

THE HISTORY OF REDEMPTION

Job 33:24 and 1st Corinthians 15:24

More than 250 years ago Jonathan Edwards, the third president of Princeton University, wrote an excellent book, which he called “*The History of Redemption.*” I cannot begin to preach about it as well as Mr. Edwards wrote about it, but I have borrowed the title for my message from him. If the Lord will enable me, I want to talk to you about **THE HISTORY OF REDEMPTION.** I have two texts I want you to read with me (Job 33:24 and 1 Corinthians 15:24).

- Job 33:24 — **Redemption begins here.**

(Job 33:24) “Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.”

- 1 Corinthians 15:24 — **Redemption is finished here.**

(1 Corinthians 15:24) “Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.”

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Obviously, I am using the word “redemption” in a very broad sense. **Sometimes the word redemption is used in a very limited sense, referring only to the purchase of deliverance and salvation for God’s elect by the blood of Christ** (Hebrews 9:12; Galatians 3:13).

(Hebrews 9:12) “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.”

(Galatians 3:13 “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree.”

But frequently the word “redemption” is used in a very broad sense, and includes all the works of God by which sinners are delivered from the ruins of the fall (Psalm 130:7-8; Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:14; 4:30).

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(Psalms 130:7-8) “Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD *there is* mercy, and with him *is* plenteous redemption. (8) And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.”

(Romans 8:23) “And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.”

(1 Corinthians 1:30) “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

(Ephesians 1:14) “Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

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(Ephesians 4:30) “And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.”

I am using the word “redemption” in this very broad sense, as it refers to all the works of God by which we are delivered from the sin and fall of our father Adam into “*the glorious liberty of the sons of God*” in the endless blessedness of the new creation.

Proposition: Everything that God does or allows to be done he does for the redemption of his people. **Everything is subservient to God’s purpose of grace in redemption.** — “*I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me*” for the redemption of my soul (Psalm 57:2).

Mr. Edwards was exactly right when he wrote — “God’s main work in providence is this of redemption...the creation of heaven was in order to the work of redemption as a habitation for the redeemed (Matthew 25:34). Even the angels were created to be employed in this work

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(Hebrews 1:14). As to this lower world, it was doubtless created to be a stage upon which this great and wonderful work of redemption should be transacted. Therefore...this lower world is wisely fitted, in its formation, for such a state of man as he is in since the fall, under a possibility of redemption.”

FIVEFOLD PURPOSE

The Scriptures teach us that God has a **fivefold purpose** in this great work of redemption. Here are five things God is determined to accomplish by the redemption of his people.

1. **God is determined to put all his enemies under Christ's feet** (1 Corinthians 15:25).

(1 Corinthians 15:25) “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.”

God's goodness will at last be triumphant. He has sovereignly arranged all things so that Satan shall be

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confounded and the works of Satan, all the works of Satan, shall be destroyed (Genesis 3:15; 1 John 3:8).

(Genesis 3:15) “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

(1 John 3:8) “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. **For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.**”

2. **It is God’s purpose to retrieve his creation from the ruins of the fall** (Acts 3:19-21).

(Acts 3:19-21) “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; (20) And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: (21) Whom the heaven must receive until

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the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”

Man's soul was ruined by the fall. The image of God in man was marred. Man's nature was corrupted. He became dead in sin. It is God's design to restore the souls of his chosen to life, to restore his elect to the image of his Son, in whose image we were created. This he does by two resurrections (John 5:25-28).

- The Resurrection of the Spirit (Revelation 20:6) — The New Birth (Sanctification)
- The Resurrection of the Body (1 Corinthians 15:12-58) — (Glorification)

Man's body was also ruined. By the fall our bodies became subject to death. The design of God is to restore the body. Not only will he deliver our bodies from death in the resurrection, he will deliver us from mortality! He will make our bodies, like Christ's glorious body, bodies of immortality!

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The world was ruined by the fall too, as effectively as if it had been reduced to chaos again. But God has determined that he will create a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwell righteousness (Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13).

(Isaiah 65:17) “For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind.”

(2 Peter 3:13) “Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.”

Satan shall be triumphant nowhere! The slime of the serpent’s trail shall be totally expunged from God’s creation!

3. **Another great design of God in the work of redemption is to gather together in one all things in Christ** (Ephesians 1:10).

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(Ephesians 1:10) “That in the dispensation of the fulness 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.”

All elect creatures in heaven and in earth, elect angels and elect men shall, at last, be perfectly united in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Head over all things (Hebrews 12:22-24).

(Hebrews 12:22-24) “But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, (23) To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, (24) And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than *that of* Abel.”

But that is not all. — All creation shall redound to the praise, honor, and glory of our God. Everything

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shall give him praise! Everything that is, has been, or shall hereafter be, shall be the cause of praise and honor to our God!

4. **God's purpose is to perfect and complete the glory of his elect in Christ** (1 Corinthians 2:9).

(1 Corinthians 2:9) “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

He is determined to make his people perfectly holy and perfectly happy forever. God intends to bring us to perfect excellence and beauty in his holy image. He intends to bring us into the highest degree of honor and glory and to raise us to ineffable heights of pleasure and satisfaction with his dear Son.

5. **In all this work of redemption our Almighty Jehovah, the Triune God, is determined to get glory to himself** (Ephesians 1:6, 11-12, 14).

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(Ephesians 1:6) “To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.”

(Ephesians 1:11-12) “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, who first trusted in Christ.”

(Ephesians 1:14) “Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”

God will be glorified in us and by us before wondering worlds (Ephesians 2:7; Revelation 5:9-12).

(Ephesians 2:7) “That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

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(Revelation 5:9-12) “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; (10) And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. (11) And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; (12) Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”

Indeed, as I said just a minute ago, all things shall praise and magnify the name of our God (Psalm 76:16; Proverbs 16:4; Revelation 5:13).

(Psalms 76:10) “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.”

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(Proverbs 16:4) “The LORD hath made all *things* for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.”

(Revelation 5:13) “And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, *be* unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”

The work by which God will accomplish this great and glorious purpose is redemption, the deliverance of his elect from the ruins of the fall by Christ. Follow me in your Bibles as I show you **THE HISTORY OF REDEMPTION** in seven great events.

THE EVERLASTING COVENANT

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1. **The history of redemption begins with our Surety's covenant engagements on or behalf before the world began** (Job 33:24; Ephesians 1:3-6; 2 Timothy 1:9-10; Revelation 13:8).

(Job 33:24) “Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.”

(Ephesians 1:3-6) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) “Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to

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our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

(Revelation 13:8) “And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”

Before the world was created, when God dwelt alone in the splendor of his own ineffable glory, the Lord Jesus Christ stood as the Surety of the covenant of God’s grace and guaranteed the accomplishment of our salvation (Psalm 40:6-8; Isaiah 50:5-7).

(Psalms 40:6-8) “Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened: burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. (7) Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me, (8) I

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delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart.”

(Isaiah 50:5-7) “The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. (6) I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. (7) For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.”

- **There was an election of grace** (2 Thessalonians 2:13).

(2 Thessalonians 2:13) “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.”

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- **There was a covenant made** (Hebrews 13:20).

(Hebrews 13:20) “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.”

- **Christ stood forth as our Surety.**

Illustration: *The Servant* (Exodus 21:5)

(Exodus 21:5) “And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free.”

(Genesis 43:9) “I will be surety for him; of my hand shalt thou require him: if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, then let me bear the blame forever.”

NOTE: It is the covenant of God’s grace that restrains the hand of God’s wrath and justice from consuming the earth immediately (2 Peter 3:9).

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(2 Peter 3:9) “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

THE INCARNATION

2. **The second great event in the history of redemption was the incarnation and birth of the Lord Jesus Christ** (Galatians 4:4-5).

(Galatians 4:4-5) “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

This was the dawn of hope for fallen man. Our Savior’s name is “*Immanuel*” — “God with us!” The Lord Jesus Christ is God in human flesh, God in our nature, God come to save!

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- The incarnation means hope!
- The incarnation means mercy!
- The incarnation means deliverance!

TRIUMPH OVER SATAN

3. **The *third* great event in the history of redemption was the triumph of Christ over Satan in his temptations.**

- **In the wilderness** (Matthew 4:1-11).

(Matthew 4:1-11) “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. (2) And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. (3) And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. (4) But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (5) Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a

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pinnacle of the temple, (6) And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, he shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. (7) Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. (8) Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; (9) And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. (10) Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. (11) Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”

- **In Gethsemane** (Matthew 26:38-39).

(Matthew 26:38-39) “Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. (39) And he

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went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou *wilt*.”

The temptations of our Lord demonstrate his oneness with us as a man. As a real man, even under the pressures of real temptations, our Savior perfectly obeyed the will of God for us, establishing righteousness in the earth.

NOTE: This Man, who is God, is able to help tempted men and women, with a tender heart of sympathy (Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15-16; 5:7-9; 7:26).

(Hebrews 2:17-18) “Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. (18) For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.”

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(Hebrews 4:15) “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet without sin.*”

(Hebrews 5:7-9) “Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; (8) Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; (9) And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

(Hebrews 7:26) “For such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.”

(Hebrews 4:16) “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

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THE CRUCIFIXION

4. The fourth great event in the history of redemption was the crucifixion and death of the Lord Jesus Christ as our Substitute at Calvary (2 Corinthians 5:21).

(2 Corinthians 5:21) “For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

- The cross of Christ is the critical, focal point of all history (John 12:31-32).

(John 12:31-32) “Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. (32) And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me.”

Our Savior’s death was the crushing of the serpent’s head (Revelation 20:1-3).

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- **The death of Christ gave satisfaction to the justice of God.**
- **The death of Christ gives peace to the believing heart, when we realize that his blood is an effectual atonement for sin, trusting him as our Savior.**

Complete atonement Thou hast made
And to the utmost farthing paid
Whate'er Thy people owed:
On me God's wrath shall find no place;
I'm sheltered in Thy righteousness
And ransomed by Thy blood!

If Christ has my discharge procured
And freely in my room endured
The whole of wrath divine -
Payment God cannot twice demand,
First at my bleeding Surety's hand
And then again at mine!

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

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5. **The fifth great event in the history of redemption was the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead** (Romans 4:25; 1 Timothy 3:16).

(Romans 4:25) “Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

(1 Timothy 3:16) “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”

- His resurrection is the proof of expiation!
- His resurrection is the assurance of our resurrection.

He said, “*Because I live, ye shall live also!*” When our Savior arose from the grave, the Lord God showed publicly that our justification was

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accomplished. In as much as our Surety has been raised from the dead, we also shall be raised (Job 19:25-29; John 5:25-29; 11:25-26).

(Job 19:25-27) “For I know *that* my Redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter *day* upon the earth. And *though* after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: (27) Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; *though* my reins be consumed within me.”

(John 5:25-29) “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. (26) For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; (27) And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. (28) Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, (29) And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the

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resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

(John 11:25-26) “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: (26) And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

CHRIST’S ASCENSION

6. **The sixth great event in the history of redemption was the ascension and exaltation of Christ as Lord over all, the enthroned King of the universe** (John 17:2; Acts 2:33-36).

(John 17:2) “As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.”

(Acts 2:33-36) “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath

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shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. (34) For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, (35) Until I make thy foes thy footstool. (36) Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

- Christ has all power!
- Christ rules the world to save his people!
- Christ makes intercession for us in heaven!
- Christ saves whom he will by the power of his Spirit!

NOTE: The greatest joy my heart knows is that he who loved me and gave himself for me now rules all the universe as my Representative and King!

COMING AGAIN

7. Each of these glorious events in the history of redemption points to another. They all point to that

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great consummating event that is yet to take place. Here is the *seventh* link in the golden chain of the history of redemption — **Our Lord Jesus Christ shall come again in power and in great glory, without sin, unto salvation** (John 14:1-3; Revelation 1:7).

(John 14:1-3) “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. (2) In my Father’s house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. (3) And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.”

(Revelation 1:7) “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.”

When Christ comes again our redemption and salvation will be complete. When Christ appears God will wrap up his work among men. All that he

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purposed in eternity will be suddenly brought to completion.

I do not pretend to know much about prophetic things, but it appears to me, as I read the Scriptures, that everything after Christ's coming will happen very quickly. The resurrection of the dead, the judgment, the conflagration of the universe, the new creation, the final separation of the righteous from the wicked, all appear to me to take place in a matter of moments.

This much I do know: — When Christ comes again there will be...

- **A General Resurrection** (John 5:28-29).

(John 5:28-29) “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, (29) And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

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- The dead shall be raised.
- The living saints shall be translated.
- The earth shall be dissolved.
- All shall meet God in judgment.
- **A Great Regeneration** (2 Peter 3:9-14). —
“Behold, I make all things new!”

(2 Peter 3:9-14) “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (10) But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. (11) *Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, (12) Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on

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fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? (13) Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. (14) Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

- **A Grand Restitution** (Revelation 5:13). This will be the time of the restitution of all things.
- **A Glorious Rest** (Hebrews 4:9).

(Hebrews 4:9) “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.”

“Then cometh the end!” (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

(1 Corinthians 15:24-28) “Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. (25) For **he must reign**, till he hath put all enemies

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under his feet. (26) The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death. (27) For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. (28) And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.”

Amen.

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Danville — Sunday Morning — November 27, 2011
Danville — Sunday Morning — December 9, 2018
Sovereign Grace Church — Kingsport, TN — (SUN - 11/27/11)
Merida Church — Merida, Mexico — (THU — 12/08/11)
Free Grace Fellowship, Ballymoney, N Ireland — (TUE – 04/12/16)
Todds Road Grace Church, Lexington, KY — (12/16/16)