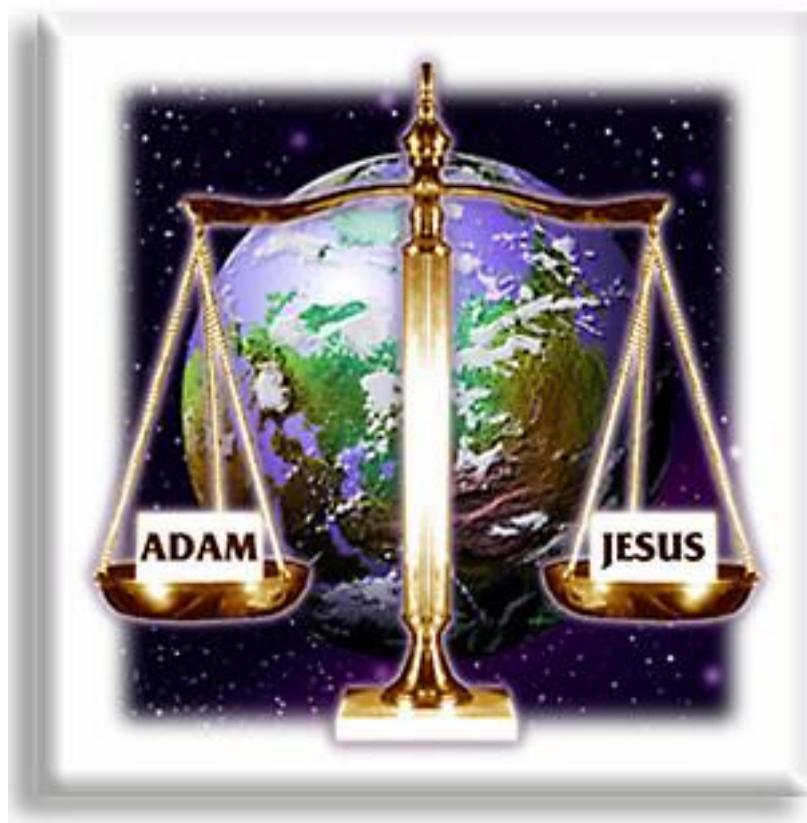


The Ransom



The doctrine of the ransom sacrifice of our Lord Jesus is basic and fundamental to every other teaching of the Bible. Though it is simple in concept and clear in Scripture, it is understood by few and unnoticed by most. Understanding it guards against innumerable errors that have plagued Christianity over the years.

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In I Corinthians 15:21 and 22 the Apostle Paul explains the ransom without using the word.

“Since by man came death,
by man came also the resurrection of the dead.”

With these words Paul draws attention to the doctrine of original sin. He wants us to know clearly that we are dying NOT for our own imperfections, but because we have INHERITED death from the one man who is the father of the entire race of mankind. He continues his clarification:

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“For as in Adam all die,
even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

In both of these verses we see Jesus as the OFFSET for the original sin and its result: death.

Hidden in Paul’s words (unless we look closely) is that it was an EXACT EXCHANGE, a man for a man, that cancels the sin. By MAN came death; by MAN comes resurrection. God’s justice is so perfect that an EXACT EXCHANGE is the only thing acceptable—no more, no less. This is why Jesus BECAME A MAN—no more, no less. But he was a PERFECT MAN, an exact replica of Adam before his fall. As Adam possessed within him a race of people yet unborn, so Jesus also had within him the ability to be a father of a yet unborn race. Jesus sacrificed himself and this prospective race within him to PURCHASE or RANSOM from justice the man Adam and the race that came from him. Thus, in I Corinthians 15:45, Paul re-names Jesus, calling him the second Adam (“the last Adam”) because the glorified Jesus will, through PURCHASE, become the new father of the race. This was prophesied of him in Isaiah 9:6 where the child which was born will have the new government on his shoulder and be called “the everlasting father.”

Several scriptures, carefully read, attest to these truths about the ransom.

In Hebrews 2 the Apostle Paul quotes the eighth Psalm saying prophetically of Adam and his race:

- Verse 6 — Why, Lord, do you pay attention to man and his descendants?
- Verse 7 — It is because you made him as something wonderful, though lower lower than angels. You made him glorious, perfect, and you made him and his descendants to be perfect rulers of the earth.
- Verse 8 — But we don’t see that that has happened yet!
- Verse 9 — However, we DO see Jesus, made exactly as Adam was—lower than the angels, but perfect. And you made him that way SPECIFICALLY so that he could die to take the the place of Adam and his race in death.

In these few verses, Paul has successfully explained the entire philosophy of the ransom.

Paul makes another closely-related point in Galatians 4:4-5. He points out that Jesus' birth had two important stipulations:

(1) He was "made of a woman." This shows that he was human, but his father was not Adam. If Adam were his father, Jesus would have inherited death. ("All in Adam die.") But even the earliest prophecies of how God would get man out of his problems show that Jesus would be human. Genesis 3:15 calls him "the seed of the woman."

(2) Here in Galatians 3:4, 5, however, Paul shows additionally that Jesus was "made under the law." He had to be a Jew—an inheritor of the promise of the law, the only man who could ever keep the law—in order to release Israel from the demands of the law under which they were held captive. Israel, unlike the rest of mankind, would be under the death-penalty of the law as well as under the Adamic death curse as long as the law still held them captive.

In I Timothy 2:5, 6, Paul shows that Jesus' ransom sacrifice will be understood by all "in due time"—during his Millennial Kingdom when he will mediate between God and man. This mediation is the resurrection process promised by Paul in I Corinthians 15: "by man came also the resurrection of the dead." It is because Jesus was a ransom that he can be this Mediator.

Jesus himself (Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45) shows that he CAME (at his first advent) specifically to SERVE the race by RANSOMING it. The Greek text reads, "to give his life a ransom for the many." This clearly echoes what we learned from Paul in Hebrews 2.

Thus also the prophets foretold:

"I will ransom them from the power of the grave;
I will redeem them from death:
O death, I will be thy plagues;
O grave, I will be thy destruction."
(Hosea 13:14)

"The ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with songs and
everlasting joy upon their heads:
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."
(Isaiah 35:10)

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The ransom and its result, restitution, are covered in great detail in Volume 5 of STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, available from this Website. See the **Available Literature** link.