

THE
COVENANT
OF
REDEMPTION

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International Ministries

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Bracketed comments following some scriptures assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of these verses

We acknowledge the additional works of the various Scholars and Bible Commentaries used in conjunction with the College material. This is not to say that we agree with all their theology, but we certainly value their contribution to the Body of Christ.

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THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION

Background Reading: Hebrews 9:11-23; 10:1-14

The Old Testament sacrifices needed to be done, day after day and year after year. But Calvary's holy perfect sacrifice brought Atonement to a new level because it was a once and for all time completed sacrifice. It put an end to all sacrifices (Matthew 5:17) by fulfilling the law of sacrifice for man. Through this Atonement, redemption was made possible. Never before had this been the case.

The sacrifice of atonement in the Old Testament could only go so far, but Christ the perfect sacrifice caused our sin to be covered by His Blood. The promise of this covering was given to the Old Testament Saints in the form of a promissory note in the Old Covenant which stated that: "*You will be clean from your sins*" (Leviticus 16:30). This was not based on the blood of bulls and goats but on the sacrifice to come - the atoning sacrifice of Christ at Calvary. So complete is this covering that now the Father is able to send His Spirit to abide with us because of that great Atonement made at Calvary. Through this Atonement we have been placed into Christ as Believers. This has given us redemption and even the forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:12-14).

The worth of the animal sacrifices used in Old Testament times was not sufficient to take sin away for the purpose of redemption. These sacrifices could only be used to atone for (cover over) the sins of the people who lived according to God's Covenant. The reason for this, as we have said, was to keep eternal spiritual death at bay until the Saviour could come to set them free. The blood of bulls and goats could do no more than that. Then at a later time under the promise of the Covenant, their sin could be fully covered so as to bring redemption to them.

The Lord had prepared the way through the patterns and practices of the Old Covenant for the establishment of the New. This Covenant was as much superior to the Old Testament Covenant of

Atonement as the Blood of Jesus is superior to that of bulls and goats.

“. . .The Lord had prepared the way through the patterns and practices of the Old Covenant for the establishment of the New. . .”

The Covenant of Redemption which we have today was thus brought into effect through the shed Blood of Jesus. By this means, God was able to establish an everlasting Covenant between Himself and man, and cancel man’s terrible debt of sin, not just cover it over and leave it there. Through the Covenant of Redemption man can be redeemed - and also empowered so that he can have victory over sin.

Within a scriptural context, “to be redeemed” means “to be bought back,” “to have one’s debt paid in full,” or “to be taken out of.”

“To be redeemed” means, as Colossians 1:13 tells us, to be completely taken out of “*the authority of darkness*” (spiritual death or Satan’s kingdom):

COLOSSIANS 1:13 Who has delivered us (all who have accepted Jesus as Lord) from the authority of darkness (dominion of death), and has (past tense) translated (placed) us into the Kingdom of His dear Son (with power over sin):

COLOSSIANS 1:14 In Whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins

Jesus was the perfect sin-offering (God’s gift - John 3:16) for all mankind. He was the sinless Lamb of God, and His body was offered on the altar of the Cross, to take the punishment for mankind’s sin, once and for all.

JOHN 1:29 *The next day John saw Jesus coming unto him, and said, “Behold the Lamb of God, Who takes away the sin of the world.”*

1 PETER 1:18 *Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold . . .*

1 PETER 1:19 *But with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.*

JOHN 19:30 *When Jesus (the spotless Lamb of God) therefore had received the vinegar, He said, “It is finished”: and He bowed His head, and gave up His spirit (breathed His last).*

MATTHEW 27:51 *At that moment the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split.*

It was finished. When Jesus died, the Holy of Holies on earth was no longer needed. This was signified when the veil in the temple which partitioned off the Holy of Holies was ripped from top to bottom. The Jewish historian Josephus recorded that the veil in the temple weighed over 2,000 pounds and was 4 inches thick. When it was torn in two, it was actually ripped from top to bottom as a sign that this was a Divine act - for men could not have rent it from the top.

“. . . Thus the veil which represented the separation between God and man was torn asunder, signifying that mankind would have direct access to God through Jesus. . .”

Thus the veil which represented the separation between God and man was torn asunder, signifying that mankind would have direct access to God through Jesus. There was no longer any need for a

mortal High Priest to mediate between God and man, and no longer any need for the blood sacrifices and ceremonies that accompanied them. The tearing of the veil showed that the Old Covenant sacrifices were no longer needed, and that the earthly Holy of Holies was no longer in operation. A new way had been made, a new Covenant had been established.

HEBREWS 9:24 For Christ did not enter a man-made holy place (the Holy of Holies on earth) that was only a copy of the true one; but He entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us:

HEBREWS 9:25 Nor did He enter heaven to offer Himself again and again, the way the High Priest (on earth under the Old Covenant) enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own.

HEBREWS 9:26 Then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

HEBREWS 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgement:

HEBREWS 9:28 So Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people . . .

So the need for the sacrificial offerings ended with the death of Jesus. Indeed the blood sacrifices under the Old Covenant were only a type-pattern of what was to come and has come, Jesus the perfect sacrifice.

Under the Old Covenant, man's sin could only be atoned for, through the blood sacrifices of bulls and goats (Hebrews 10:4).

Under the New Covenant, man can be forgiven and cleansed of sin through Jesus' shed Blood (Isaiah 1:18; 1 John 1:9). This enables us to be reconciled to God through Him - by God's saving grace.

“ . . . Indeed the blood sacrifices under the Old Covenant were only a type-pattern of what was to come and has come, Jesus the perfect sacrifice. . . ”

By the law of perfect justice, Jesus, the innocent Lamb of God, bore the penalty for our sin. Our guilt was imputed (legally attributed) to Him, and His righteousness is imputed to us:

“ The idea of the transfer of guilt or of vicarious punishment lies at the foundation of all the expiatory offerings under the Old Testament, and of the great atonement under the new dispensation. To bear sin, is in Scriptural language to bear the penalty of sin. The victim bore the sin of the offerer. Hands were imposed upon the head of the animal about to be slaughtered, to express the transfer of guilt. That animal must be free from all defect or blemish to make it the more apparent that its blood was shed not for its own deficiencies but for the sin of another. All this was symbolical and typical. There could be no real transfer of guilt made to an irrational animal, and no real atonement made by its blood. But these services were significant. They were intended to teach these great truths: (1.) That the penalty of sin was death. (2.) That sin could not be pardoned without an atonement. (3.) That atonement consists in vicarious punishment. The innocent takes the place of the guilty and bears the penalty in his stead. This is the idea attached to expiatory offerings in all ages and among all nations. This is the idea inculcated in every part of the Bible. And this is what the Scriptures teach concerning the atonement of Christ. He bore our sins; He was made a curse for us; He suffered the penalty of the law in our stead. All this proceeds on the ground that the sins of one man can be justly, on some adequate ground, imputed to another. In justification the same radical idea is included. Justification is not a subjective change in the moral state of the sinner; it is not mere pardon; it is not simply pardon and restoration to favour, as when a rebel is forgiven and restored to the enjoyment of his civil rights. It is a declaration that the demands of justice have been satisfied. It proceeds on the assumption that the righteousness which the law requires belongs either personally and inherently, or by imputation, to the person who is justified, or declared to be just. ”¹

(underlines added)

“. . .By the law of perfect justice, Jesus, the innocent Lamb of God, bore the penalty for our sin. Our guilt was imputed (legally attributed) to Him, and His righteousness is imputed to us. . .”

OUR HIGH PRIEST TODAY

It was revealed to the writer of the Book of Hebrews that Jesus sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high as the great High Priest of the New Covenant. He took over the role of the mortal high priests of the Old Covenant and became, forevermore, our great High Priest.

HEBREWS 3:1 *Wherefore, holy brethren (Christians), partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;*

HEBREWS 7:26 *For such an High Priest became us (meets our need), Who is holy, harmless (blameless), undefiled (pure), separate (set apart) from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.*

HEBREWS 7:27 *Who needs not daily, as those (other) high priests (under the Old Covenant), to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did once (and for all) when He offered up Himself (as the perfect sacrifice).*

HEBREWS 10:12 *But this man (Jesus), after He had offered one sacrifice (being Himself) for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God;*

HEBREWS 10:14 *For by one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified.*

HEBREWS 4:14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, Who is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession (of faith).

Seeing then that we have (present tense) this great High Priest, let us hold fast to our faith without wavering.

HEBREWS 4:15 For we do not have a High Priest Who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points (in every way) tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

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.

What wonderful assurance these scriptures give us. They tell us we have a great High Priest Who knows what it is to be human and to suffer temptation. They tell us, nevertheless, that Jesus remained sinless all His life. Because of this He was able to become the perfect sacrifice. They tell us that the way has been made for us to boldly enter into the throneroom of grace when we have a need - and remember it is only through Christ Jesus that we can have that need met. Today we have Jesus as our High Priest, sitting at the right hand of the Father, having interceded on our behalf.

“ . . . Today we have Jesus as our High Priest, sitting at the right hand of the Father, having interceded on our behalf. . . ”

Jesus is also the Mediator between God and man. The function of a mediator is to act as an intermediary to effect reconciliation between two parties when the gulf between them cannot be bridged by themselves. The type of situation where the mediator's services are required usually involves alienation and estrangement. And through His finished work at the Cross, Jesus is the One Who has bridged the gap and effected a reconciliation

between the Father and His errant creation. Only through Jesus, our Saviour, our Redeemer and our Mediator, do we have direct access to come boldly to the throne of grace.

ROMANS 5:11 And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the atonement (more correctly translated as “reconciliation” from the Greek work “katallage”).

The high priest of the Old Covenant interceded for the children of Israel and acted as a mediator or intermediary between God and His people. The high priest of the Old Covenant institution was a type-pattern of Christ.

MAN’S MEDIATOR

It is only because of Christ’s position as our great High Priest that He is able to be our Mediator and to intercede on our behalf. While His governing position is that of High Priest, as our High Priest, He also functions in the roles of Mediator and Intercessor.

1 TIMOTHY 2:5 For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

1 TIMOTHY 2:6 Who gave Himself as a ransom for all (mankind) . . .

The story of the whole Bible is the story of “the fall and redemption of mankind.” In His Word, we see the mighty hand of God at work through the ages, fulfilling His purpose of restoring mankind to Himself through the mediatorial work of Jesus.

Jesus became eligible to be the Mediator between God and man because of Who He was and what He had done. As both God (God the Word) and man (Jesus the Son of Man and the Son of God), He was and is able to represent both parties (Matthew 12:8; 16:16).

HEBREWS 10:12 But this man (Jesus), after He had offered one sacrifice (that being Himself) for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God;

HEBREWS 9:15 *And for this cause (to purge our conscience) He is the Mediator (He Alone can be the Mediator) of the New Testament (the New Covenant), that by means of death (the death of Christ on the Cross, which atoned for all sin, and was necessary if man was to be saved), for the Redemption of the transgressions that were under the First Testament (proclaims the fact that the death of Christ pertained just as much to those before the Cross as those after the Cross; His Sacrifice of Himself guaranteed their Redemption, and we speak of all who had died in the Faith), they which are called might receive the Promise of Eternal Inheritance. (This continues to address those who had died in the Faith before the Cross. They are referred to as “the called.” The reason their Salvation depended on the Cross was that the blood of bulls and goats, which was all they had before the Cross, was insufficient to take away sins [10:4].) (E.S.B.)*

Christ has closed the gap between Deity and humanity, having bridged the chasm between heaven and earth, God and man. Job in the Old Testament cried out in despair, “Neither is there any daysman (mediator) between us, who might lay his hand upon us both” (Job 9:33). Christ is the One Who is able to answer Job’s cry for help, for He is the Mediator of the New Covenant.

Note: The basic meaning of the term “mediator” is: “one who intervenes between two, either in order to make or restore peace and friendship, or to form a compact, or for ratifying a Covenant.”²

“. . . Christ has closed the gap between Deity and humanity, having bridged the chasm between heaven and earth, God and man. . .”

Through Christ’s mediatorial work at the Cross, we have been reconciled to God, and Jesus continues to intercede on our behalf so we may enjoy the full benefits of our redemption (Hebrews 7:25), not just on a legal level but also on an experiential level.

HEBREWS 7:25 Wherefore He (Jesus) is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.

Now “*make intercession for them*” actually refers not to Jesus praying constantly for us, but to His “intervention” on our behalf. In other words, the Lord’s very presence in the throneroom, because He has already finished His work on the Cross and through the Resurrection, constitutes intercession for us. If He had to continually petition the Father so that our every need could be met, it would mean His work had not been completed. His presence is an eternal reminder of the Covenant established with us, and therefore His everlasting provision of all we need - for He has already paid the price. As a consequence He can intervene in our affairs and supply every need as we allow Him to do so.

“ . . . To “make intercession for them” actually refers not to Jesus praying constantly for us, but to His “intervention” on our behalf. In other words, the Lord’s very presence in the throneroom, . . . ”

We receive the provisions of the Covenant through faith. It is faith (trust and belief) which opens the gates, causing God’s grace to flood into our lives and make the Covenant effectual on a day to day basis. Then by His power He can give us direction, wisdom, knowledge, healing - whatever graces of God are needed in our lives so we may do His will. Indeed scripture tells us:

PHILIPPIANS 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

The provision of all we need is promised. This is not so that we may focus on material blessing (as some maintain), that we may be indulged and have our flesh gratified, but so that we may have every

sufficiency to do God's will. This therefore should be our prayer: "Give me the grace I need today Lord to do Your will." Amen. This is both our great responsibility and our great privilege.

“. . .It is faith (trust and belief) which opens the gates, causing God's grace to flood into our lives and make the Covenant effectual on a day to day basis. . .”

JESUS' SHED BLOOD WAS ACCEPTED

The Holy Spirit revealed to the writer of Hebrews that the Father accepted Jesus' sinless shed Blood as the seal of mankind's eternal redemption (for all those who believe).

HEBREWS 9:11 *But Christ being come* (the little word "but" is the pivot upon which all the arguments swing) ***an High Priest*** (presented by the Apostle to show how marvelously the one Offering of our Lord Jesus Christ transcends all the types and shadows of the old) ***of good things to come*** (should have been translated, "of the good things realized"), ***by a greater and more perfect Tabernacle*** (presents Christ Himself as the more perfect Tabernacle), ***not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building*** (Christ is not a flimsy structure like the Tabernacle of old); (E.S.B.)

HEBREWS 9:12 *Neither by the blood of goats and calves* (proclaims by the fact of the continued need of more Sacrifices that it was not properly effected), ***but by His Own Blood*** (presents the price paid) ***He entered in once into the Holy Place*** (presents Christ doing what no other Priest had ever done; He offered a Sacrifice that was complete, which means it would never have to be repeated; thereby, the Heavenly Tabernacle was opened to Him; and if opened to Him, it was opened to us as well), ***having obtained Eternal Redemption for us.*** (This

proclaims what was accomplished by the giving of Himself on the Cross.) (E.S.B.)

1 PETER 1:18 Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things . . .

1 PETER 1:19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

Jesus entered into the “Most Holy Place” (heavenly Holy of Holies or the throneroom of God) by means of His own shed Blood, and the courts of heaven accepted His Blood as the ransom price for mankind. This was only made possible because that Blood was sinless, perfect and pure. Thus a righteous God can justify a sinner (who repents and accepts Jesus as Lord) on the basis that perfect justice has been satisfied. Indeed salvation rests on the fact that our sins have been paid for by Jesus’ sacrifice in which His Blood was shed and then accepted, by the courts of heaven, on our behalf. In this way the law of perfect justice was satisfied - for those who accept the ransom price and identify with the crucified One.

“. . .Salvation rests on the fact that our sins have been paid for by Jesus’ sacrifice in which His Blood was shed and then accepted, by the courts of heaven, on our behalf. . .”

HEBREWS 10:19 Having therefore, Brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of Jesus (the Cross has made it possible for any and every Believer to come into the presence of the very Throne of God, and at any time so desired), (E.S.B.)

HEBREWS 10:20 By a new and living way (presents the New Covenant), which He has consecrated for us (by the Cross), through the Veil (contains an illusion to the Veil which separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place in the Tabernacle), that is to say, His flesh (refers

to giving Himself on the Cross, which opened up the way to God); (E.S.B.)

The holiest place in existence is the throneroom of God. Therefore, on behalf of man, Jesus entered into the throneroom of God by means of His own shed Blood. Only once did He do this, for His sacrifice was sufficient for all people, for all time. Repetition is needless. The Blood of the sinless Lamb was and is enough.

By His finished work on the Cross, Jesus had paid for mankind's redemption. To complete the process of ratifying the Covenant, Jesus went to heaven as our great High Priest with only one claim - that of His shed Blood. Because of the Blood He can stand on our behalf. Because of the Blood He has interceded on our behalf. Because of the Blood He is on our side (Psalm 118:6).

Jesus' shed Blood is the legal agent whereby God can, through His perfect justice and grace, release His power to redeem anyone from the darkness and power of sin. This Divine power is in His saving presence. If Jesus had been tainted with sin, His Blood would not have been acceptable to pay the price.

Through Jesus, however, all sin can be forgiven, never to be remembered. This forgiveness is available to all who come to God through the Lord Jesus Christ for cleansing.

***1 JOHN 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (all effects of that sin).*

***1 JOHN 1:7** But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

“ . . . Jesus' shed Blood is the legal agent whereby God can, through His perfect justice and grace, release His power to redeem anyone from the darkness and power of sin. . . ”

This is only possible because Jesus is sitting at the right hand of the Father as the High Priest and Mediator of the New Covenant, having paid the price and then entered the true Most Holy Place for us, by means of His own shed Blood. The term “the Atonement” relates to Calvary, and includes Christ’s suffering, death and Resurrection. Let us not forget any part of it.

Indeed Christ came as the sacrificial Lamb of God to fulfill (complete and satisfy) the law of sacrifice which was based on innocent blood being shed (which occasioned death) on behalf of the guilty. What the sacrifice was able to achieve was determined by the worth of the sacrifice. Hence the blood of bulls and goats could not do what the Blood of Calvary’s Cross was able to do - obtain eternal forgiveness and break the power of sin itself. Jesus fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law of sacrifice for the purpose of mankind’s redemption:

MATTHEW 5:17 Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

“. . .The term “the Atonement” relates to Calvary, and includes Christ’s suffering, death and Resurrection. Let us not forget any part of it. . .”

May you have the victory in Christ. Amen!

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- 1 Hodge, C., Systematic Theology, Vol.2, pgs. 200-202.
- 2 S.B.C. Vol.20, 1 Timothy, pg.100.

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