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Redeemed in Messiah
1: 7-13a

Redeemed in Messiah DIG: How are redemption (ransomed) and forgiveness related? How does the truth that Yeshua is the only way to gain redemption serve as motivation to share the Gospel with others? Who in your life has exemplified God's grace to you? How did the person do this for you? How have you given grace to someone else? What did you do?

REFLECT: How do the blessings in Messiah relate to praising Him? What does Paul say that God makes known to His people? What does that mean to you? God offers the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Messiah. What difference should that make in your daily life?

Faith is man's response to God's elective purpose.
God's choice of men is election; men's choice of God is faith.
In election, God gives His promises, and by faith men and women receive them.



In Messiah, through the shedding of his blood (1:7a): One of the Hebrew words corresponding to the Greek word *lutrosis*, meaning *redemption* or *ransom*, is *padut*, of which another form is *pidyon*, as in *pidyon-haben*, **redemption** of the firstborn son **(Luke 22-24)**. *Pidyon* has in it the idea of exchange, of substitution. In the Torah **the redemption** of the firstborn is stated in **Exodus 13:13-14**. In **Numbers 3** 22,000 Levites became substitutes for 22,000 of **Isra'el's** firstborn males, and the remaining 273, for whom there were no Levites, were **ransomed** by

1,365 shekels. In **First Samuel 14**, **Jonathan** came under sentence of death for transgressing a public oath **his** father had made in his absence. Yet, although King Sha'ul condemned **him** to die, the sentence was not carried out, because the people objected. But law is law, and not to be ignored. Therefore, the people **ransomed him**, and thus legally prevented **his** being put to death.

We too, like **Jonathan**, have come under the sentence of death. **Jonathan** was condemned to death even though **he** had been unaware of King Sha'ul's oath and order. We are condemned to death, even though we have not sinned after the manner of the first Adam (see the commentary on **Romans, to see link click Bm – The Consequences of Adam**). Like Jonathan, we must either die or be **ransomed**. **Jonathan** and the Israelite firstborn were **ransomed** with money. Money equals **blood**. One of the names of money in Hebrew is *damim*, plural of *dam*, **blood**, because it represents man's labor and risks. But money cannot **redeem** anyone from eternal death. Man has nothing with which to **ransom** himself or others **(Psalm 49:7-8)**; **ADONAI Himself** must **redeem** him from the power of the grave **(Psalm 49:15)**. But **God** has said: **I have found a ransom (Job 33:24)**, and that **ransom** is **the blood** of **the Messiah**.[66]

We are set free (1:7b): The original word evokes the idea of **redemption**, that is, the purchase of a person for a new relationship. As **Rabbi Sha'ul** seems to be thinking of the ancient Torah ritual of **redemption** of the firstborn. After the Egyptian Passover (see the commentary on **Exodus Bv – The Egyptian Passover**), all first-born sons of **Isra'el** were the priests of their families (see **Exodus Cd – Consecrate to Me Every Firstborn Male**). Later, it was the Levites who were given this holy responsibility by **God**, and all non-Levite families were instructed to **redeem** their own first-born son with five shekels **(Num 18:15-17)**. As with all biblical customs given by **God**, **redemption** of the first-born has a higher spiritual meaning. It is actually all mankind that is in need of spiritual **redemption**. It is only through **the blood of Messiah** that people are **set free**.[67]

Our sins are forgiven (1:7c): Judaism teaches the concept of **sin** using two Hebrew words. One is *chet*, meaning *to miss the target*, a description of the human condition. People need not be criminals to be "sinners," as the biblical definition means missing the mark and thus falling short of God's standards. All of the Temple sacrifices, especially the purification offering (see the commentary on **Leviticus Al – The Purification Offering: Purified by the Blood**), speak of this need for all people, **Isra'el** and all the Gentile nations included. One of the key purposes of the work of **Messiah** is the removal of **sin** from **God's** people **(Dani'el 9:24-25)**. The

B'rit Chadashah is not proclaiming a new religion, but simply the fulfillment of this Messianic promise (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Dg – The Fulfillment of the Torah**).[68]

The enormity and breadth of our **forgiveness** is seen in **Paul's** statement that **this accords with the wealth of the grace that He lavished upon us (1:7d-8a).** The **grace** of **YHVH**, like **His** love, holiness, power, and all **His** other attributes – is boundless. It is far beyond our ability to comprehend or describe, yet, we know it is **according to the wealth** of that infinite **grace** that **He** produces **forgiveness**. This is a small picture of **God's** generosity. **His forgiveness** is not only given **according to the wealth of His grace,** but it is **lavished on us.** We should never worry that our **sin** will surpass **ADONAI's gracious forgiveness**. **Where sin increased, Paul** assures us, **grace increased all the more (Romans 5:20).** Our heavenly Father does not simply give us skimpy forgiveness that will barely cover our **sins** if we are careful not to overdo. We *cannot* **sin** beyond **God's grace**, because as wicked and extensive as our **sins** might be or become, **they** will never approach the greatness of **His grace**. **His** forgiveness is infinite, and **He lavishes it** without measure upon those who trust in **His Son**. We therefore not only can enjoy future glory with **God** but present fellowship with **Him** as well.[69]

In all His wisdom and insight (1:8b), he has made known to us the mystery (Greek: *musterion*) **of His will, which by His own will He designed beforehand in Himself (1:9).** The benefits and blessings of salvation would be unknown to us if **God** had not revealed them. **He** gives us the truth of **His** Word and grants us the enlightenment to understand it. This was part of **His** purpose and **plan**. In the Bible, **a mystery** means *something that was once hidden, but now is revealed*. In this case, **the plan** of **redemption** through the coming **Messiah**, previously predicted in the TaNaKh, is now fully realized in the coming of **Yeshua**.[70]

God's plan for our salvation was revealed over time, coming to light at just **the right time**. **And will put into effect when the time is ripe.** The essence of **God's plan** is to unite everything **in Messiah**, to bring every part of creation under the lordship of **Yeshua**. **His plan to bring everything together** (Greek: *anakephalaiosasthai*) **in heaven and on earth under the Messiah's headship (1:10). Paul** used a word for **to bring everything together** that was somewhat uncommon in the Greek language. It carries three ideas: (1) to restore something to its original purpose, (2) to unify, and (3) to put all things under their proper head and master. Nothing is catching the **God** of the universe by surprise. The entire

plan of God is putting everything in creation under the lordship of **Messiah**.

The TaNaKh was not far from **Rabbi Sha'ul's** mind as **he** (under the inspiration of **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh**) wrote **Ephesians**. **He** described how those who believe **in Messiah were given an inheritance (1:11a).** Literally, the verb he used can be translated *chosen by lot.* This paints the picture of **the tribes of Isra'el** being assigned **their lands by lot (Numbers 26:52-55).** In the Hebrew vocabulary, an inheritance was anything that was given and generally means *to take possession of.* **Sha'ul** emphasized that salvation came through divine initiative. The Jewish believers in **Ephesus** could claim a physical inheritance from **YHVH**, including **the Land** promised in the Torah **(Exodus 6:8** and **Deuteronomy 33:4)**. Messianic Judaism and many Christian denominations today affirm that **God** will still fulfill **the Land** promise to the Jewish people. Something unusual started when the Jewish people returned to the Land of their forefathers with the immigration of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For Messianic Jews, the physical rebirth of the State of **Isra'el** is not just about man made resolutions, but is a sign that **Ha'Shem** still intends to fulfill **His Word** in a literal way.

While the present-day controversy over the Jewish State, it should be noted that these land promises do not exclude the modern Arab cousins. There is plenty of land in the Middle East and certainly a way to accommodate the co-existence of both a Jewish state and an Arab Palestinian state if there is a proper recognition of both states. So, irrespective of the world politics, UN resolutions and anti-**Isra'el** sentiment, we know that **ADONAI** will fulfill **His** promises in **His** own way and timing. We look forward to the return of King **Messiah** to establish **His** peace plan!

As **Rabbi Sha'ul** speaks of **the inheritance**, it becomes clear that he is also speaking of an inheritance that is focused on spiritual promises. The promise of physical land is not given to Gentiles, but the greater spiritual reality of **redemption** and relationship with **YHVH** is. The mixed membership of the Messianic congregation in **Ephesu**s shared this common experience. The Gentile believer does not replace the Jewish believer, but is invited to share the same spiritual promises found in **Yeshua** and the Messianic **redemption** (see the commentary on **Jeremiah Eo – The Days are Coming, declares the LORD, When I Will Make a New Covenant with the People of Isra'el: The Church's Relationship to the B'rit Chadashah**).

We who were picked in advance (see **Ao – Chosen in Messiah: The plan of God was determined in advance**) **according to the purpose of the One who**

works (Greek: *energeo*, from which we get such English words as *energy*, *energetic*, and *energize*) **everything in keeping with the decision of His will . . . should bring Him praise commensurate with His glory (1:11b** and **12b). God's** creating and energizing are one in **His** divine mind. When **He** spoke each part of the world into existence, it immediately began to operate exactly as **He** had planned it to do. Unlike the things we make, **God's** creations do not have to be redesigned, prototyped, tested, fueled, charged, and the like. They are not only created ready to function, they are created to function.

Energizing is an indispensable part of **His** creative **plan** and **work**. Because in **His** wondrous **grace ADONAI** chose us to be **His** children, citizens of **His** Kingdom, and joint heirs with **His Son**, **He** will bring all of that to pass. **For I am confident of this very thing, Paul** declared, **that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Messiah Yeshua (Phil 1:6). God** works out what He plans. He energizes all believers with all the power necessary for their spiritual completion. It is not sufficient to think that **YHVH** only makes **His plan**. **He** also fulfills **His** plan, and brings it to completion.[72] **So that we who earlier had put our hope in the Messiah (1:12a).** In the Greek text, this passage is continuous, that last part of **verse 12** leading into the first part of **verse 13**. **Verse 12a** emphasizes that the Jewish believer is not joining a new Gentile religion. This is clear in **Sha'ul's** mind, because it is the Jewish believers who were the first fruits of the Messianic movement (see the commentary on **Acts Al – The Ruach ha'Kodesh Comes at Shavu'ot**). People may debate the details of **God's plan**, but **Paul** emphasizes that this is all by the divine purpose and **plan** of **God the Father**.[73]

Therefore, **Paul** continues, **in Him,** after **you who heard the message of the truth, the Good News offering you deliverance, you trusted (1:13a).** As **the apostle Paul** explains in **his** letter to the Romans: **Faith comes through hearing, and hearing by the word of Messiah (Romans 10:17). Faith** comes from a positive response to the message of the Gospel (see the commentary on **Galatians Aj – No Other Gospel**), **the Good News** that **ADONAI** has provided a way of salvation through the atoning work of **His Son Yeshua Messiah**. To **as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God, even to those who believe in His name (John 1:12).** Man-made systems of religion, which rely on ritual or works or both, not only don't lead to **God** but can become great barriers to finding **Him**. The only way to come is through **His Son**. **For with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with**

the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says: **Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed" (Romans 10:10-11). Faith** is man's response to **God's** elective purpose. **God's** choice of men is election; men's choice of **God** is **faith**. In election, **God** gives **His** promises, and by **faith** men and women receive them.[74]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You**, for **You** are Awesome Always! Praise **You** that in **Your** great wisdom and love, **Your plan** from **before creation**, was **a plan** to unite **Your** children **in Messiah.** In this way they not only are united in **His** death, but also in **His** glorious resurrection! **Or do you not know that all of us who were immersed into the Messiah were immersed into His death? Therefore we were buried together with Him through immersion into death – in order that just as Messiah was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become joined together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also will be joined together in His resurrection . . . Now if we have died with Messiah, we believe that we shall also live with Him (Rom 6:3-5, 8).***

***Messiah Yeshua** prayed the same idea about **the** glorious **plan** of unity when **He** prayed **His** High Priestly prayer: **I pray not on behalf of these only, but also for those who believe in Me through their message, that they all may be one. Just as You, Father, are in Me and I am in You, so also may they be one in Us, so the world may believe that You sent Me. The glory that You have given to Me I have given to them, that they may be one just as We are one – I in them and You in Me – that they may be perfected in unity (John 17:20-23a). Your** purpose has always been a wonderful relationship by uniting **Your** children with **You, in Messiah**. Thank **You** for **Your** gracious love and plan to unite all in your family **in Messiah**. In **Yeshua's** holy name and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*