

## Introduction to Soteriology

### The Origin of Saving Grace

- **Did God leave all humanity to die in the miserable state of sin?**

Out of His good pleasure and from all eternity, God did enter into a covenant of grace in order to deliver His children from the bondage and misery of sin, and bring them into a state of salvation by the work of a Redeemer.

Question: What was the first active and verbal revelation of God's grace?

#### 1) God demonstrates Gracious Grace from the **beginning**.

- Genesis 3:6-21 – “6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. 7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked [exposed before God in their shame]. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths [an attempt to cover their own shame].

8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden [their shame drove them from God rather than to Him]. 9 But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” 10 And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” [fear and shame are the results of sin against the holy God of creation]

“11 He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” [Then Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent; and God begins to proclaim a curse upon each of them... He begins with the serpent, but includes a promise of grace for humanity before He proclaims the curse upon them.] “15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” [God then proclaims curses upon all of humanity and creation itself, but Adam's response (in v20) reveals that he has understood the promise of grace from God. Note that he calls Eve the “mother of all living.” This clearly denotes Adam's expectation that there is life yet to be enjoyed and not only death, which was the content of the curse. Then notice what Moses tells us about what God did next.] “21 And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.”

First, no creature was a carnivore and no death of any kind had occurred before sin. This means that there was peace among all creation in the perfect order of God's design. However, sin brought death and marred creation almost beyond recognition.

Second, God used "skins" to cover or "clothe" Adam and Eve. It can only be assumed that the skins God used came from an animal of some sort. The inference here is that God killed, or sacrificed, the very first animal.

Lastly, the skins God used were to cover the "nakedness" of Adam and Eve. This is huge! Remember that Adam and Eve tried to cover themselves with leaves. This obviously would have been an inadequate attempt. In addition, nakedness is a term used in scripture to speak of one's sinfulness. We, in our sin, are naked before God and exposed for the sinners we are.

Isaiah 47:3 – Your **nakedness** shall be uncovered, and your **disgrace** shall be seen.

Nahum 3:5 – Behold, I am against you, declares the LORD of hosts, and will lift up your skirts over your face; and I will make nations look at your **nakedness** and kingdoms at your **shame**.

How gracious of God, that He would give us a shadow of the Redeemer to come in the sacrifice of the first animal in order to cover the nakedness of humanity!

His acts of grace, from beginning to end, reveal that His covenant of grace began long before humanity would be privileged to know and understand it.

**Question: Who is the instigator, author, and engineer of Ultimate Redemption?**

**2) God, out of His loving-kindness, chose to enter into a **covenant** of grace.**

- **Covenant of Grace is first announced before the curse!**

Genesis 3:15 – "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

- **The Covenant of Grace in the Noaic Covenant**

Genesis 6:17-18 – "Behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh... But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark..."

- **The Covenant of Grace in the Abrahamic Covenant**

Genesis 15:9-10,12,17-18 – “[God] said to [Abram], ‘Bring me a heifer three years old, a female goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.’ And [Abram] brought him all these, cut them in half, and laid each half over against the other. But he did not cut the birds in half... As the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell on Abram. And behold, dreadful and great darkness fell upon him... a smoking fire pot and a flaming torch passed between the pieces. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram.”

Genesis 17:7 – “And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.”

- **The Covenant of Grace in the Mosaic Covenant**

Exodus 19:4-6 – “You yourselves have seen what I [God] did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Nor therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

- **The Covenant of Grace in the Davidic Covenant**

2 Samuel 7:11-14,16 – “I [God] will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover, the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house... I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son... Your throne shall be established forever.”

- **The Covenant of Grace is fulfilled in Christ**

Galatians 3:16 – “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, ‘And to offsprings,’ referring to many, but referring to one, ‘And to your offspring,’ who is Christ.”

1 Peter 2:5,9 – “You yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ... But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”

### 3) God has promised and provided a perfect Redeemer.

Hebrews 8:8-12, 9:11-15 – “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 9 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord; I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 11 And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”

“9:11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) 12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

15 Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.”

Salvation, Redemption, and any other term that one may use to describe what a sinner receives from God through the person and work of Christ, by way of the application of the Holy Spirit, is the plan and work of God.

It cannot be overstated that Grace is from God; Salvation is from God; Redemption is from God; Justification is from God; Adoption is from God; Righteousness is from God; and the means by which any of this happens are FROM GOD!

Question: What assurance can we have that God will not break His covenant?