

## The Theology of Isaiah #5: God as Savior and Redeemer

In the last lesson we saw how Isaiah reveals God as King (of all creation, but more specifically of his redeemed people), and as the righteous Judge. As King he requires complete submission and obedience from his creation. Because mankind has been corrupted by sin, that sin must be judged. He has often brought temporal judgments on men and nations, but the ultimate judgment is yet to come, which no man can escape. And yet because he is also a God of mercy, and because he has chosen to himself a people for his name, he has made a way that will satisfy both his justice and his mercy. Toward his chosen, he is a Savior and Redeemer, through Christ. Toward the rest, he will be a completely fair Judge, bringing them to condemnation for their sins.

Just as the two roles of King and Judge are related, so also his roles as Savior and Redeemer. In fact there are verses where it says our Savior and our Redeemer.

49:25-26 – "... for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children ... and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob."

60:16 - "... and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

He needed to redeem us (from sin) in order to save us. Redemption is inseparable from salvation

### Savior (KJV spells it Saviour)

God is described as a Savior of his people in a physical and national sense – he delivered them from their enemies, either directly (we would say miraculously), or indirectly, through judges and kings. He delivered the nation from Egypt, saving them from the bondage of slavery. And he will come down to save them in the last day (Zech. 14). But he is also a Savior in the spiritual sense of saving his chosen people from sins.

The Bible describes how God casts our sins into the depths of the sea (Mic. 7:19), that he will remember our sins no more (Jer. 31:34 and Heb. 8:12), and that he will remove our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12). Isaiah makes similar statements, showing that he is our Savior from sin:

1:18 – "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

38:17 – "Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back."

43:25 – "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

In Isaiah, God specifically and repeatedly calls himself Israel's Savior.

43:3 - "For I am the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour ..."

45:15 - "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour."

45:17 - "But Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." (Rom. 9:6 – "... For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.")

46:13 - "I will bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory."

63:8 – "For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour."

What is a savior, but one who rescues someone else from imminent danger? In a physical sense it could be a rescue from drowning, choking, heart attack or stroke, accident, etc. I believe that God does save us from many of those things, sometimes without our even being aware of it. Ps. 91 gives many promises of earthly protections, and we hold to them joyfully in faith. But God our Savior is especially concerned with the spiritual danger in which we find ourselves. In fact it is not just danger, but death! As unbelievers we lived in a state of condemnation already, and spiritual death (Jn. 3:18, 36). We needed a new birth (Jn. 3:3, 5) and the impartation of life by the Holy Spirit, the gift of faith and repentance, and a washing from sins by the blood of Christ.

Mankind in general is blinded by this world and its distractions to our true state as spiritually dead, rank and corrupt sinners who are enemies of a holy God. Unless a person can come to see their true state, they see no need of a Savior, but merely a helper, an encourager, perhaps a "divine psychologist" who will help them develop a better self-worth and help them to improve themselves. Their religious goal is not holiness but happiness. If you

think you just need to improve a few things, you see no need of a Savior. What you really need is to have a sense of desperation, seeing yourself as hopelessly lost, filthy in sin and moral corruption, a devastating awareness that drives you to your knees in repentance, and to receive Christ as Savior and LORD.

## Redeemer

God calls himself the Redeemer 13 times in Isaiah. To redeem is to buy back, to pay a debt, to deliver someone from servitude or bondage.

Why do we need a redeemer? Because we are sold under sin. Our souls are not free, but in bondage to sin, and before regeneration we are already living in a state of condemnation (Jn. 3:18) and have nothing to look forward to at death but God's eternal fiery judgment. THAT is why we need a Redeemer!

50:1 – "...Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away." Yet even in our state of misery and slavery to sin, we do not repent or come to God, The next verse says "Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I no power to deliver? ..."

52:3 – "For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money."

But we have the great joy to know that according to his pleasure and good will alone, he has provided Christ as the Redeemer of the souls of his elect. Isaiah's references to God as our Redeemer may at times be looking back to Israel's deliverance from Egypt, but they are especially predicting the (then future) Messianic Redeemer who "was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: and with his stripes [*wounds*] we are healed." (53:5).

41:14 – "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel: I will help thee, saith the LORD, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel."

43:1 - "But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine."

44:22-24 - "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee, Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel. Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; ..."

45:21-22 - "Remember these O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee."

47:4 - "As for our redeemer, the LORD of hosts is his name, the Holy One of Israel."

63:9 – "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."

So we have seen that God is the Almighty, our Savior, and our Redeemer. Here it is, all in one verse.

49:26 – "... and all flesh shall know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob."

God is the one who saves and redeems us, at his own initiative and for his own purpose. No one can save or redeem themselves. It is the work of the whole triune Godhead – the Father who chooses us and gives us to the Son, the Son who redeems us by his death, and the Holy Spirit who regenerates us.

**So how should we respond?** Accept who we are and our utter hopelessness without Christ, repent and believe on him in complete surrender and become a son of God, saved and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Jn. 6:29 – "... This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

Ac. 17:30 – "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

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