

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

Eph 1:7

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We have some very important doctrinal statements in this one verse.

But before we discuss doctrine, which might be a big word for some who enjoy the simplicity of God's Love and witness of His Spirit with our spirit – Joy unspeakable, let us consider we are witnesses, 2000 years after the birth of Jesus Christ, that - He is God, our redeemer lives, and His grace far exceeds the wisdom and wealth of this present age of the world we live in. Having been saved, we seek to grow in God's word and His grace.

In Him we have redemption through His blood

Why do we need to have blood spilled in order to have redemption, atonement for sins? Why does it take a life to forgive sins?

What happened in the Garden of Eden that such a serious offence that there is so much suffering, pain, and death in the world?

Is God so harsh that He would demand such a payment in suffering and blood?

Well, let me say the God of the Bible is good. We cannot express answers to fully gratify our need to understand. But our need is great. Man cannot stop striving to achieve greater heights in all his endeavors. Man would seem to be destined for greatness but then he uses his cleverness to destroy other human beings. Since we need government and laws, we know man is not capable of performing total justice, not even through government and law, for himself. We need prisons to incarcerate criminals, but innocent individuals are sent to prisons. We need courts, but the innocent are found guilty. We want rights but kill our own children without regard.

Let me make a conjecture here. I feel this expresses some of the verses in Genesis that I have not seen answered or explained.

Fallen man knows the difference between right and wrong to some extent at least. God told Adam and Eve not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. When God had finished the creation of the universe and all that is in it, He said it is good. This included mankind. But what does it take to have knowledge of good – and evil? We have difficulty expressing this concept because we are of the fall which is the pattern of man and the fallen world we live in. Man was good and God declared His creation as such. So there is no doubt about that. But to have knowledge of good and of evil, one must be able to distinguish between the two. So, as we know from the record in the Bible in its first book – the book of beginnings – Genesis, that man partook of the fruit that would produce in mankind discernment, an environment, which would produce evil including himself in this regard.

At the fall, man became evil. He knew for the first time what evil is. He was capable of committing acts of evil. He would eventually need judges to help him declare who is guilty and not. So man gained information by adjoining himself to wickedness. He gained knowledge of evil by committing acts of evil and becoming evil himself. He was once good as God declared him, but now, knowing, doing, and conceiving evil, he has fallen from God's perfection of his original creation to the state of disaster we see today in our world. With our modern weaponry, man can kill millions of people, innocent and guilty from a secular perspective, within a few brief moments. As a matter of fact the Bible tells us that God has to intervene in mankind's future in order to keep him from destroying all life on planet earth.

Death, pain, suffering, injustice is all due to mankind choosing to do wrong. It was man's choice. God created man with freewill. Man would not have been perfected if he responded to his creator as a robot or programmed machine of some kind.

Then Adam and Eve became bare to one another at the fall. They 'knew' they were naked. Perhaps they were robed with an angelic vesture and physically different? But they 'knew' something was 'wrong' and 'rightly' so.

Now Adam tried to fix this dilemma by cutting plant leaves to cover himself and Eve. But God used some creature's skin to 'cover' what was 'wrong' and these are the first deaths recorded in the Bible.

So, what was good is now bad and we have death and bloodshed to 'cover' the sins of man.

Now, there are those who would say God is not good due to the evil in the world. Remember, man is conducting evil, there is the devil, man's fallen nature, and a political world system that is corrupted. If you think God is evil go to an abortion clinic, peer into a stainless steel bucket filled with fully developed little babies with arms and legs detached and mingled together like so much meat in a butcher shop.

God has made a way for mankind to escape eternity in Hell. Hell is a real place and people refuse, they are under the influence of the fall, to turn to God.

Let us hear Jesus' words recorded for us in the Gospel of John as He teaches Nicodemus, a Jewish scholar of the Law, that man must be born again.

John 3:3-8

³ Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one ^Ais born ¹again he cannot see ^Bthe kingdom of God."

⁴ Nicodemus ^{*}said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of ^Awater and the Spirit he cannot enter into ^Bthe kingdom of God. ⁶ ^AThat which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ "Do not be amazed that I said to you,

You must be born ¹again.'

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John 3:9-21

⁹ Nicodemus said to Him, "How can these things be?" ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you ^Athe teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? ¹¹ "Truly, truly, I say to you, ^Awe speak of what we know and ^Btestify of what we have seen, and ^Byou do not accept our testimony. ¹² "If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ ^ANo one has ascended into heaven, but ^BHe who descended from heaven: ^Cthe Son of Man. ¹⁴ ^AAs ^AMoses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must ^Bthe Son of Man ^Cbe lifted up; ¹⁵ so that whoever ¹believes will ^Ain Him have eternal life.

¹⁶ "For God so ^Aloved the world, that He ^Bgave His ¹only begotten Son, that whoever ^Bbelieves in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ "For God ^Adid not send the Son into the world ^Bto judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of ^Bthe ¹only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ "This is the judgment, that ^Athe Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for ^Btheir deeds were evil. ²⁰ ^AFor everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ "But he who ^Apractices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God."

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Are you living in sexual sin? The Bible tells us we are not to have sex unless we are married. Are you a believer in Jesus Christ and are living in sexual sin? You are breaking God's Holy Law. Christ did not die for you so you can have your cake and eat it too. Can you keep yourself pure till your wedding day? It is the least service you can do if you call yourself a believer in Christ (Messiah).

This was my sin. I did not want to come to the light because my deeds were dark and I loved the darkness, but without Christ, you cannot go to Heaven but will go to Hell for all eternity.

Rom 8:12-19

¹² So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — ¹³ for ^Aif you are living according to the flesh, you ¹must die; but if by the Spirit you are ^Bputting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. ¹⁴ For all who are ^Abeing led by the Spirit of God, these are ^Bsons of God. ¹⁵ For you ^Ahave not received a spirit of slavery ¹leading to fear again, but you ^Bhave received ²a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "^CAbba! Father!" ¹⁶ The Spirit Himself ^Atestifies with our spirit that we are ^Bchildren of God, ¹⁷ and if children, ^Aheirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, ^Bif indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*.

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time ^Aare not worthy to be compared with the ^Bglory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the ^Aanxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for ^Bthe revealing of the ^Csons of God.

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So we have sin, which entered the universe including mankind since the fall in the garden. We are told in the New Testament that all of creation is groaning – waiting for the full redemption of all things. I'm getting ahead of myself here but let me say that we are redeemed but not fully as of now.

In the economy of the Jewish social and religious system, the word redemption carries significant meaning. The 'Spirit testifies with our spirit' this is something beautiful. It rings with truth within our being as we know we are His and He loves us. But what did it mean to the people Paul was speaking to? The Jewish people, who did not own a New Testament, and had to rely mostly upon the Old Testament. It carries the same truth to the Ephesian Church as it does to us today. The hearers of Paul's letter had only reference through what they have been educated in – the Old Testament.

This is good enough since Christ came to fulfill the Law and the prophets and not destroy them.

Matt 5:17-19

¹⁷"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. ¹⁸For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

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The witness (Spirit of God) of the New Covenant bears witness within the believer through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit once a you are born again!

I will say that the entire giving of the Law, both sociological and religious, is given so that men would see Christ and believe. There is no other greater purpose for man than to be born again. Nothing else comes into focus but is dimmed by the glorious aspect of Christ and His Kingdom.

As we discussed earlier, man is fallen. We are children of the fall – of Adam. Jesus says we must be born again and He is speaking of receiving the gift of eternal life that he lost at the fall. So Jesus is saying accept Me and receive My Spirit so that you may live in Heaven. Of course, Jesus knew He would have to die on the Cross for this to take place.

Jesus is willing to die in your place as long as you accept what He has done for you. Are your sins keeping you from the light of Christ? Will you leave the darkness and come to the light? It is a matter of Heaven and Hell for all eternity!

The sociological aspect plays out a great spiritual significance as Paul uses the term 'redemption' in his letters to the churches. Paul was a scholar of the Jewish Law. When he writes to us in his letters he is making many references to the Old Testament. We adopt these teachings as Christians as we are an extension of the promises God has made in the Old Testament. So, when you hear someone say "redeemed by His blood," we are speaking OT language. Yes, Isaiah (800 BC) tells us He will sprinkle many nations.

Looking at the economics of the Old Covenant, a person living in Old Testament days would borrow and trade to make a living with what they were capable of producing. But if this person was not able to produce the payment for say some olive oil, he would have to pay off his debt by working it off. He would go into slavery. This slavery is not what we understand from our perspective here in the U.S. It was more like being a servant in a household. You had to work but you are entitled to leave after 7 years regardless of what you owed. You might marry another servant while being employed by your debt and may wish to remain a servant by having your ear pierced. One would do so by having an awl punched into the ear at the house of service at the door post.

Paul also brings to light that this is what Christ does for humanity. He came to serve and not be served and is a bond servant of man. The awl is a type of nail to the Cross. He gave His life of His own free will and no one takes His life from Him but lays it down freely!

The idea of redemption, an economical term, refers to a kinsmen redeemer. (Remember this is Old Testament thousands of years before Jesus Christ is born.) A kinsman had the legal ability to pay off a person's debt and set that individual free.

Christ paid for us with His blood we are told in the New Testament. He paid with His life, the only one who could, and conquered death. The wages of sin is death and Jesus was able to pay fully and take His life back up again. We were dead before the light of Christ shined upon us, and our eyes were opened to the Gospel. Now we are made alive in Christ and shall forever more be with the Lord. Amen.

So we see Christ paid the wages of sin for everyone who would accept Him. He is born of a virgin fulfilling the Prophecy in Isaiah and yet being fully man He is God as well. So he set the captives free. He also led captivity captive, death is swallowed up, and we are more than conquers having a spoil far greater than what this life can ever offer.

So, we lose this life, live for Christ and not for ourselves, to gain eternal Life in the Kingdom of God. Jesus tells us we must lose this life in order to find it. And we know as believers; life in Christ is far more fulfilling than life without.

Blood was necessary in the Old Testament as 'the life is in the blood' and the wages of sin required a life. The life of an innocent animal that was perfect by law was required to atone for the sinner. The hands of the person who would be bringing the sacrifice for their sins would be placed upon the animal transferring the sins of the individual to the innocent lamb then the lamb was killed. Without the shedding of blood, we are told, there is no remission of sins. This is Old Testament. This of course points to Christ, the God man, who would die and conquer death for all mankind.

The forgiveness of sins

Forgiveness of sins is something that was not possible in the Old Testament under the Law. They had atonement as we have in the New, which was a covering up of sin but not a removal. You might think that we are sinners still but forgiven which is true, But God does not see our sin just because it is 'covered' up. It has been washed in the blood of Christ which removes the sin. It is as if we have never sinned. The sin is completely gone as far as God is concerned once we have come to Christ. Our sins are forgiven. We know we are sinners, but by the preaching of Paul we know we are forgiven. We do not need to bring a lamb to church on Sunday as a sacrifice. It is finished once and for all for the Redeemed. Amen.

John 3:9-21

. ¹⁴ "As ^AMoses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must ^Bthe Son of Man ^Cbe lifted up; ¹⁵ so that whoever ¹believes will ^Ain Him have eternal life.

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Why is Jesus going back to the time of Israel's wondering in the wilderness? This is right after the Exodus where Moses is leading the people. You will not find mention of this elsewhere in the Bible where it carries a significant meaning as it did to the time Jesus referred to it and the significance it plays out as a 'type' which foreshadows the death of Christ on the Cross.

The situation in the wilderness had lead deadly snakes to bite the children of Israel. They had sinned against God and now death, once again, is taking the life. Moses was instructed by God to erect a pole and place a brass snake upon it and have the Israelis look upon the snake that is lifted up in order to live.

In other words, listen to what I tell you people and you will live. Look at the snake on the pole. That is my instruction to you.

Listen to God and live.

Jesus was saying man will have to look to me on the Cross. How does a snake relate to Jesus? The Bible tells us Jesus became sin for us. Sin, your sin, my sin, the sins of the world were nailed and held to the Cross by Christ's love for people – all people. He who knew no sin (Jesus The Messiah) became sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (paraphrase).

Jesus was telling us in so many words, I am God. I love you and will die for you because God is Love. All you have to do is accept this love and listen to what I tell you. They will beat me, they will whip me, and they will beat my body to the point where it is not recognizable as being human. Then, they will nail me to the cross and lift me up for all men to see.

According to the Riches of His Grace

Remember that we stated a kinsmen would pay off a debt owed. Well God's grace is sufficient for the sins of the world. He can pay for the sins of the world with His own blood! He can justify man – propitiate God – by His Life, death, and resurrection. We have His righteousness imputed upon us as well!

We have grace given to us – the grace of God. The Cross, as beyond as it is in our comprehension in its beauty to all mankind in what it represents to the redeemed, is just a part of the much more grace of God. A Bible teacher has said that the Cross is a cup of water and the grace of God is an ocean. I barely can imagine that! We have 'Grace for the ages to come.' We have grace during the church age, during the 1000 year rule of Christ on earth, and during the eternal Kingdom of God.

Grace is undeserved merit. God's wrath is poured out on Christ and we receive God's grace. God sees the work of Christ and mankind is now justified to enter Heaven and become the children of God. Amen to His grace!

Eph 1:3-14

³ 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, ⁴ 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, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹ having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ 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, ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

¹³ 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, ¹⁴ who* is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

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Isa 9:1-2 (800 BC)

9 Nevertheless the gloom *will not be* upon her who *is* distressed,

As when at first He lightly esteemed
The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,
And afterward more heavily oppressed *her*,

**By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,
In Galilee of the Gentiles.**

² **The people who walked in darkness**

Have seen a great light;

Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death,

Upon them a light has shined.

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