

LESSONS ON PREDESTINATION #44
"The Covenant of Redemption" (Part Two)
(Scriptures from NKJV)

Ephesians 1:3-14:

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."

INTRODUCTION: In the previous lesson, we gave a broad coverage to the subject of the "Covenant of Redemption." We defined its meaning as the arrangement between the Father giving the Son as Head and Redeemer of the elect, and the Son voluntarily taking the place of those whom the Father had given Him. The Holy Spirit agreeing to bear witness of the Covenant, while applying the benefits purchased by the Son to the elect so as to secure their final salvation.

It is the link which unites eternal election with salvation taking place in time. It is that part of the eternal purpose in election which predestines the means of salvation. Election is the choice of God to save. The Covenant of

Redemption contains the ordained method or means to secure the purpose.

We quoted Curt Daniel in his description of the transaction in this manner as he describes the elect of God.

They were given to the Son judicially in the eternal covenant, then they were actually brought to Him and given to the Son in time by the Holy Spirit, and then the Son again presents Himself and His people to the Father in eternity future. At the last day Christ says, "Behold, I, and the children whom God has given me." (Curt Daniel, *The History and Theology of Calvinism*)

In today's lesson, we will examine it more in detail as we consider the Father's role in the Covenant. Then we will look at the Son's role in the Covenant, and lastly, we will reflect upon the Holy Spirit's role in the Covenant. We begin first with:

A. THE FATHER'S ROLE IN THE COVENANT

1. NOTE: When we refer to an inter-Trinitarian Covenant, we must be careful that we do not impose the idea of time back into eternity by imparting the idea that the three persons in the Godhead got together and developed a plan which did not previously exist. No, the plan is as eternal as the Being of God himself.

2. NOTE: Before looking at the Covenant, we should be clear what we mean by the Triune nature of God. This will require brevity, as whole volumes could be devoted to the topic. God is three persons whose essence is One. The Father is God. The Son is God. The Holy Spirit is God. They are co-equal.

3. NOTE: Next, it requires us to distinguish between what is called the ontological and the economical Trinity.

a. **Ontological Trinity**: The word "ontology" means the nature or essence of being. While God is eternally triune in essence, the Scriptures reveal that the Father has begotten the Son, and the Holy Spirit

proceeds from both the Father and the Son. This is not a process of becoming, but an eternal fact or essence of eternality. While the Father has begotten the Son, there was never a time the Son did not exist. If the Son had not eternally existed, then there would be a time in which the Father did not exist as the Father. Hence, you would have neither the Father or the Son, thus no God!

b. **Economical Trinity:** Economical means the arrangement or disposition of any work or orderly conduct in the achievement of things. In the economical Trinity, there is a recognized subordination of the Son to the Father, and the subordination of the Spirit to both the Father and the Son in the creation and redemption of the heaven and earth and all of its creatures, particularly mankind. Thus, in the economy of redemption, the Father plans for the salvation of an elect people. The Son is sent on a mission from the Father to redeem those elect people, and the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son to secure their actual salvation by applying the benefits of Christ's atoning death to these elect. So while there is equality existing in the ontological Trinity, there is an agreed upon subordination in roles in achieving the scheme of redemption.

4. Just as the Father is the eternal begetter of the Son in the Trinity, He is the initiator of the Covenant of Redemption. He begins by making stipulations with the Son and the Spirit to perform the things necessary to fulfill the Covenant. The Son then re-stipulates or agrees to perform the role of Mediator in the Covenant, and the Holy Spirit agrees to witness and seal the actions agreed upon. Thus the Father not only gives the elect to the Son, but He gives the Son to the elect. In the Covenant, the Son represents the Father to the people, and the people to the Father. He is the Mediator between God (the Father) and man. This we have expressed in I Timothy 2:5, ***"For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus."***

5. Next, the Father represents the Trinity in another important way. He does so by requiring satisfaction by payment being made for the sins of the elect, and that the payment must be paid to the Father. In time, Christ

paid the sin debt which we (the elect) owed, and He paid it to the Father.

6. In the last lesson we saw in John chapter 17 that the Father gave the Son a work to do, and sent the Son into this world on a mission. Jesus said in Luke 19:10, ***"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*** In sending the Son, the Father prepared the Son for His mission.

a. First, He specifically prepared a human body for the Son's incarnation. This is set forth in Hebrews 10:5-9, quoting from Psalm 40:7,8.

Therefore, when He came into the world, He said:

"Sacrifice and offering You did not desire,

But a body You have prepared for Me.

In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin

You had no pleasure.

Then I said, 'Behold, I have come—

In the volume of the book it is written of Me—

To do Your will, O God.'"

Previously saying, "Sacrifice and offering, burnt offerings, and offerings for sin You did not desire, nor had pleasure in them" (which are offered according to the law), then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first that He may establish the second.

This was a real body, not a mere Theophany as that which occurred several times in the Old Testament.

b. Secondly, He promised to sustain and protect the Son during His mission on earth. In Psalm 89:21-24 we read of Christ, the greater than David, ***"With whom My hand shall be established; also My arm shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not outwit him, nor the son of wickedness afflict him. I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague those who hate him. But My faithfulness and My mercy shall be with him, and in My name his horn shall be exalted."*** This included

providing a special protection from Satan. Psalm 89:22 reads, ***"The enemy shall not outwit Him."***

6. Next, the Father promised that if the Son performed His part of the Covenant, He would make Him the heir of all things. In Hebrews 1:2-4 we read: ***"has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."*** So the Father not only gave the elect to the Son, but He also gave "all things" to the Son. This included elevating Him above all the ranks of the angels and enthroned Him at His own right hand as the moral governor of heaven and earth.

7. This is also expressed in Luke 22:29,30, ***"And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."*** The NKJV translates the gift of a kingdom to the Son by using the words, "bestow and bestowed." The KJV says, "appoint and appointed." The NASV says, "grant and granted." The NIV says, "confer and conferred." And the NES version renders it "assign and assigned." What they all fail to bring out is that the Greek word is directly related to the word "covenant." Thus the Father "covenanted" with the Son to give Him a kingdom, and this included Christ bringing His people (the elect) into His kingdom. This helps to understand the meaning of Revelation 3:21 which reads, ***"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."***

B. THE SON'S ROLE IN THE COVENANT

1. In a manner similar to Christ being the eternally generated Son, the Son, in turn, agreed to the conditions and promises of the Father. He submitted to and perfectly obeyed the Father's will both in the eternal Covenant and throughout His mission while on earth. The Gospel of John frequently refers to Christ as saying that He did not come to do His own will, but the will of the One who sent Him. An example of this is seen in John 6:38-40: ***"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."***

2. The first segment of the Son's mission was His agreement to become a man. This we have seen in the passage from Hebrews 10:5-9. We quote again from verse 5: ***"Therefore when He came into the world, He said 'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me . . .'"*** And in verse 7: ***"Then I said, 'Behold I have come - in the volume (scroll) of the book it is written of Me - to do Your will, O God.'"*** It was the will of the Father that the Son become a man. This was eternally written in the scroll of the book. This refers to the decrees of God in general and specifically the Covenant of Redemption.

3. By acquiring a human body, Christ then became what the Scriptures refer to Him as being the "Servant of the Lord." In Isaiah 52:13 we are told ***"Behold, My Servant!"*** And in Isaiah 53:11 ***"By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities."*** In becoming God's Servant, He was invested in His threefold office as Prophet, Priest, and King. While He exercised these offices on earth, He was ordained to them in the Covenant of Redemption formed in eternity.

4. The necessity of the Son acquiring a body as a man was necessary for two reasons:

a. One: He must live a life of perfect active obedience to the law or will of God in order to purchase eternal life to be bestowed upon His elect. As God demanded a life of perfection from the first Adam, He likewise required the same from the second Adam. Fallen man needs not only a debt to be paid for His Sins, He needs a sinless life to be imputed to his account.

b. Two: He must die in the place of the sinner in order to render satisfaction to God in paying the sinner's debt. NOTE again in Hebrews 10:5,6 that the Father did not desire sacrifice and offerings. This was because the bodies of animals were imperfect sacrifices. Only the God-man could provide such. As God, His sacrifice of Himself was of infinite value, and only as a man could He die in a body. All of this was laid out in the eternal Covenant.

5. The efficacy of the Son's work is set forth in Hebrews 7:22 where we read that Jesus became a "surety" or a guarantee that payment would be made. If one could not pay a debt, then the surety had to pay. The elect could not pay, so Christ paid for them. He was our sponsor. He paid our debt by taking upon Himself the wrath of the Father for our sins. The rest of Hebrews 7:22-28 goes like this: ***"by so much more Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant. Also there were many priests, because they were prevented by death from continuing. But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever."***

6. The first verse and chorus of the gospel song, "Jesus Paid It All" sets forth this truth to the forgiven sinner.

*Gone is all my debt of sin. A great change is wrought within,
And to live I now begin, risen from the fall,
Yet the debt I did not pay, Someone died for me one day,
Sweeping all the debt away - Jesus paid it all.*

*Jesus died and paid it, on the cross of Calvary,
And my heart was melted at His dying call.
Oh, His heart was broken, on the tree for you and me.
And the debt is cancelled, Jesus paid it all.*

(M.S. Shaffer, Stamps-Baxter Music & Ptg. Co.)

7. The work of Christ on the cross was not due to some oversight on the part of God. It was pre-planned in the Covenant of Redemption. This is clearly stated in numerous places in the Bible. In Luke 22:22, ***"And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed."*** Determined is action preordained beforehand. Christ did not resist going to the cross. Instead, He submitted to the Father's will. In John 10:17,18, He stated, ***"Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."*** NOTE that the Father had commanded the Son to die and rise again. When did He do that? In the eternal Covenant of Redemption.

8. The whole life and death of Christ was the result of the predetermined plan or purpose of God. This is stated in Acts 2:23, ***"Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified and put to death."*** Also, those who crucified Jesus, while responsible for their actions, were but fulfilling the predetermined purpose of God. In Acts 4:27,28, we read, ***"For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done."*** It had all been predestined in the Covenant of Redemption.

C. THE SPIRIT'S ROLE IN THE COVENANT

1. The Holy Spirit is an equal member of the eternal Trinity and had a vital role in the Covenant. Just as the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son in the Ontological Trinity, He in like manner is sent forth in time in the Economical Trinity to bear witness of the Covenant between the Father and the Son. This is clearly expressed in John 15:26 where Jesus states, ***"But when the Helper (Comforter) comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify (bear witness) of me."***

2. A witness is one who testifies of the legality of a matter. The Holy Spirit is frequently described as a witness in Scripture. In Acts 5:32 we read, ***"And we are witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to these who obey Him."*** (Cf. Also Romans 8:16; Acts 20:23).

3. Thomas Brooks explained it like this:

The whole compact and agreement between God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, about the redemption of poor sinners' souls, was really and solemnly transacted in open court; or, as I may say, in the high court of justice above, in the presence of the great public notary of heaven - viz, the Holy Ghost; who being a third person makes up a third legal witness with the Father and the Son.

Thus the Covenant is signed by three legal witnesses.

4. In addition to serving as a legal witness to the transaction made in the Covenant, the Holy Spirit produced the incarnation of Christ through the Virgin Birth (Luke 1:34). He empowered the God-man, anointed Him, draws the elect to Him, regenerates the elect and seals or confirms them in their state of eternal life. In Ephesians 1:13,14 we read, ***"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."***

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

From Ephesians (NKJV)

GOD THE FATHER PLANNED IT

(Unconditional Election)

Ephesians 1:3-6 - *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.”* (Cf. Isaiah 46:9-13; Romans 8:29-31)

GOD THE SON PURCHASED IT

(Particular Redemption)

Ephesians 1:7-12 - *“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.”* (Cf. Romans 8:32-34; John 6:37; 10:11,27; Acts 2:23-24; II Timothy 1:9)

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT APPLIES IT

(Irresistible Grace)

By hearing and imparting faith - Ephesians 1:13-14 - *“In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.”* (Cf. Rom. 8:16; John 16:13-14; I Cor. 2:9-13)

By enlightenment - Ephesians 1:17-18 - *“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.”* (Cf. Luke 24:45)

By sanctification - Ephesians 2:10 - *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”* (Cf. Acts 3:19; 5:14; 11:18; II Cor. 7:10; II Peter 3:9; Job 42:5-6; II Thes. 2:13-14)

The following is quoted from Charles H. Spurgeon's *Morning and Evening Devotions*.

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance." Ephesians 1:11

When Jesus gave Himself for us, He gave us all the rights and privileges which went with Himself; so that now, although as eternal God, He has essential rights to which no creature may venture to pretend, yet as Jesus, the Mediator, the federal Head of the covenant of grace, He has no heritage apart from us. All the glorious consequences of His obedience unto death are the joint riches of all who are in Him, and on whose behalf He accomplished the divine will. See, He enters into glory, but not for Himself alone, for it is written, **"Whither the Forerunner is for us entered."** Hebrews 6:20. Does He stand in the presence of God? – **"He appears in the presence of God for us."** Hebrews 9:24.

Consider this, believer. You have no right to heaven in yourself; your right lies in Christ. If you are pardoned, it is through His blood; if you are justified, it is through His righteousness; if you are sanctified, it is because He is made of God unto you sanctification; if you shall be kept from falling, it will be because you are preserved in Christ Jesus; and if you are perfected at the last, it will be because you are complete in Him. Thus Jesus is magnified—for all is in Him and by Him; thus the inheritance is made certain to us – for it is obtained in Him; thus each blessing is the sweeter, and even heaven itself the brighter, because it is Jesus our Beloved "in whom" we have obtained all.

Where is the man who shall estimate our divine portion? Weigh the riches of Christ in scales, and His treasure in balances, and then think to count the treasures which belong to the saints. Reach the bottom of Christ's sea of joy, and then hope to understand the bliss which God hath prepared for them that love Him. Overleap the boundaries of Christ's possessions, and then dream of a limit to the fair inheritance of the elect. "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."