

2 Timothy 1:9

Pastor: 2 Timothy 1:9: Salvation is not according to works.

“[W]ho has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Messiah Yeshua from all eternity.”

One cannot be ashamed of Yeshua the Messiah, and hardships that may need to be endured for Him, **when the salvation He provides is kept in proper perspective.**¹ Paul exclaims how God “saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and the grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus ages ago” (2 Timothy 1:9, RSV). The salvation, that is available in Yeshua the Son, is something that the Father purposed *pro chronōn aiōniōn* (πρὸ χρόνων αἰωνίων), “from all eternity” (NASU), “before the ages began” (NRSV/ESV), or “before the beginning of time” (NIV). Can any person who has experienced the goodness of redemption in the Messiah really be ashamed (2 Timothy 1:8), realizing the importance of how His arrival to be sacrificed for sinners was planned before the formation of this universe (cf. Ephesians 1:3-14; Revelation 13:8)?

The importance of a Believer’s salvation is only highlighted by recognizing that it is *ou kata ta erga hēmōn* (οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν), “not according to our works” (cf. Ephesians 2:9). This is true whether such deeds are associated with the Torah of Moses, or just human activities in general, as Ben Witherington III confirms, “Here the contrast between grace and works refers not to works of the Mosaic law, but to human deeds more generally.”² While works are expected by those who experience salvation (2 Timothy 3:17), I. Howard Marshall & Philip H. Towner stress, “The force then is that, although God judges on the basis of deeds, he does not save on that basis.”³

¹ This entry has been adapted from the commentary *The Pastoral Epistles for the Practical Messianic*.

² Witherington, *Titus, 1-2 Timothy and 1-3 John*, 318.

³ Marshall & Towner, 705.