

GRACE GAZETTE

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Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.

Hebrews 12:12-13

REDEMPTION IN HIM

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.

Ephesians 1:7

The scripture indicates that the natural man distorts the truth and is primarily interested in exalting the creature. *"Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever."* (Rom 1:25) This can be seen in the religious mindset that the vast majority of the human race demonstrates. The natural bent of men in general (even some claiming to be the followers of CHRIST) manifests this very tendency as they express their theories about why GOD created the world. The prevailing notion today is that GOD created the world for the creature's sake and desires to bless and perpetuate mans happiness if he will only cooperate with HIM and obey HIS precepts. They view the redemption which the LORD provided in JESUS CHRIST as the solution to a problem which allows GOD to continue to bless them as long as they in turn acknowledge HIS sacrifice and appropriate it to themselves by their own faith. In this distorted view the work of CHRIST becomes only a partial means to a greater end which is the restoration of man back to the paradise of Eden. This particular philosophy has such widespread acceptance that those who question or dispute this viewpoint are castigated as misfits and/or radicals of the rankest sort.

Sadly or gladly (depending on your point of view) we fall into the latter category since it seems clear enough to us that according to the scripture record, GOD has done all things for HIS own pleasure. *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."* (Rev 4:11) We do not claim to know the things which GOD has kept secret (see Dt.29:29; Rom.16:25; Col.1:16) but we cannot help but rejoice and proclaim those things which seem to us to be clearly revealed in the Holy Writ regardless of how well received or popular they are. Our interest is in the exaltation of that NAME which is above every name. Our aim is to remind men that they were fashioned from the dust and to it they shall return but the glory of our GOD shall shine in all of HIS splendor throughout the eternal day. HE is worthy to be praised.

Redemption is not an afterthought with HIM nor is it a means to another end. It is not a partial solution to a terrible problem which GOD is trying to solve. It is not something man can in any way "participate in." In fact the scriptures indicate that the redemption of sinners was the very reason GOD created the world and ordained that Adam should fall in the Garden. HE had prepared the provider of Adam's covering long before Adam disobeyed HIM and incurred the curse of sin. GOD will bring glory to HIS name through the redemption of HIS elect children, and it is for this end that HE created man and this world in which we dwell.

“That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” (Eph 2:7) “Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory..”(Eph 1:9-12)

It is impossible to preach the gospel without preaching redemption, there is no gospel if there is no redemption. Sadly much of what is purported to be the preaching of the gospel, today, is no gospel at all since the scriptural concept of redemption is ignored or misunderstood. The word “redeem” means to “buy back” and to “deliver”. In order to preach scriptural redemption one must teach that redemption involves:

The purchase of a former possession which was lost. Something cannot be bought “back” if it was never possessed in the first place. The scripture plainly indicates that CHRIST had an elect bride given to HIM before the foundation of the world. *“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.” (Eph 1:4)* (see John 6:37,39; 17:2) By the same token it was necessary that this “possession” be lost in order that it might be redeemed. Though never appointed unto wrath nonetheless GOD’s elect children fell under the curse of the law and were separated from HIM by their sin. (see I Thes.5:9; Gal.4:5)

A particular object to be purchased. There can be no such thing as a general redemption because redemption involves the purchase of a particular object. Under the “law” a man could buy back a house he sold in a walled city up to a year afterward. (see Lev.25:29) or a sibling could buy back his brother out of slavery (v.48) These were not general purchases but very specific ones. The LORD JESUS CHRIST has bought HIS people with HIS own blood. In v.7 of Eph 1 Paul says *“we have redemption”*, the we has reference to the “chosen” in v.4. (see Isa.53:11;John 17:9;10)

A particular time for the purchase. As in the verses cited above in Leviticus, there was a specific timeframe for this “redemption” to take place. The LORD JESUS came into the world at the specific time which was ordained for HIM to come. But make no mistake about it, it was “necessary” that HE come at that time and perform the exact requirement in order for redemption to occur. *“But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”(Heb 9:26)* This is not an ongoing transaction.

A definite price. HE has paid the exact price necessary for the redemption of HIS people. The law demands the death of a sinner, HE has poured out HIS life’s blood to purchase our redemption. *“we have redemption through his blood”*

Not all the blood of beasts On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace , Or wash away the stain.
But Christ, the heavenly Lamb, Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name And richer blood than they.
Taken from Gadsby’s Hymns, #125 by Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

A completed transaction. Where there is no finished work, there can be no redemption. The LORD has accomplished exactly what HE set out to do. *“By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” (Heb 9:12) “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God.” (Heb 10:12)* The glorious message of the gospel is that JESUS CHRIST has taken our sins by imputation upon HIS back and paid our sin debt imputing HIS righteousness to us, therein do we rejoice in a finished salvation and await HIS glorious return.