

"Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption"

Introduction

God's Word, the Bible, is a book of redemption. It is either that, or nothing at all. It is not just a book of history, science, anthropology, or cosmogony, although it is also all of those. It is, first and foremost, a book of salvation and deliverance for lost mankind!

The meaning of the word "*redemption*" is twofold: it refers to a deliverance; and it refers to the price paid for that deliverance, a ransom. We (mankind) are redeemed from the penalty of sin, from the power of Satan and evil, by the price Jesus Christ paid on the cross for us. And, we are redeemed to a new a freedom from sin, a new relationship to God, and a new life of love by the appropriation of that atonement for our sins.

The Bible in it's entirety, whether the Old Testament or the New Testament, looks to the mighty, redemptive atonement of Christ. His blood sacrifice is the ransom paid for our deliverance. He took our sinful nature upon Himself in order that He might satisfy the demands of the law. His sacrifice is accepted as the payment for the debt that the sinner (mankind) owes to God and His death is accepted as the full payment (ransom) for man's deliverance.

Our Lord's redemptive work for us is three fold.

- One, it is closely associated with forgiveness through the redemptive price of Christ's death.
- Two, it involves justification since the deliverance establishes us in a restored position of favor before God.
- Three, it promises final deliverance from the power of sin at the coming of the Lord.

This is "*Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption*".

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The Creation and the Fall

When God made the heavens and the earth, they must have been beautiful, perfect and pure, not like they are today.

However, in the Garden of Eden through a denial of the Word of God and through a deception of the woman, our first parents fell. Eve was deceived, but Adam chose to die by the side of the woman whom God had created and placed in his arms.

When the Lord came to visit the man and his wife in the cool of the day, He could not find them. They were afraid and hid themselves from the Lord because they were naked and ashamed. To hide their guilt, they made for themselves loin coverings of fig leaves. When God looked upon the covering, He said, *"This will not do"*.

Covering for sin (atonement for sin) cannot be *woven* by human hands. Therefore, somewhere in the Garden of Eden, the Lord took an innocent animal, and before the eyes of Eve and Adam, God slew that innocent animal and the ground drank up its blood. This is the beginning of *"Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption"*. Through the slaughter of an innocent victim, God took coats of skin and covered over the shame and the nakedness of the man and his wife. This is the first sacrifice, and it was offered by the hand of Almighty God.

When Adam saw the gasping, spent life of that innocent creature, and when he saw the crimson stain which soiled the ground, the reality of this first experience to know what it meant to die because of sin, must have been horrific.

The story of atonement and sacrifice begins and continues to unfold throughout the Word of God until finally, in glory, we shall see vast throngs of the saints who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

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From the Seventh Day in Eden to the Call of Abraham

In the Garden of Eden, as the Lord covered over the nakedness of the man and the woman, He turned to Satan and said, *"The seed of this woman, whom you have deceived and through whom you have destroyed the human race, will crush your head."*

For centuries the old rabbis pored over that word of Jehovah God to Satan, *"The seed of the woman."* Seed is masculine; seed belongs to the man. A woman does not have seed. The old Rabbis pored over that word and the promise of God that the seed of the woman shall bruise Satan's head.

We now know that the promise is related to the long conflict and struggle between the hatred of Lucifer and the love of God in Christ Jesus. It speaks of Jesus at Calvary. Jesus suffered. His heel was bruised. But in that bruising, He defeated once and for all the power of that old serpent, the devil. He bruised his head.

As the man Adam and his wife Eve made their first home in an earth cursed for their sakes, in the passing of time there were born to them two sons. One was named Cain and the other Abel. In jealousy and insane fury, the older brother murdered the younger brother. But the seed of God must be preserved. The Lord, therefore, gave to Eve another son named Seth. Seth was a man of faith as Cain was a man of the world. When the children of Seth, the godly remnant, intermarried with the children of Cain, the seed of the world, the result was a fallen progeny that filled the earth with violence.

Finally, God said: *"It is enough. One hundred twenty years from now I am going to destroy this world by a flood."* But a member of the line of Seth found grace in the sight of the Lord. His name was Noah. To preserve the righteous seed, God told Noah to build an ark; and into that ark of safety, salvation, and hope Noah brought his family. After the passing of the awesome judgment of the flood, the earth once again began its story of redemption through the life of this one man and his three sons.

It was not long, however, until the ravages of sin began to waste the select family of God. Instead of carrying out the great commission of the Lord for mankind to inhabit the whole earth, the people drew together into one plain and announced their purpose to build a tower around which they were to center their civilization and

their collective, communal unity.

When God looked down and saw the pride of men in their hearts, He confused their speech and caused them to "babble". From this "*Tower of Babel*", therefore, the different component parts of the human race, being unable to understand each other, scattered in different directions and so fathered the nations of the earth that grew up from those three great family lines of Noah.

From the Call of Abraham Through the Times of the Judges

We begin the story of Abraham in a dark, dark day. The whole world has been plunged into abysmal idolatry, but God calls out this man to leave his home, his place, his country, and his family to go into another country which he should afterward receive for an inheritance.

In obedience, Abraham left the Mesopotamian valley and came as a pilgrim, a stranger, and a sojourner into the promised land of Canaan. There he dwelt and there God gave him two sons. But the Lord God said to Abraham that Ishmael, the child of the flesh and the son of a slave woman, would not be the promised seed. When Abraham was one hundred years old and when Sarah was ninety years old, God miraculously placed into the arms of the parents the child and seed of promise whom they named Isaac. Isaac was the father of two sons, Esau and Jacob. The Lord, refusing Esau, chose Jacob whom He renamed, after a deep conversion experience, "*the Prince of God*", even "*Israel*".

Because of a severe famine in Canaan and because of the presence of the son of Israel, Joseph, in Egypt, the entire household of Jacob went down to live in the land of the Nile. In the passing of the years, there arose a Pharaoh who did not know Joseph. The chosen family became slaves to the new ruler of Egypt, and their heavy groaning mounted up to the ears of the Lord God in heaven. The Lord, therefore, raised up a mighty prophet by the name of Moses to deliver his people from the bondage and slavery of the Egyptians. God wrought this deliverance by a marvelous miracle called the Passover. For the Lord said, "*When I see the blood, I will pass over you and will spare you and your home*". This way of salvation through the blood is once again, "*Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption*".

After the Lord God delivered the chosen family out of Egypt, He brought them by the hand of Moses through the parting of the Red Sea into the Sinaitic Peninsula to the base of Mount Horeb. There for forty days and forty nights Moses was with God, and there the Lord gave to Moses the pattern of the Tabernacle, the ritual instructions of holy worship, and all of the other marvelous things in the book of Leviticus that portray and prophesy the sacrifice of the Son of God.

After the death of Moses, Joshua went over Jordan and completed the wars of conquest. In the first confrontation at Jericho an incident happened which gave rise to the title of this summary.

The scouts sent out by Joshua to spy out Jericho were saved by the faith and the kindness of Rehab. The men of Israel promised her life and safety, both for her and her father's house, if she would bind a scarlet thread in her window. This she faithfully did, and, when Jericho was delivered into the hands of Joshua by the mighty intervention of God, Rehab and her family were spared because of that scarlet thread. "*Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption*".

After the conquest of Canaan, through the military prowess and genius of Joshua we have the story of Judges. The difference between a judge and a king is this: a king gives to his son in succession his throne, but a judge is raised up according to a crisis and endowed with special gifts from God for that one period of time. The days of the Judges end with the birth of Samuel.

From the First of the Prophets to the Founding of the Kingdom

During the time of Samuel, the people began to cry for a king. It was the purpose of God in the beginning for the children of Israel to have a king (Deut. 17:14-20 OT), but it hurt the heart of the Lord that the request should come in so vain and rebellious a way as they presented it to Samuel. But according to the word and instructions of God, Samuel anointed Saul to be king over Israel.

In his beginning ministry, Saul was a mighty man and carried out the mandates of heaven, but he soon fell away from the instruction of Samuel and fell into gross disobedience to the will of God. The Word of the Lord, therefore, came to Samuel that he anoint a man after God's own heart.

That anointing was directed toward a lad from the shepherd field, a son of Jesse by the name of David.

David and the Kingdom of Israel and Judah

The first part of David's life as king of Israel was magnificent. Then, in the very prime of his life, at the very height of his glory, he turned aside from the will of God and became soft and indulgent and lustful like other Oriental kings. This brought to David an infinite tragedy, one of which the name of God was blasphemed and has been injured ever since. Nevertheless, God forgave the sin of David and chose him to be the father of that marvelous Son who would sit upon His throne as King forever. A type of the glorious son of David, called Jesus the Christ, was the immediate son of David, called Solomon. Solomon also began his reign gloriously and triumphantly, but like his father, Solomon also fell into tragic decline. Upon his death, the kingdom was torn apart.

Thereafter, the people of God are divided into two kingdoms; that of the north is called the kingdom of Israel, and that of the south is called the kingdom of Judah. The northern kingdom of Israel was taken away into captivity by the cruel and ruthless Assyrians in 722 BC. The southern kingdom was carried away into Babylonian captivity in 587 BC. In the days of the Babylonian captivity, Jeremiah prophesied in Jerusalem while Daniel, the prophet-statesman and Ezekiel, the holy watchman, comforted and strengthened the people of God in Mesopotamia.

Out of the Babylonian captivity came three great establishments by which God has blessed our world. First, the Jews were never idolatrous again. Second, the synagogue was born, and from the synagogue came the Church. The services of the synagogue are the same type of services we have today. Third, out of the captivity came the canon of the Holy Scriptures.

Out of tears and suffering comes our greatest blessing: *"Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption"*.

From the Prophets to the Christ to the Preaching of Paul

Out of the agonies of the days of the kingdom of Israel and of Judah came the depiction of the prophets of a more glorious Savior and King whom God would send to His people. When we read a passage like the twenty-second Psalm or the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, we seem to be standing by the very cross of the Son of God. More and more as the days went by, the great spiritual leaders of Israel and of Judah began to outline and to depict the coming of a Redeemer who would save the people from their sins and bring to them the everlasting hope and righteousness of God in a promised Messiah. This Messianic hope became stronger and more gloriously received as the centuries passed.

Out of the Babylonian captivity, in 536 BC, Cyrus the Persian gave the people the right to return to their homeland in Judah and to build their holy Temple in Jerusalem. Thus the remnant of the captivity returned under Zerubbabel the political leader, and under Joshua the priestly leader, and under Ezra the scribe, and

under Nehemiah the prime minister in the court of Shushan. This holy remnant, thus seeking to restore the worship of the true God in Jerusalem, and to recreate the political life of Judah, were encouraged by God's messengers Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

Of the three great restoration prophets, Zechariah is far and away the greatest. Zechariah spoke much about Israel, about the end of time, and about the conversion of the people of the Lord. The last prophet, of course, is Malachi. He delivered his message from about 450 BC to about 425 BC.

The 40 decades between the last book of Old Testament, Malachi, and the first book of the New Testament, Matthew, marks the rise of the Hellenistic Empire. God used Alexander the Great to spread throughout the civilized world one culture and one language which made possible the preaching of Christ to all men everywhere.

In that inter-biblical period also arose the might of the Roman Empire. When Augustus Caesar was the Roman emperor, and when Rome had the entire world in her hand, the great prophecy of Isaiah, and the great prophecy of Micah, and the great prophecy of Nathan to David, and the great prophecy of Jacob to his son Judah, and the great promise of God Almighty to Eve in the Garden of Eden, came to pass. In the seed of the woman and through the seed of Abraham all the families of the earth are to be blessed -- and our Savior is thus born into the world. *"Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption"* has led us to the birth of Him who has come to redeem the human race from their fallen estate.

In His ministry, Jesus early began to teach His disciples that He would suffer and die. When He was transfigured, there appeared Moses and Elijah talking to Him about His death which He should accomplish in Jerusalem. When He was anointed by Mary of Bethany, He said it was for His burial. When the Greeks came to see Him from afar He said, *"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself"* (John 12:32). At the last supper He said, *"This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."* And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten, saying, *"This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in My blood."* Before He went to the cross, He gave Himself in Gethsemane in travail of soul for our redemption (Is. 53:11). And when He bowed His head and died He said, *"It is finished"* (John 19:30).

When we preach the blood, when we preach the sacrificial death of Christ, we are preaching the meaning of His coming into the world. The sacrifice of Christ consummated the great redemptive plan and purpose of God in the earth. This is *"Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption"*.

After the resurrection of our Lord, after the giving of the Great Commission to the apostles, and after the ascension of our Savior into Heaven, the Lord poured out His Holy Spirit upon His Church in Jerusalem upon the day of Pentecost. Thereafter, the disciples of Jesus and the preachers of the redemptive message of Christ began to make known throughout the earth the *Good News* of our hope and salvation.

The epistles of Paul are divided into four distinct groups:

- The first group he wrote on his second missionary journey from Athens and Corinth. They are First and Second Thessalonians.
- The second group of letters were born in his third missionary journey. While he was in Ephesus, he wrote First Corinthians. In Macedonia, somewhere between Ephesus and Corinth, he wrote Second Corinthians. Then, either in Antioch or on his way to Antioch, he wrote Galatians and Romans. First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans, therefore, center around the city of Ephesus.
- The third group of epistles Paul wrote from the prison in Rome, during his first Roman imprisonment. They are Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, and Ephesians.
- The fourth and last group of his epistles, which were written after his first Roman imprisonment, were

First Timothy, Titus, and Second Timothy, called the pastoral epistles.

In all Paul's letters there is the constant theme of redemptive love. It is a part of "*Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption*".

The Apocalypse and the Consummation of the Age

We come now to the conclusion of the Bible.

On the Isle of Patmos, a rocky little point in the sea several miles southwest from Ephesus, John is exiled to die of exposure and starvation. But even there does the Lord appear to John in an incomparable and glorious vision. The vision is called the Revelation, that is, the unveiling. The Apocalypse, the uncovering of Jesus Christ in His Glory, in His majesty, and in His kingdom, is the reward that God gave to Jesus for saving us, Adam's fallen children, from our sins.

After the vision of the exalted and glorified Christ in Revelation chapter one and after the prophetic words concerning the church age in chapters two and three, we have the rapture of John through an open door into heaven. While John, translated in the Spirit, is with the Savior in heaven, there is poured out upon the earth the judgments of Almighty God called **The Great Tribulation**. They are depicted in the opening of the seven seals, the seven trumpets, and the seven bowls. In those dark days John sees a vision in Revelation chapter seven, concerning the blood washed, blood-bought, redeemed of the Lord in glory. Announcement is made to him through one of the elders that these are they who have come out of **The Great Tribulation** and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. This is "*Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption*" that began with the blood of covering in the Garden of Eden and finds its ultimate and final consummation in the blood-washed throng before the throne of God in glory.

After the seven seals and their judgments, the seven bowls and their judgments, and the seven personages and their judgments, we come to the final great *Judgment Day of Almighty God*. The antichrist who professes to be the leader of the nations of the world, is gathering the armies of the entire world together. They are converging from the north in Russia, from the east in China, from the south in Africa, and from the west in Europe and the islands of the sea. They are converging for that great *Day of the Lord*. That is the Battle of Armageddon, the last great war the whole world is going to fight. At Megiddo, the armies of the earth by millions and millions will converge to face that rendezvous with God. In the midst of unimaginable holocaust, Christ intervenes in human history. He comes with His saints. He delivers His people, shut up in the holy city, and takes Satan and binds him for a thousand years in the bottomless pit.

After the binding of Satan for a thousand years, which is called the glorious *Millennium*, Satan is released and thereafter goes out once again to lead men into rebellion against God. This is the final conflict which ends forever man's refusal to accept the will of God for their lives. At the end of time in the final resurrection of the wicked dead and the **Great White Throne Judgment**, the books are opened, and those whose names are not found written in the *Lamb's Book of Life* are cast out and rewarded according to their deeds. Into the **abyss of hell** are flung Satan and his way of life, plus death and the grave -- all are hurled into the fiery flames where the **Beast** and the **False Prophet** have already been for a thousand years.

After the purging of the earth of Satan and his minions, and after the judgment upon those who reject Christ and His grace, and after cleansing the earth of the heartache and tears of sickness, sin, death, and the grave, will come the renovation of this earth and this heaven. It is a new creation with a *new heaven* and a *new earth*, remade according to the fullness of the glory and wonder of God. In it is the *new and holy city*, the heavenly **Jerusalem**, and in it is the presence of the dwelling place of God Himself. Tears, death, sorrow, pain and crying are all passed away. There are no graves on the hillsides of glory and no funeral wreaths on the doors of those

mansions in the sky.

The Book closes with the incomparable message of the hope, salvation, and redemption we have in the personal coming and presence of the **Lord Christ Himself**.

This is "*Weaving a Tapestry of Redemption*".

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