

**LESSONS ON PREDESTINATION #43**  
**"The Covenant of Redemption" (Part One)**  
(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:** Before we move on in our series, it is perhaps helpful to give a brief review so that we might relate to where we are at. We have defined the doctrine. We have seen how the doctrine is inseparable from the eternal purpose of God as formulated in the eternal God before the world began, and which His all wise providence is moving through history toward its fulfillment in the eternal state to come. We have looked at the doctrine of God's foreknowledge and how the different theological systems approach the topic. We briefly looked at what is known as the five points of Calvinism and how they relate to the redemptive program of God in Christ.

We covered the first of the five points, which was man's total depravity and inability due to his fall in Adam in the Garden of Eden. We examined the principle of representation set forth in the two Adams, namely Adam and Christ Jesus. We covered the relationship between man's inability and his responsibility.

We then moved to the second point which deals with God's unconditional election. By this, we mean that God chose His elect based on His own sovereign good pleasure, and not on their foreseen faith or good works. We also looked at the negative side of election, that

being the doctrine of reprobation, wherein God merely chooses to pass by the non-elect and leave them to their own sinful wills to choose what their natures will allow them to choose, namely those things which will promote their own pride and self-exaltation.

Then in lessons 24 through 42, we began to flesh out these doctrines in the actual history found in the lives of men and angels. This led us into the election of angels which developed in their fall and the subsequent warfare between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of Satan. We have followed this from the garden and the announcement of the beginning of the warfare in Genesis 3:15 between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Satan). This has taken us through the serpent's trail in the Old Testament era up to the birth of Christ and His enthronement as seen in Revelation chapter twelve. All through this era, Satan has failed time and time again in His effort to frustrate the eternal purpose of God leading to the dethronement of God.

In our dealing with the topic of the election of the angels, we have focused our attention in Satan's fall and his attempt to defeat God in His eternal purpose, thereby dethroning Him from the honor of being the "Most High God." In doing so, we have looked at this from the creature's viewpoint. It is now time to look at it from God's viewpoint. Just what is contained in God's eternal purpose, and how did He determine to achieve that purpose? When we see the mechanism involved, it will help us in understanding what is going on in the "Invisible War" between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan. The starting point takes us back into eternity involving the work of the Trinity in what is called "The Covenant of Redemption." I wish to acknowledge three works which have been of help to me over the years. First: *Systematic Theology*, by Lewis Berkhof; second: *Systematic Theology* by Charles Hodge; and third: *The History and Theology of Calvinism* by Curt Daniel.

## **A. WHAT IS THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION?**

1. Defined: "The Covenant of Redemption may be defined as the agreement or 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."

a. 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. The character of the Lord is revealed in

Isaiah 14:24 where He says, **"The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed, it shall stand."** We further read in verse 27, **"For the Lord of hosts has purposed, and who will annul it?"**

b. It is an inter-Trinitarian covenant. While the name is not found in Scripture, its essence is found therein. It is like the Trinity itself. Both must be understood by comparing the many explicit and implicit passages found throughout the Bible. Even the entire gospel is not contained in a single verse or chapter, but must be compiled by comparing Scripture with Scripture in what we call the Analogy of Faith.

c. The elements contained in the covenant. Charles Hodge explains the covenantal concept in this manner:

When one person assigns a stipulated work to another person with the promise of a reward upon the condition of the performance of that work, there is a covenant. Nothing can be plainer than that all this is true in relation to the Father and the Son. The Father gave the Son a work to do; He sent Him into the world to perform it, and promised Him a great reward when the work was accomplished. Such is the constant representation of the Scriptures. We have, therefore, the contracting parties, the promise, and the condition. These are the essential elements of a covenant. Such being the representation of Scripture, such must be the truth to which we are bound to adhere. It is not a mere figure, but a real transaction, and should be regarded and treated as such if we would understand aright the plan of salvation. (Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. II, p. 360).

## **B. SCRIPTURAL DATA FOR THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION.**

1. Psalm Two. This is acknowledged by all to be a Messianic Psalm. It is quoted several times in the New Testament as referring to Christ. It speaks not only of King David, but of the Son of David, the King of Kings. Verse 2 speaks of "His anointed," which refers to Jesus as being the Christ (meaning the "anointed one") **"against the Lord and against His anointed."** (2:2). Verse 7 mentions Him as being "My Son." **"I will declare the decree: The Lord has said to Me, You are My Son, today I have begotten You."** (2:7). Verse 12 also mentions the Son, **"Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish in the way."** (2:12). Note also verse 8 which describes the Lord (Father) promising the Son an inheritance or a reward for His labors. **"Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession."** (2:8). Notice the Son is told to ask the Father for a people, which includes the Gentiles. So Christ then asks and the Father gives, and this gift is called an "inheritance." Now when did this conversation occur? Not in time, but in eternity past!

2. Psalm Eighty-nine: This Psalm is also considered a Messianic Psalm. While

directed to David, it is also directed to the Son of David, who was the Son of God. Notice in verses 3 and 4, **"I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations."** (89:3,4). This reference to a covenant is repeated in verses 28, 34, and 39. This special covenant, made with the Father's "Chosen One" is the Covenant of Redemption. Christ, being the Son of David, was also the Son of God, the God-man. In verse 20, He is anointed or commissioned by the Father. **"I have found My servant David; with My holy oil, I have anointed him."** He was anointed by the Holy Spirit for the task of securing salvation for His people, known as the elect. The elect are also called His seed. In Psalm 89:26-29 we read, **"He shall cry to Me, 'You are my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.' Also I will make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth. My mercy I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall stand firm with him. His seed also I will make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven."** Thus the Father has chosen the Son to be responsible for purchasing the salvation of His elect people.

3. John Seventeen: Here we have what is called Christ's High Priestly Prayer. It gives us great insights of the deep relationship that existed between the Father and the Son in the eternal state of the past. While we cannot cover the prayer in its entirety, I deem it appropriate to read it in its entirety to allow my hearers (readers) the opportunity to reflect upon the depths of its content.

#### **Jesus Prays for Himself - verses 1-5.**

**Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."**

#### **Jesus Prays for His Disciples - verses 6-19.**

**"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them. Now I am no**

***longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth."***

**Jesus Prays for All Believers - verses 20-26.**

***"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."***

a. Just as we used the "connect the dots" method in developing the teaching on the angels, we use it again in the development of the Covenant of Redemption.

b. We begin by observing how the Son reflects upon the events in eternity past. First in verse 5, "***And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.***" Also in verse 24, "***Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.***"

c. Then He recalls that the Father gave the Son "authority over all mankind." In verse 2 we read, "***As You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.***"

d. He then affirms that the Father sent the Son into the world on a specific mission. This is stated in the following verses.

Verse 3 - ***"whom You have sent"***

Verse 8 - ***"I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me"***

Verse 18 - ***"As you sent Me into the world"***

Verse 21 - ***"that the world may believe that You sent Me"***

Verse 23 - ***"that the world may know that You have sent Me"***

Verse 25 - ***"And these have known that You sent me"***

e. The concept of the Father sending the Son into the world is a major theme in the Gospel of John:

3:17 - ***"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."***

3:34 - ***"For He whom God has sent."***

5:36-38 - ***"But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me. And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form. But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe."***

6:29 - ***"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."***

6:38-39 - ***"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."***

6:57 - ***"As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me."***

7:28-29 - ***"Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, 'You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.'"***

8:42 - ***"Jesus said to them, 'If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.'"***

10:36 - ***"do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?"***

11:42 - ***"And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me."***

20:21 - ***"So Jesus said to them again, 'Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.'"***

f. (Back in chapter 17). In addition to His sending the Son, the Father also assigned or gave the Son a work to accomplish. This is stated in verse 4, ***"I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do."*** Also in John 5:36 we read, ***"But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me."***

g. As a reward for the Son's obedience, the Father glorified the Son. In verses 4-5, ***"I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was,"*** and in verse 22, ***"And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are One."***

h. In affirming the doctrine of unconditional election, notice that Christ specifically states that the Father "gave" a people to the Son. This is seen in:

Verse 2 - ***"as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him."***

Verse 6 - ***"I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word."***

Verse 9 - ***"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours."***

Verse 24 - ***"Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am."***

The Gospel of John frequently mentions this gift of a people out of the world of mankind. In John 6:37-39 we are told, ***"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. 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."*** This "gift" of the Father to the Son is expressed in John 10:29 - ***"My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."***

i. The Son, in His prayer in chapter 17, prays for these people and them

alone in verses 9 and 10. ***"I pray for them, I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours, and all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them."*** Now the question emerges: When were these given to the Son by the Father? Answer: In eternity past when the Son was anointed and sent by the Father in the Covenant of Redemption.

j. Curt Daniel describes the transaction in this manner:

The order is this: 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." (Daniel, *History and Theology of Calvinism*, p. 349).

### **C. CLOSING REMARKS**

In today's lesson, we have gone back into eternity before the world came into existence; before Lucifer and the angels, along with Adam and Eve, were ever created. What was to come to pass in time, was all laid out and predetermined beforehand. What God formed in His wisdom, He brought to pass by His power. So while the creatures are exercising their wills, God is fulfilling His will. We have given a broad sweep of the Covenant of Redemption. In the next lesson, we will cover it in a more detailed manner. We will examine 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. Until then, let us meditate upon what we have heard today.