

**Kingdom Expectations – Part 4:
Messiah & Kingdom – Pss.2, 110**

0.0 Introduction

- 0.1 Conversation of all kinds, for all sorts of people in all places = common stuff of life
(estimates suggest men speak 2-3k/day while women speak 5-20k/day)
- 0.2 Unusual conversations – Ps.2:7-9 and Ps.110:1-4 – both parties in heaven (e.g. Gen.1:26)

1.0 Parties of a Covenant

- 1.1 Covenants are usually between people or entities
- 1.2 Some covenants between God & people, e.g. Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David
- 1.3 Conversation/covenant in Ps.2:7-9 = Royal father-God bequeaths all to Son/heir,
with guarantee that opponents will be eliminated
- 1.4 Conversation in Ps.110:1-4 = incl. imagery of follows as dew shining on morning field

2.0 Provisions of The Covenant

- 2.1 Covenant of redemption (see <https://www.ligonier.org/blog/what-covenant-redemption/>)
- 2.2 Mission, Messiah, Mediator
- 2.3 *Messiah the Prince: The Mediatorial Dominion of Jesus Christ* (William Symington, 1884)
 - Christ's role on our behalf (Ch.1, p.3)
 - Christ's dominion over all (Ch.8, p.101)
 - Nations have obligations to Christ (Ch.10, p.129)

3.0 The Importance of This Covenant for Us Today

- 3.1 Contrast between the two kingdoms (Symington, Ch.5, p.45)
- 3.2 “There is not one square inch of the universe, of which Christ does not say, ‘It is mine’.”
(Dutch theologian and one-time prime minister, Abraham Kuyper)

*Next week (Oct.25) – Kingdom Expectations – Part 5:
The Open Kingdom – Ac.28:23-31*

What Is the Covenant of Redemption?

FROM R.C. SPROUL JUN 24, 2020 CATEGORY: ARTICLES

A persistent tradition claims that upon being mocked by a skeptic with regard to his doctrine of creation, Saint Augustine was cynically asked, “What was God doing before He created the world? Augustine’s alleged reply was: “Creating hell for curious souls.” The reply was, of course, tongue-in-cheek. The Bible doesn’t speak of such a special work of divine creation before creation itself. But Augustine’s *bon mot* had a serious point that warned against idle speculation of God’s activity in eternity.

However, quite apart from speculation, the Bible has much to say about God’s activity “before” the world was made. The Bible speaks often of God’s eternal counsel, of His plan of salvation and the like. It is a matter of theological urgency that Christians not think of God as a ruler who *ad libs* His dominion of the universe. God does not “make it up as He goes along.” Nor must He be viewed as a bumbling administrator who is so inept in His planning that His blueprint for redemption must be endlessly subject to revision according to the actions of men. The God of Scripture has no “plan b” or “plan c.” His “plan a” is from everlasting to everlasting. It is both perfect and unchangeable as it rests on God’s eternal character, which is among other things, holy, omniscient, and immutable. God’s eternal plan is not revised because of moral imperfections within it that must be purified. His plan was not corrected or amended because He gained new knowledge that He lacked at the beginning. God’s plan never changes because He never changes and because perfection admits to no degrees and cannot be improved upon.

The covenant of redemption is intimately concerned with God’s eternal plan. It is called a “covenant” inasmuch as the plan involves two or more parties. This is not a covenant between God and humans. It is a covenant among the persons of the Godhead, specifically between the Father and the Son. God did not become triune at creation or at the Incarnation. His triunity is as eternal as His being. He is one in essence and three in person from all eternity.

The covenant of redemption is a corollary to the doctrine of the Trinity. Like the word *trinity*, the Bible nowhere explicitly mentions it. The word *trinity* does not appear in the Bible, but the concept of the Trinity is affirmed throughout Scripture. Likewise, the phrase “covenant of redemption” does not occur explicitly in Scripture but the concept is heralded throughout.

Central to the message of Jesus is the declaration that He was sent into the world by the Father. His mission was not given to Him at His baptism or in the manger. He had it before His incarnation.

In the great “Kenotic Hymn” of Philippians 2, we get a glimpse of this: “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (vv. 5–11 NKJV).

This passage reveals many things. It speaks of the willingness of the Son to undertake a mission of redemption at the behest of the Father. That Jesus was about doing the will of the Father is testified throughout His life. As a young boy in the temple He reminded His earthly parents that

He must be about His Father's business. His meat and drink was to do the will of His Father. It was zeal for His Father's house that consumed Him. Repeatedly He declared that He spoke not on His own authority but on the authority of the One who sent Him.

Jesus is the primary missionary. As the word suggests, a missionary is one who is "sent." The eternal Word did not decide on His own to come to this planet for its redemption. He was sent here. In the plan of salvation the Son comes to do the Father's bidding. The point of the covenant of redemption is that the Son comes willingly. He is not coerced by the Father to relinquish His glory and be subjected to humiliation. Rather, He willingly "made Himself of no reputation." The Father did not strip the Son of His eternal glory but the Son agreed to lay it aside temporarily for the sake of our salvation.

Listen to Jesus as He prays to the Father at the end of His ministry: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You; And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (John 17:1–5 NKJV). The covenant of redemption was a transaction that involved both obligation and reward. The Son entered into a sacred agreement with the Father. He submitted Himself to the obligations of that covenantal agreement. An obligation was likewise assumed by the Father — to give His Son a reward for doing the work of redemption.

In his systematic theology, Charles Hodge lists eight promises the Father gave to the Son in this pact made in eternity. Briefly they are: that God would form a purified Church for His Son; that the Son would receive the Spirit without measure; that He would be ever-present to support Him; that He would deliver Him from death and exalt Him to His right hand; that He would have the Holy Spirit to send to whom He willed; that all the Father gave to Him would come to Him and none of these be lost; that multitudes would partake of His redemption and His messianic kingdom; that He would see the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

Because God honored the eternal covenant of redemption, Christ became the heir of His Father's promises. Because this covenant was never violated, we reap its benefits as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

This post was originally published in Tabletalk magazine.

PSALM 2

The Reign of the LORD's Anointed.

- 1 Why are the nations in an uproar
 And the peoples devising a vain thing?
- 2 The kings of the earth take their stand
 And the rulers take counsel together
 Against the LORD and against His Anointed, saying,
- 3 "Let us tear their fetters apart
 And cast away their cords from us!"
- 4 He who sits in the heavens laughs,
 The Lord scoffs at them.
- 5 Then He will speak to them in His anger
 And terrify them in His fury, saying,

- 6 “But as for Me, I have installed My King
Upon Zion, My holy mountain.”
- 7 “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD:
He said to Me, ‘You are My Son,
Today I have begotten You.
- 8 ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance,
And the *very* ends of the earth as Your possession.
- 9 ‘You shall break them with a rod of iron,
You shall shatter them like earthenware.’ ”
- 10 Now therefore, O kings, show discernment;
Take warning, O judges of the earth.
- 11 Worship the LORD with reverence
And rejoice with trembling.
- 12 Do homage to the Son, that He not become angry, and you perish *in* the way,
For His wrath may soon be kindled.
How blessed are all who take refuge in Him!

PSALM 110

The LORD Gives Dominion to the King.
A Psalm of David.

- 1 The LORD says to my Lord:
“Sit at My right hand
Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”
- 2 The LORD will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, *saying*,
“Rule in the midst of Your enemies.”
- 3 Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power;
In holy array, from the womb of the dawn,
Your youth are to You *as* the dew.
- 4 The LORD has sworn and will not change His mind,
“You are a priest forever
According to the order of Melchizedek.”
- 5 The Lord is at Your right hand;
He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath.
- 6 He will judge among the nations,
He will fill *them* with corpses,
He will shatter the chief men over a broad country.
- 7 He will drink from the brook by the wayside;
Therefore He will lift up *His* head.