

What a variety of meanings!

The words "save," "salvation," and "saved" are used in many ways. But of course we are interested in the way or ways in which the Bible uses these words.

In the NIV version of the Bible we discover that "salvation" is used 122 times in 118 verses, and that these uses sort themselves out into two basic categories. One category speaks of the salvation of the nation Israel. The other category speaks of the salvation of individual believers. To illustrate these categories, let us look at seventeen uses in sixteen verses as a fair sample.

Handout

One Category of Usage refers to the Nation of Israel

Psalms 14:7 (NIV) "Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!"

Psalms 98:3 (NIV) "He has remembered his love and his faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God."

Isaiah 46:13 (NIV) "I am bringing my righteousness near, it is not far away; and my salvation will not be delayed. I will grant salvation to Zion, my splendor to Israel."

Isaiah 52:7 (NIV) "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!""

Isaiah 52:10 (NIV) "The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God."

Isaiah 62:1 (NIV) "For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines out like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch."

In this first category of usage God promises salvation to the nation of Israel, in the form of deliverance from oppression by external enemies and from unrighteousness and misery. This deliverance will result in the restoration of Israel to God's favor, to God's lordship, to righteousness, to the manifestation of God's glory, and to great happiness and blessedness.