

The Hope of Our Salvation

By [Wayne Jackson](#)

In describing the metaphorical armor with which the Christian is to fortify himself, one of the items listed by Paul is the “helmet of salvation” (Ephesians 6:17). The term “helmet” is derived from a compound Greek term conveying the idea of “around the head.” The imagery appears to be borrowed from Isaiah 59:17, where it is applied to Jehovah, a divine warrior. In that context it seems to suggest the power of God to defeat his enemies and save his people.

In Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, it speaks of the Christian’s need to protect the salvation he received at the point of his baptism (Mark 16:16; cf. Ephesians 5:26).

Here is an interesting question: If the child of God is so securely “saved” at the time of his conversion, that he **never** can be lost (as Calvinism alleges), why would the apostle suggest, by this imagery, that his salvation needs to be protected? The implication of the figure obviously implies just the opposite of the “impossible-to-apostatize” dogma.

This point is further amplified in another of Paul’s letters. In his first epistle to the church at Thessalonica, the apostle wrote: “But let us, since we are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation” (1 Thessalonians 5:8). The expression “hope of salvation” may strike us as curious, inasmuch as “hope” generally suggests the idea of that yet to be received.

Elsewhere Paul wrote: “For in hope were we saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopes for that which he sees? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it” (Romans 8:24-25). Hope, from the very nature of the case, focuses upon that which has not yet been realized.

How, then, can the Christian **now** possess salvation (cf. Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 15:2), and yet “hope” for it? The answer is to be found in the fact that words may be used in **different senses** in the Scriptures. There is a sense in which salvation has been received already, i.e., we received the forgiveness of all past sins when, with obedient faith, we submitted to the rite of baptism as commanded by God (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21).

And yet, in another manner of speaking, we “hope” for a salvation yet to come (1 Thessalonians 5:8), which is “nearer than when we first believed” (Romans 13:11), but is yet to be obtained in its fullness (2 Timothy 2:10).

The ultimate salvation will be received in “the last time” (1 Peter 1:5), being realized in the “heavenly kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:18), when we are freed from the temptations and difficulties of this life.

These passages clearly refute the commonly-believed theory that salvation is a “done deal” at the moment of one’s belief, and thus never can be forfeited.

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Scripture References

Ephesians 6:17; Isaiah 59:17; Mark 16:16; Ephesians 5:26; 1 Thessalonians 5:8; Romans 8:24-25; Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 15:2; Acts 2:38, 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Romans 13:11; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 1:5; 2 Timothy 4:18

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Fortify Your Faith

P.O. Box 11746

Jackson, Tennessee 38308

Phone: (731) 256-7280 – Fax: (731) 256-5152

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