30; Romans 16:17-18; Second Corinthians 11:13-15; First Timothy 4:1-2; Second Peter 2:1-22; First John 2:19; Jude 3-19)**. So these are passages that speak of false teachers and are not dealing with people who actually were saved and then lost their **salvation**. These are people who were never saved to begin with; people who had knowledge of the truth by rejected it and then actively began teaching doctrine contrary to it.

False Professions of Faith: Some people try to use passages to show that we can lose our salvation, but are, in fact, merely scriptures that speak of an outward profession of faith but are not true conversion (**Matthew 7:22-23, 13:1-8; Luke 11:24-26; First Corinthians 15:1-4**). It should be noted that the Bible clearly recognizes the difference between mere profession and real possession of **faith: Nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm, sealed with this inscription, "The Lord know those who are His," and "Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness" (2 Timothy 2:19)**. The context of this passage deals with two men who had been teaching

erroneously in **verse 17**. They had made a profession of **faith**, but they never truly possessed it. Had they truly been saved, they would have departed from **wickedness**. This is similar to the passage cited above, **First John 2:19**. For a while they appeared to be **believers**, but their actions showed that they were mere professors and not possessors of the **faith**.

Passages Concerning the Fruits of Salvation: There are passages that people try to use to show that it is possible to lose our **salvation**, but they are really talking about the evidences of **salvation**: that true **salvation** is proved by the evidence of its spiritual fruit. **John 8:31** does not deal with **salvation**, but with discipleship. One is saved by **faith**, but becomes a disciple by obedience. In **John 15:6**, the context is not loss of **salvation**, but fruit bearing. Those who bear fruit will be rewarded, while those that do not bear fruit will not be rewarded. Another familiar passage in this same category is **James 2:17-18**. The issue here is not **salvation** by works, but the evidence of **salvation**. While **salvation** is not by good works, **salvation** will result in good works. Again, these works are evidence of **salvation**, not the loss of it (**Second Peter 1:10-11**). Finally, **First John 3:10** makes a distinction between **believers** and unbelievers, *not* a distinction between **believers** who have retained their **salvation** and **believers** who have lost it. These are passages that show that true **salvation** is proved by its fruits; they are not dealing with losing **salvation**.

The five warnings in the book of **Hebrews**: We must understand that there are three basic groups of people in view throughout this book. If one does not keep these groups in mind, the book becomes very confusing. The key to interpreting any part of **Hebrews** is to understand which group is being addressed. The primary message is addressed to believers. But periodically there are five different warnings (**2:1-4**, **3:7-19**, **5:11-14**, **6:1-8**, **10:26-39**) to two unbelieving groups: Jews who were merely intellectually convinced, but had not crossed over the line from knowledge to faith, and secondly unbelieving Jews. But some people think that these passages are addressing believers who have lost their salvation.

Basic Warnings to All Mankind: People use **First John 5:4-5** to say that if a **believer** does not **overcome the world**, she will lose her **salvation**; she will not be a child of **God**. However, this is a general statement that everyone born of **God** *does* (without exception), **overcome the world**. Notice the way it is worded: **For everyone born of God overcomes the world**. So **everyone** who is **born of God**, everyone who has been born again, will **overcome the world** and gain their **victory** because of **their faith**. **And who is that overcomes the world, verse 5 asks?** The answer is, **the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God**. By virtue of saving faith, we have **overcome the world**. These verses *do not* teach that only those who **overcome the world** will be **saved** and that those who don't will lose their **salvation**. A second passage in this category is **Revelation 22:19**. In this passage, **the Holy Spirit** is not dealing with **believers**; a **believer** would never want to take away and destroy **the Word of God** to begin with. This verse says nothing about the possibility of losing one's

salvation. It simply promises punishment for those who deny the truths given in the book of **Revelation**. **Believers** will have **faith** in it, while unbelievers will deny the truths of the book.

The Olive Tree of Romans 11:17-24: Rabbi Sha'ul discusses **the olive tree**, branches being broken off and branches being grafted into **the olive tree**. Those who distort this passage must assume this **olive tree** represents **salvation**. So to be **broken off** means to lose **salvation**, and to be **grafted in** means to gain **salvation**. However, **the olive tree**, in the context of **Romans 11** is the remnant of **Isra'el** and that **all Isra'el will be saved (Romans 11:26)**. **The olive tree** is rooted in the Abrahamic Covenant: **I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse (Genesis 12:3a)**. Sha'ul was not dealing with individual believers; rather, he was discussing two nationalities, Jews and Gentiles. Gentiles formerly outside the place of blessing, now, because of their obedience, can receive some of the blessings of the Jewish covenants. Then he warned the Gentiles that they, too, may be **broken off** from the place of blessing even as **Isra'el** was. But the issue is not a distinction between individual **believers** who retain their **salvation** and individual **believers** who lose it; rather, he is dealing with two nationalities: Jews and Gentiles.

Losing Rewards: Some people misinterpret the losing of rewards in heaven as losing their **salvation**. One such passage is **First Corinthians 3:10-15**, which discusses **the Judgment Seat of Christ** (see my commentary on **Revelation Cc - For We Must All Appear Before the Judgment Seat of Christ**). But this very verse denies that the person who loses her rewards loses her **salvation** because **verse 15** declares: **If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved - even though only as one escaping through the flames**. Another passage in this same category is **First Corinthians 9:26-27**: **Therefore, I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize**. Some use this verse to try to show that Paul taught there is real possibility of a believer eventually being rejected and losing his **salvation**. The context is of a race or contest where the victor gains a reward and is *not* dealing with the loss of **salvation**.

Loss of Fellowship and Divine Discipline: In **John 13:8**, contextually, **Yeshua** was not dealing with **salvation**, but the need for cleansing daily sins to restore fellowship. The means of cleansing daily sins is confession (**First John 1:9**). Another passage in the same category is **First Corinthians 11:29-32**. Here Rabbi Sha'ul is dealing with divine discipline and physical judgments such as sickness and death. Sometimes divine discipline requires physical death, but those who suffer this kind physical discipline **will not be finally condemned along with the world**. But there is no loss of **salvation** because of their disobedience. One more passage in this category is **First John 5:16**. **Death** here is physical **death**, not spiritual **death**. The situation here is the same as in **First Corinthians 5:1-5**, where Sha'ul dealt with

the issue of excommunication. The excommunication process means that a person could lose his physical life, but he will not lose his **salvation**.

Falling from *Grace*: **You who are trying to be declared righteous by God through legalism have severed yourselves from the Messiah! You have fallen away from God's grace (Galatians 5:4 CJB)**. The context of **Galatians 5** is not dealing with salvation or loss of salvation. These **Galatians** were true believers who were being taught by false teachers that **they** had to keep the Torah for **their** sanctification. **They** knew **they** were **saved** by **grace**, but felt that **they** needed to *keep their salvation* by obeying the 613 commandments of Moshe. As **believers**, we can either operate in the sphere of **legalism** or in the sphere of **grace**. If we choose to operate in the sphere of **legalism**, we **fall from grace** . . . not in the sense of losing our **salvation**, but in the sense of losing divine enablement to live a **righteous** life because **legalism** cannot provide the power to *keep* it. Living a spirit-filled life provides the power (*Greek: dunamis*, where we get the word *dynamite*) to keep **the Lord's righteous** standards of holiness. So the **fall from grace** means to resort to works, to **legalism**, to a merit system, in attempting to live a godly life. In other words, those who try to live a godly life through works have **fallen from grace**. **They** don't lose **their salvation**; **they** simply no longer operate in the sphere of **grace**, but rather in the sphere of **legalism**. As a result, **they** live **their** lives on the basis of **their** own strength, not on the basis of divine **grace**.

Weakened Spiritual Condition (**1 Cor 8:8-12**): This passage does not deal with **believers** losing their **salvation**, but a baby **believer** in a weakened spiritual condition. An immature **believer** can easily be offended by the actions of another **believer**, and that offense can be a stumbling block to their spiritual development. They do not lose their **salvation** because they are offended, but it does show that they have a weakened spiritual condition.

Confession, acknowledging, or professing: Some confuse daily confession of sin (**First John 1:9**) with the original **salvation** confession. There are also passages that deal with **acknowledging Messiah before others (Matthew 10:32-33)**, and **professing that Jesus is Lord (Romans 10:8-11)** that has nothing to do with losing our **salvation**.

Rejection of the Holy Spirit (see **Em - Whoever Blasphemes Against the Holy Spirit Will Never Be Forgiven**): The people that the Gospel writers refer to are not **believers**. These were the leaders of **Isra'el** who accused **Jesus** of being demon possessed (see **Ek - It is only by Beelzebub, the Prince of Demons, that This Fellow Drives Out Demons**). When the religious leaders of **Isra'el** lead the nation into the rejection of **the Holy Spirit**, the nation was doomed. So the context is the rejection of **Yeshua** as **the Meshiach** on the grounds of demon possession. Only unbelievers reject **the Ruach HaKodesh**.

Parables (**Matthew 13:1-13, 24:30; Luke 13:22-30 John 15:6**): Some try to point to these parables as proof that we can lose our salvation. But if these parables are studied closely, it will become obvious that they actually speak of unbelievers and not **believers**. Furthermore, parables have only one main point and the details of a parable should not be pressed. As a result, one should never, ever, try to prove doctrine from a parable.

The Book of Life: There are statements made in the Bible about being **blotted out of the book of life**. If this is true, doesn't that prove you can lose your **salvation**? No. The fact is that everyone ever born has his or her name written in **the book of life (Psalm 139:16)**. If they are saved their names remain in **the book of life (Revelation 3:5)**; but if anyone dies unsaved, then their names are **blotted out (Psalm 69:28)**. Another separate, distinct book mentioned in Scripture is **the Lamb's book of life (Revelation 17:8b)**. It contains the names of everyone who is born again, and only those who are born again. Their names were written into this **book from the creation of the world (Revelation 13:8)**. Based on the election and foreknowledge of **ADONAI**, this **book** contains the names of all those who are born again. And because **salvation is eternally secure**, it is impossible to be **blotted out** of it.

Biblical Characters: Some use biblical characters as examples of people who have lost their **salvation**. Usually different biblical characters are used. How about **Lot**? Wasn't **Lot's** treatment of **his daughters'** proof that **he** lost his **salvation**? No! **If [God] condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the depraved conduct of the lawless (for the righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard) - if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment (2 Peter 2:6-9).**

How about **Samson**? Didn't he lose his **salvation**? No, the writer to the **Hebrews** declares: **I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson and Jephthah, about David and Samuel and the prophets, who through faith, conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions, quenched the fury of flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies (Hebrews 11:32-35). Samson died a saved man; he never lost his salvation.**

How about **David**? Didn't his adultery with Bath-Sheba lead to his loss of **salvation**? No! This is made clear by **Psalm 51:8-12: Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones You have crushed rejoice. Hide Your face from My sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from Your presence or take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your**

salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. He didn't lose his salvation, but he did lose his personal fellowship with God. He suffered personal consequences because the sword never left his house for the rest of his life (Second Samuel Chapters 13 to 21).

How about Simon Magus? He was a sorcerer who wanted another treat in his bag of tricks. When he saw Phillip healing people in Samaria, he wanted that same power (Acts 8:4-8). He didn't see salvation as a transformed life. Rabbi Sha'ul says: IF any man be in Christ he's, what? A new creation, old things pass away, what becomes new? All things. But Simon thought it was something to be added. Some greater wonder to hold people captive. You see, his view of salvation was as an external commodity that wasn't legitimate. Then Simon himself believed also, oh, it sounds so good, and when he was baptized he continued with Philip and was amazed beholding the miracles and signs that were done (Acts 8:13). He hung around, he watched, he looked at those miracles. But He only believed in the miracles, not in Jesus. He even got baptized, but that was just for show. There is a phony "faith" that doesn't save. You saw it where Jesus did miracles when came to the Temple to begin His ministry and many believed Him, but it says Yeshua didn't commit Himself to them for He knew what was in them (John 2:23). What did He know? That they weren't really saved. True salvation is not mere profession, it is not external identity, it is no sudden impulse, it is no vanishing sentiment, but a transformed life committed to Christ. You can't lose something you never had and Simon Magus was never saved to begin with.

How about Judas Iscariot? Once again, Judas was never saved. As soon as Judas took the matzah, Satan entered into Him. While the others were growing into apostles, Judas was quietly became a wicked, calculating tool of the Adversary. Whatever his character seemed to be at the beginning, his faith was not real. And his heart gradually hardened so the he became a false apostle who sold the Son of God for a fistful of coins. In the end, he was so prepared to do the tempter's bidding that the devil himself possessed him (John 13:27). Yeshua would say later: None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction, in reference to Judas (John 17:12). Judas was remorseful but not repentant (see Lm - Judas Hangs Himself), and Acts 1:24-25 states that Judas fell from apostleship, but not from salvation because he was never saved.

None of these verses or examples actually teaches that believers can lose their salvation. On the contrary, once saved, believers can never be snatched out of Christ's hand because they are kept by the power of God.¹⁷¹⁴ We don't keep ourselves; He keeps us. Consequently, the problem passages can be explained as misapplications, while the positive passages cannot be disproven. So as believers we can be confident that we are eternally secure.

PS: The fact that we are **eternally secure** in our **salvation** does not give us the liberty to live like the **devil**. Rabbi Sha'ul addresses this issue in **Romans**, saying: **What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By not means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.**

For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we will certainly also be united with Him in a resurrection like His. For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin - because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, He cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over Him. The death He died, He died to sin once and for all; but the life He lives, He lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Our **eternal security** should not merely be viewed as "fire insurance."

Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to Him as an instrument of righteousness. For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the Torah, but under grace.

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the Torah but under grace? By no means! Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey - whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness (Romans 6:1-18).