

Our Redemption in Christ

June 7, 2002

Ephesians 1:7-10,

"7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, 8 which He lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight 9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, [that is], the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth."

Remember in verse 3 Paul praises God for blessing us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. As we looked at verses 4-6 the focus was on God the Father. The spiritual blessings mentioned were:

- Election: *"He chose us before the foundation of the world..."* (Verse 4)
- Adoption: *"He predestined us to adoption as sons..."* (Verse 5)
- Grace: *"to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us..."* (Verse 6)

This evening we will take a look at another one of our spiritual blessings that Paul praises God for, our redemption in Christ. As we have noticed so far, every one of our spiritual blessings are said to be, *"in Christ," "in Him,"* or *"in the Beloved."* Our redemption is no different.

The Reality of our Redemption

Paul emphasizes the reality of our redemption in verse 7, where he says, *"In Him we have redemption through His blood,"*

- ***What is redemption? What is the meaning of Redemption? What does it mean to be redeemed?***

An Illustration of Redemption:

In a city on the shore of a great lake lived a small boy who loved the water and sailing. So deep was his fascination that he, with the help of his father, spent months making a beautiful model boat, which he began to sail at the waters edge. One day a sudden gust of wind caught the tiny boat and carried it far out into the lake and out of sight. Distraught, the boy returned home inconsolable. Day after day he would walk the shores in search of his treasure, but always in vain. Then one day as he was walking through town he saw his beautiful boat—in a store window! He approached the proprietor and announced his ownership, only to be told that it was not his, for the owner had paid a local fisherman good money for the boat. If the boy wanted the boat, he would have to pay the price. And so the lad set himself to work doing anything and everything until finally he returned to the store with the money. At last, holding his precious boat in his arms, he said with great joy, "You are twice mine now—because I made you, and because I bought you." So it is with our redemption in Christ. He made us and He bought us.

The Meaning of the term "redemption" from verse 7:

The term translated, *redemption* here is a rare word, which means, *"to release from captivity."* It is used in reference to paying a ransom in order to release a person from bondage as a slave or prisoner. During the New Testament times the Roman Empire had about 6 million slaves. For the Roman Empire, slavery was a profitable business. If a person wanted to free a loved one, who was a

slave, he would have to buy that slave for himself and then grant him freedom. That is precisely the idea of the term as it is used in the New Testament in reference to Christ's atoning sacrifice on the cross. It is the payment of a ransom price in order to obtain a release from bondage. Specifically, it is the payment of a ransom price to release sinful mankind from their bondage to sin.

- ***Who is the Redeemer?***

- ***Who are the Redeemed?***

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- ***What is the Redemption Price?***

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The price paid for man's redemption from bondage to sin was costly beyond measure. It was the very lifeblood of Christ Himself, poured out in death. It cost the blood of the Son of God to buy men back from the slave market of sin. *Blood* here represents *death*. Death is the penalty or price for sin. Romans 6:23 says, "*For the wages of sin is death.*" Christ's own death by the shedding of His blood was the substitute for our death. It was the ransom price to obtain our release from bondage.

- ***What do the following verses have to say regarding the Ransom Price paid by Christ?***

Mark 10:45

Romans 3:21-26

Ephesians 5:2

Hebrews 9:12-14

1 Peter 1:18-19

Clearly Christ's death on the cross, the shedding of His own blood paid the price for those who are chosen by God. He bought them out of the slave market of sin, where they were in bondage and set them free as liberated sons of God. That is the Reality of our Redemption!

The Results of our Redemption

Paul moves on in verses 7b-10 to highlight the results of our redemption in Christ.

- ***What are the Results of our Redemption in Christ?***

1. Forgiveness: The first result of our redemption in Christ is the forgiveness of our trespasses. (vs. 7b)

The term *forgiveness* basically means to send away. It communicates such ideas as dismissal, release, pardon, or cancellation of obligation, punishment, or guilt. It strictly means removal, or loosing from something that binds; and includes the idea of freedom from debt, penalty or obligation.

Because of what Christ did on the cross, our heavenly Father could release His chosen ones from the penalty of sin. Christ will take away both the sin and the guilt of those who trust Him. Through the shedding of His blood, Jesus Christ took our sins upon His own head and sent them an infinite distance away, from where they could never return.

- ***What do the following verses have to say in confirmation of this?***

Romans 8:1-2

1 John 1:9

Notice also that the forgiveness of our trespasses is in accordance with the riches of His grace, which He lavished on us (vs. 7b-8). This is far beyond our ability to comprehend. God gives forgiveness in accordance with the unlimited treasure house of His grace. It is important to note that this is not *from* the riches of His grace, but *in accordance with* the riches of His grace.

"If you were to go to a multimillionaire and ask him to contribute to a worthy ministry, and he gave you a check for \$25, he would only be giving from his riches. Many poor people give that much. But if, instead, he gave you a check for \$25,000, he would be giving in accordance to his riches." John MacArthur

We never need to worry that our sin will go beyond God's grace. Paul says in Romans 5:20, "*Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more.*" No matter how wicked or extensive our sin is; it can never approach the greatness of God's infinite Grace and forgiveness. But that should never be an excuse to sin!

2. Wisdom & Insight: The second result of our redemption in Christ is that of wisdom and insight. (vs. 8)

There seems to be some disagreement among Bible scholars on whether the phrase, "*in all wisdom and insight*" goes with verse 8 or verse 9. After much debate, it seems better to link it with the preceding clause, "*He lavished on us.*" In this view *wisdom* and *insight* are seen as benefits or results of our redemption. Verse 8 can literally be rendered, "*which He lavished on us with all wisdom and insight*" (i.e. NIV).

- ***What is the difference between wisdom and insight?***

Wisdom is the knowledge, which sees to the heart of things. It emphasizes understanding of ultimate things such as life and death, God and man, righteousness and sin, heaven and hell, or eternity and time. It is specifically used of Paul here to speak of wisdom concerning the things of God.

Insight emphasizes practical understanding, comprehension of the needs, problems and principals of everyday living. It is understanding that leads to the right action.

Many unbelievers do not recognize God exists or have any understanding of life, the universe or eternity future. But when we are redeemed in Christ, God lavishes wisdom and insight on us according to the riches of His grace and these things become clear. (cf. 1 Corinthians 2:6-13) God lavishly gives believers all the necessary equipment to understand Him, to discern the spirit of the times, and to walk obediently day by day.

3. Knowledge of the Mystery of His Will: The third result of our redemption in Christ is the knowledge of the mystery of His will. (vs. 9-10)

This result or benefit of our redemption in Christ is really an outflow of the wisdom and insight that God lavishes on us. It emphasizes both a present benefit, knowledge of the mystery of His will, and the future goal, the summing up of all things in Christ.

The term *mystery* refers to a previously hidden secret now revealed. It was a secret in times past not because it was incomprehensible, but because it was undiscoverable by human reason.

- ***What is the Mystery of His will that Paul speaks of here?***

Paul highlights both the timing of the mystery and the content of the mystery here for us in verse 10.

- ***What is the timing of the mystery?***

The term *administration* is translated throughout the New Testament as "management, stewardship or dispensation." Its basic meaning relates to household management. The usual use of this word is to designate the duty of a manager entrusted with an estate or city. Here, Paul uses it in view of God's ordering and administration of the universe, the arranging and implementing of His far-reaching redemptive plan.

The phrase, *the fullness of times*, identifies this as the fulfillment or completion of time. The timing of the mystery is at the fulfillment of the times and likely refers to the events surrounding the Millennial Kingdom of Christ (cf. Revelation 20:1-10). At this time the completion of history comes, the kingdom arrives, eternity begins again, and the new heavens and new earth are established.

- ***What is the content of the mystery?***

God redeems men in order that He might gather everything to Himself. It is at this future time when all of the elect of God, both Jew and Gentile will be brought together under the headship of Christ. In fact, God will bring all things in heaven and on earth together under the headship of Jesus Christ. God has designed His great plan in the ages past. He now sovereignly works it out according to His divine will. And in the fullness of times He will complete and perfect it in His Son, in Whom it will forever operate in righteous harmony.

APPLICATION:

- *What one truth has impacted your life most from this passage and why?*