

## CONFESSION OF FAITH.

### CHAPTER 8.-Of Christ the Mediatour.

VI. Although the work of Redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after his Incarnation, yet the vertue, efficacy, and benefits thereof were communicated unto the Elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in, and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein he was revealed, and signified to be the seed of the woman which should bruise the serpents head; and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world: being yesterday, and to day the same, and for ever.<sup>1</sup>

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Question 1.—*Was the work of redemption actually wrought by Christ before or after His incarnation?*

*Answer.*—The work of redemption, being a work accomplished within the bounds of the created order, was *actually* wrought after the incarnation, 1 Pet. 2:24. The work of redemption consisting of Christ's active and passive obedience, Rom. 5:16-19; Phil. 2:8; Acts 3:18; Rom. 5:21, could only be accomplished after the eternal Son of God assumed the human nature and became incarnate, Gal. 4:4, 5. Thus, the Scriptures are clear that Christ finished the redemptive work prior to his ascension, John 19:30.

Question 2.—*Were the virtue, efficacy and benefits of Christ's redemption communicated unto the elect in all ages successively from the beginning of the world?*

*Answer.*—Yes. The same gracious promises of spiritual grace and eternal blessedness were administered then as now. *Compare* Gen. 17:7 *with* Matt. 22:32; and Gen. 22:18 *with* Gal. 3:16. Christ was "a propitiation for the sins that are past," Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:15. Faith was the condition of salvation under the old dispensation in the same sense it is now, Heb. 4:2; Ps. 2:12. These promises and faith rest upon the same three things:

The virtue, or righteousness, of Christ's redemption, is that needful communication whereby sinful men are made righteous before God, 2 Cor. 5:19. It consists in the righteousness of God which, by his obedience, makes many righteous, Rom. 5:19. This righteousness of God, so far from being limited only to those who believe after his atonement, belongs to all that comprise the church of God, Acts 20:28. This church is comprised of all the elect from the beginning of the world, Heb. 11:4; 12:24; Matt. 23:35; Acts 7:38.

The efficacy, or ability to produce the intended results, of Christ's redemption, is that actual communication or conveyance of that righteousness therein contained, 2 Pet. 1:1. Christ, being the eternal Son of God, is both willing and able to convey, or communicate the intended results, Zeph. 3:17; Isa. 63:1. This efficacy is the product of the persons working, both the Son and the Spirit, Jude 24, 25; Zech. 4:6.

The benefits, or actual results, of receiving that righteousness wrought by Christ, in his redemption, are both our justification, Rom. 4:25; our sanctification, 1 Cor. 1:30; and the promise of life everlasting, Rom. 5:21; 6:4, 5. These benefits are the very same ones received by the elect of God in every age since the beginning, Gal. 3:16, 29. Thus,

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<sup>1</sup> Gal. 4:4, 5; Gen. 3:15; Rev. 13:8; Heb. 13:8.

Gentiles, under the New Testament, are not said to form a new body but to belong to the same body as the Jews, Eph. 3:6.

Question 3.—*How was Christ's redemption made effectual for the elect in all ages?*

*Answer.*—The virtue, efficacy and benefits of Christ's redemption were communicated in and by those promises, types and sacrifices wherein he was revealed, 1 Pet. 1:19, 20. He was promised to Adam and to Abraham as the Savior of the world, Gen. 3:15; 17:7; 22:18. He was symbolically exhibited and typically prophesied by all the ceremonial and especially by the sacrificial system of the temple, Col. 2:17; Heb. 10:1-10. He was especially witnessed to as the Savior from sin by all the prophets, Acts 10:43. Abraham rejoiced to see his day, and was justified by faith in him, John 8:56; Rom. 4:3, 4.

Question 4.—*Did these promises, types and sacrifices reveal and signify that Christ was to be the seed of the woman which should bruise the serpents head; and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world?*

*Answer.*—Yes. Initially, there was given the promise of the seed of the woman, Gen. 3:15. The various promises, types and sacrifices of the Old Testament had reference to Christ and his coming in the flesh, Col. 2:16, 17. The Covenant administered has from the beginning remained in all essential respects the same, in spite of all outward changes in its mode and administration, Acts 13:32, 33; 15:10, 11. Christ was the Savior of men before his advent, and he saved them on the same principles then as now, Acts 26:6. He was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," Rev. 13:8. In and through Jesus Christ, this promise concerning the seed of the woman, is carried out by his body, the church, Mal. 4:3; Rom. 16:20.

Question 5.—*Is the redemption wrought by Christ more efficacious now than prior to the incarnation?*

*Answer.*—No. Although the mystery of his death for redemption was kept secret from the beginning of the world, it is the same mystery revealed in Christ's coming and dying, Rom. 16:25, 26. This mystery, which depends upon the eternal election of God, Eph. 1:4; represents the same purpose both before and after the incarnation, Eph. 3:9-11. His death is not more efficacious now, nor will be to eternity, than it was before; for he is the same in point of virtue *yesterday*, in the ages past, as he is *today*, at present, and will be in the *ages to come*, Heb. 13:8. Although his death was effected and wrought in his perfect humanity, Eph. 2:15, 16; its virtue, efficacy and benefits are to be attributed to the person, or agent, who performed this work, and not simply to the nature utilized in working this work, Col. 1:13-22. The person, being the eternal Son of God incarnate, John 1:14; the work, whether from eternity or in time, on behalf of his elect people, is the work of the eternal person of the Son and not subject to variableness or shadows of turning, Jas. 1:17.