



What Is the Big Picture of God's Redemption of Man?

"Redemption. Redeemed. What does that mean, anyway? I hear Christians talking about how they are redeemed. I think God has a plan and I know there's a reason why things went down the way they did with Jesus, but I don't know where to start to get the big picture of it all."

There is an over arching message in the Bible. It's not easily understood, but if you study Scripture and let the Holy Spirit guide you, it will surface. Want a hint? It has everything to do with God's covenant He made with us. When we begin to understand the love and loyalty of a covenant, we begin to see clearly the incredible lasting love of our Lord. God wants us to know that He is with us always and will never, as His children, turn His back on us. In return, He wants us to love and trust Him more. Do you want to be more passionate about God? It starts with understanding His covenant.

A covenant is not a contract. It's a deeper, stronger, more personal, self-sacrificing union between two parties. A covenant agreement involves the mutual exchange of each party's lifelong commitment that each party will keep even to the death. It is the fullest expression of love and commitment. A covenant will complement each party's strength, not their similarities.

Covenants have been made almost since the beginning of time. The intricacy and care that takes place when making a covenant is beautiful and involves promises, blessings, blood sacrifice, seals, vows, oaths, exchanges of goods, meals, memorials and specific language. Think about the wedding ceremony. It is a sacred covenant that binds a man and a woman together forever. Sadly, in our world today, we have lessened the importance of the promises made. Honor, love and commitment forever are missing in many marriages. (Read Ephesians 2:3-10.)

The Bible tells us that God has established a blood covenant with mankind in order to redeem him from eternal death and separation from God. That's right. God, the Creator of the Universe and the heavens, the architect of the sky and sea, cut a covenant, *a new covenant*, with His Son Jesus, and included believers in it. Our covenant with God is new because there was nothing like it ever before. Our covenant with God is the first covenant ever where both the covenant representative and the covenant sacrifice are one in the same, Jesus. Our covenant with God brings us back to His arms and keeps us there for eternity. He will never, EVER, break that covenant. EVER.

As Christ followers, we must be willing to change the way we live and the way we treat others that God has put in our lives. Romans 12:10, 13 *"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves...share with God's people who are in need."* What greater way can we show our gratefulness to our God for being our Redeemer than by loving others the way He loves us, blemishes and all!

Genesis 17:7 *"I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you."*