

Salvation—Adoption (4th)

(Today we continue studying the doctrine of adoption unto salvation. This podcast continues to show more information that adoption does not originate at faith and that it is an eternal and immanent act of God before the foundation of the world. It also concludes with the lengthy quote from an article on the subject by Elder J. D. Shain.)

In the previous podcast we ended while quoting from an excellent article on the subject of adoption by Elder J. D. Shain. We stopped where he clearly showed that adoption was a legal act that only placed a child into a legal relationship and that adoption “does not convey a likeness of nature” to the person that adopted the child. Our concluding quote from Brother Shain was as follows:

From these facts, it must be clear to the reader that adoption constitutes only legal relationship and does not convey a likeness of nature. You could adopt a Negro child, but you could not make it white; you could adopt a Chinese child, but you could not put Anglo-Saxon life in its bloodstream.

At this point, he passed on “to consider the proceedings necessary to accomplish or complete” adoption unto salvation as taught in the Scriptures. In his transitional comments, he wrote:

... As before pointed out, there must be, first, the decision or purpose to adopt an heir; second, to select or choose the heir; third, to define and pledge estate to the heir; fourth, apply to a court of law to validate your acts and intentions on behalf of the heir by the decree of adoption. Fifth, we come now to the last and final steps in completing the process of adoption, and that is to gather all the heirs from every clime, country, tribe and nation and conduct them safely to that heavenly Home which they have inherited. ...

Before enlarging on this, Brother Shain describes what he calls “the incredible and incomprehensible obstacles and difficulties that must be removed or overcome before the heirs can be admitted to that home of eternal joys.” He proceeds to show the fallen and depraved condition of the adopted through the fall of Adam and how they are redeemed by the Person and work of Jesus Christ. Then he shows that the redemptive work is applied experimentally to them. He summarizes as follows:

These are the adopted heirs that will hear and live. So the Father and Son have each testified that the work of giving life, cleansing, sanctifying and calling must go forward to reach each and every heir by adoption, making them to be living, vital, quickened heirs, by being born again into the family of God. Then they will know that God has ever been their Father by adoption; and that He is now their Father by the new birth, wherein they have received His Spirit and been made partakers of His divine nature, whereby they cry ABBA FATHER.

In closing, allow me to exercise your patience more by quoting at length from the last part of the article. He wrote as follows:

Now please turn to Galatians 4:1-6. There Paul reminds us that a child, though an heir, does not possess his inheritance, but is under governors and tutors until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children (children by adoption) were in bondage under the elements of the world: Here Paul likens our state as adopted sons as being unregenerate and still under bondage of sin in nature, to the underage child that is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. So, just as the natural father appointed a time to liberate his heir from the limitations of childhood, the Father of heavenly adoption has appointed a day when He will release His adopted children from the rudiments of the world by regeneration, the New Birth, or being quickened and made a new creature in Christ. To argue that adoption comes in or with the new birth is to press a point that has no example in human or divine affairs. What good could accrue to one by adoption that is already a child or heir by birth? Where is there a law, human or divine, that provides for a parent to adopt his own child? There is none. Now to answer the last, and I think the final question on this point, we will consider the 5th verse in this chapter, which reads—"To redeem them that were under law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." With a casual reading of this passage, one might be inclined to understand that this is the point where the sons were adopted. But a careful look will convince us that this could not be the case. The verse does not read, "That we might be adopted as sons," but that "we might receive the adoption of sons." Adopted is a verb, which expresses action, state or being. Adoption is a noun, and is the name of a thing or an object. And here they received a thing, and that thing was adoption. So adoption existed before this point, even before the world was. And so the 6th verse reads—"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." So because ye are sons by adoption, God sends the Spirit of Jesus Christ into your hearts, making you vital, living, born-again sons. And now you are not only sons by adoption, but you are sons by birth and brought into vital relationship with God. And now you gladly, humbly and joyfully call Him, "OUR FATHER." So as the adopting father, who adopts an heir that abides in a place distant from where he intends the heir to live, sends a son or servant to see that the new heir reaches his home in safety; even so, God the Father sends His only Son from the heavenly world into this sin-blighted and ruined world to gather His adopted children from all walks and conditions of life, from nations and climes. First He redeems them, then He quickens them into eternal life, changing their wicked and hateful hearts into hearts that love Him and cry out for Him; turning their ways from the downward path of destruction to start on their journey home. Can you not in your imagery see them as they start on this heavenly journey, some as mere children from the playground, some from the dark alleys of hopeless despair, some from the grog-shops and houses of infamy and shame, some from the leper colony, some from the prison-house? Yes, I can even see a poor blind man groping in physical darkness, but lighted inside with a torch of light that will never be extinguished. He is on his way home calling out, "O, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me!" The cripple at the gate, the daughter of Abraham who is bound in fetters by Satan is released from her fetters and joins the chorus of heavenly praise. Yes, I can see the proud Pharisee bow his arrogant and defiant head to this Lord of Lords and say in humble and plaintive tones—"Lord, who art thou," and "What wilt thou have me do?" We could go on and on in our imagery until this apparent trickle of human misery at the beginning swells into a countless throng, pressing onward and upward in their journey home. And the beauty of this is, not a one will fall by the wayside and be left to perish. Every adopted son must appear in the Holy City of the

New Jerusalem; because He who started them on this journey will never quit their side. And so, we now come to the last text to be considered in this article.

In Romans 8:23 we read these heavenly words—“Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” If we should contend that we are adopted in regeneration, we would also have to, by the same rule, contend that we are adopted in the resurrection of our bodies. But as in Galatians, the noun form is used as it is in Romans. In this text Paul points out the glorious end of adoption, which is the resurrection and glorification of our bodies. Then shall we appear before Him, holy and without blame before Him in love. Here, the Lord that has brought His adopted brethren from the deepest depths of degradation, shame, and ruin will present them to the Father in spotless purity, clothed in celestial apparel of fine needlework and wrought gold, which is His perfect righteousness. And here they will out-shine all suns and be sublimely fitted for the royal society of the Courts of their King. Thus in the jubilation of eternal victory of their Lord and King over death, the grave, and the awful plague of sin, they will join that song of triumph—“Thou was slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.”

So adoption, like election and predestination in the primary sense was before time began. While election, predestination and adoption did not affect the heirs when the Lord acted in these matters, these acts did PROVIDE for the heirs in the ages to come when they would receive the things provided. The things provided and described as “All spiritual Blessings in heavenly places,” and are particularly mentioned as redemption, reconciliation, justification and the new birth or regeneration, sanctification, faith, repentance, love, hope, peace, joy, preservation, resurrection and finally, glorification. All these things are made sure and secure in the covenant of mercy.

In the first chapter of Ephesians Paul defines the eternal phase of adoption. In the fourth chapter of Galatians he defines the time phase when we as the heirs begin to experience the glorious riches of it. When the Spirit of adoption comes to us, we begin to know and feel that the Lord hath provided sweet and precious things for us here, and hereafter. In the eighth chapter of Romans, Paul points out the final and last phase of adoption. If possible, this is the sweetest of all. At the last great day, our poor weak, worn-out and worm-eaten bodies at His command will arise, bone to bone, limb to limb, and in flawless perfection and eternal beauty will do honor and praise to Him who through love unbounded, suffering, tears and death has brought us safely Home.

We preach much about election and predestination, and we rarely mention adoption; yet we preach adoption every time we preach election and predestination. Many people object to election and predestination when preached, but never raise an eyebrow when we preach adoption. And yet, we cannot preach the truth of adoption without preaching election and predestination. So brethren, speak more about the truth of adoption and you will have God’s children rejoicing in all of them.

As glorious as the thought is, our time is exhausted for today. May this glorious truth be sanctified to your heart and soul. Farewell.