

The Kinsman-Redeemer

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And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

- Revelation 5:9-10

(Author's Note: There are many Scripture citations in this study. Quoting them would have required too much space. I am relying upon the reader to look them up and read them carefully. Use the King James Version.)

Introduction

In the Scriptures there is a forgotten ministry which was a central figure in the government of Israel. So important was this ministry that the very mission of our Lord was defined in terms of it. I speak of the *ga`al* (*go`el*) or, as known to us, the *kinsman-redeemer*.

The doctrine of redemption, of course, is the central message of the Gospel. That Jesus Christ is our "redeemer" is plainly taught in the Scriptures and universally acknowledged by spokesmen of the faith:

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ . . .
In whom we have redemption through his blood, the
forgiveness of sins . . .*

- Ephesians 1:3 & 7

By becoming our Redeemer, Jesus became our Savior. What then does the term "redemption" mean? And why is it necessary to salvation? Let me begin with an illustration.

If you are a grocery shopper, you know what it means to "redeem" a coupon. The grocery store issues coupons in advertisements. This is a common practice. Housewives read the advertisements and discover these coupons enclosed that offer free or discounted items if they present the coupon to the merchant during purchase. The merchant at that

time "redeems" the coupon - that is, he "buys it back" by exchanging it for the product promised on the label.

This is redemption. "Redemption" is a term which describes a pecuniary transaction (although not necessarily an equal exchange). Theologians tell us that the Biblical doctrine of redemption pretty much means the same thing: "to buy something back that once belonged to you." In the case of the grocer, he buys back a coupon that he paid a printer to make. The coupon may bear the image of the product he wants to sell. He doesn't really need the coupon. But he needs the customer's business. He wants her to buy that product so that he can make a profit and stay in business. Redemption becomes a means to this end for the advertiser.

Man was made in the image of God. He is God's property. Remember the story about Jesus and Caesar's coin? Remember when the Pharisees asked Him about government taxes and whether they should be paid or not? You can find it in Matthew 22:20 and Luke 20:24. In this story how did Jesus determine that the coin was Caesar's property? He did it by identifying the image on the coin. Caesar wanted some of his coins back as payment for the privilege the taxpayer had in circulating them in his monetary exchanges.

We bear the image of God. We are God's property. Satan wants to deface that image so that God will not want it back or so that it cannot be recognizable as God's property. His attempts do not work. Our identity runs too deep. God wants us back.

God may want us back, but He doesn't really need us. Personally, there is nothing we can offer Him that He needs. He has no dependency on His creation.

However, He does have a plan. He is a creator. Creating is something He takes great pleasure in doing. He still creates; for scientists tell us we have a growing universe. This very day, God is creating stars and planets, and maybe even people in far off galaxies.

God created us for a purpose: to learn how to govern the terrestrial universe in His stead (Psalm 8). He created us to be the managers of creation. He wants us back on the job.

Now, we really don't belong to the devil, but he has acquired some legal claims over us. We think that Satan's mission was to be God's rod of discipline. If we got out of line, it was in his power to punish us. But it was Satan who got out-of-line. He was insulted that God would use such a pathetic creature as man for dominion. He wanted man out of the way. So he tempted man with sin that he might have justification to destroy him (see the chapter "Devils, Dragons, & Diadems" in the book [Biblical Midwifery](#)). In legal parlance that is called "entrapment."

When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden, Satan could say, "Look! See God? I told you they were useless as rulers over creation. They cannot even rule themselves. You gave them one little law and they couldn't keep it. You must give me your leave to

destroy them. That is what your law requires. They are unworthy. They no longer bear the image of your righteousness" (Job 1).

And so, that is the claim of public justice. God said they would die on the day that they ate of the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3). And Satan as the great cosmic law enforcement officer demanded the sentence be carried out.

Yet God knew Satan's duplicity. He was not to be manipulated. He had a greater plan.

That plan was the Atonement: the sacrificing of a worthy substitute. With that substitute, He would nullify the claims of public justice and reclaim His property: fallen man.

And that is redemption.

Why was the Redeemer the Kinsman?

Redemption cannot be understood properly without an understanding of Old Testament law. Ironically, traditional Christians usually reject the ethical system in the Old Testament where this doctrine is found. It should not surprise us that their antinomianism has tainted their understanding of redemption, as well. The old law teaches how redemption works. However, for most Christians, "redemption" is one of the many pious terms which rolls off their tongues in a mantra of "church speak," but which few of them understand.

Redemption required the kinsman. Redemption could not be made by just anyone. Only certain people had the legal right to be someone's redeemer, and that was the next of kin (Leviticus 25:25, 48-49).

Let's return to our analogy of the grocery store coupon again. Let us suppose that a coupon issued by Piggly Wiggly is being used by a customer to buy a product at Safeway. Is the Safeway owner legally required to honor it? No, of course not. The promise on the coupon was made by Piggly Wiggly, not by Safeway. However, the store manager may have authority to honor it anyway. Some grocery stores do. But that is their prerogative. They are not obligated to honor someone else's coupon.

The uses of coupons often have other restrictions. They may have quantity limitations or dates of expiration. They may be limited to particular brands of a product. Perhaps you want to use a coupon to buy toilet paper. You want to use it to buy the generic brand, but the coupon says it's good for Charmin. The merchant is unlikely to let you use the coupon for the generic brand. He wants you to buy the Charmin.

What this analogy teaches us is that redemption has conditions which must be fulfilled before it can be put into effect. In the case of the redemption of mankind, it requires a man worthy enough to be the redeemer. This explains the Incarnation. This is why the

Son of God had to become a man. He had to become our kinsman according to the flesh so that He would have legal standing to buy us back (Hebrews 2:14-17).

This point is important. In economic exchanges the seller retains sovereignty over his property if it is not for sale. Just because I offer to buy your house, it does not mean you are required to sell it to me. Likewise in the Torah, if a man offered to buy a slave from his master and he was not the slave's relative, the offer could be rejected. But if the offer was made by the next-of-kin, the master had no other option but to agree to the transaction. When Jesus Christ offered His blood as ransom to Satan for the world, it was a transaction Satan was compelled to accept. Had Jesus not become a man, had He not been our kinsman according to the flesh, Satan would have retained sovereignty over the transaction for the souls of men. He could have rejected God's offer. But because of the Incarnation, because we have a kinsman to redeem us, Satan has lost all legal claims.

Of course, the slave must ask to be redeemed. This is what Old Testament law teaches us in the book of Ruth. Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer, could not force it upon her. Ruth had to initiate the process. She had to make a legal claim to the right of redemption. So it is in the case of our eternal salvation. We must "plead the blood of Jesus;" we each must make our legal claim to a redeemer. Only then do Satan's claims come to naught. And this is why the proclamation of the Gospel is so important. Satan's hostages must be told that they have a redeemer. Left to their ignorance, they cannot attain their freedom.

(It is true that some people prefer Satan as their master. They love their sins and do not want a redeemer.)

The doctrine of redemption is an eternal principle written into our beings. It is a part of our design and the requirements of public justice. It is an immutable principle in God's moral government.[1]

While Jesus may be our kinsman-redeemer in terms of our eternal salvation, it does not stop there. This principle still operates in our earthly life, as well. Why do you suppose prospective borrowers are required to give the name and contact information of their nearest relative to the creditor? It is because the creditor wants accountability. He wants to know of someone who might come to your rescue and pay the note on your behalf should you falter.

Sometimes, especially if you do not have a credit history, the lender wants a co-signer on the note. The co-signer becomes the "kinsman-redeemer" should the borrower fail to repay the loan. By signing the note, a redeemer relationship is created.

The Redeemer in the Government of Israel

Thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
- from the Lord's Prayer

Because the theology of the Church is so infected with Gnostic doctrine, it often "spiritualizes" this text and fails to realize that the kinsman-redeemer is an office for the government of mankind upon Earth, just as it is in Heaven. Gnosticism teaches that our time on Earth is of no account. It is merely a springboard from which to escape. The issues of this life are unimportant to eternity and the flesh is an impediment to the spirit within us.

The Jamesian tradition of the Jerusalem Church taught differently. It taught that "faith without works is dead" (James 2:3). Eternal life does not begin in Heaven; it begins when we are born again. Our life in the flesh is meant to be a manifestation of the glory of God, not a prison (although our pain and suffering make us long for a better tabernacle to dwell in). It should matter to us how the saints of God have governed themselves in the past; for indeed, they will govern again in the future (see our opening text in Revelation 5:9-10).

The government of Israel, prior to the time of Moses, was that of family elders. We see them mentioned in the book of Exodus as already a governmental structure which existed prior to the one established by Moses (Exodus 3:16, 18; 4:29; 12:21, etc.). Synonymous terms to describe these elders might be "patriarchs," "chieftains," "sheiks," "lords," "magistrates," "masters," and so on. After Moses, of course, we had judges, prophets, priests and kings. But prior to Moses, and continuing throughout the history of ancient Israel, these family elders continued to exist in a familial succession.

These men served as the most basic governmental unit of Israel. These men were not the leaders of tiny nuclear families. In fact, the nuclear family finds no nomenclature in the Hebrew language. Circle and underline that statement. The word for family is *mishpachah* and always refers to a clan or tribal group. A careful study of Israelite census reports in the book of Numbers reveals that the average Israelite "family" had 27 sons - born of one father (compare the census of Numbers 1:46 with the number of firstborn sons given in Numbers 3:40-43 and do your arithmetic). Abraham could field a fighting force of over 300 men, from servants and concubines born in his own house (Genesis 14:14). Consequently, a "family" in Israel constituted perhaps as many as a thousand people sharing a common ancestor (probably a great-grandfather), or as few as a hundred, but certainly far more than our modern concept of the family. This was the most basic governmental and social unit in the Hebrew republic.

It should be noted that almost every culture in every part of the world and in every time period has had similar tribal governments. Whether the Amerindian cultures of North and South America, or the Celtic and Nordic cultures of Europe, or the aboriginal cultures of sub-Sahara Africa or Asia, we find the same pattern. Even to this day, cultures

untouched by our civilization practice this way of life. It seems to be a social structure organically connected to our biology.

The concept of the state and empire is a more recent development in societal evolution. (Or should we say, "devolution"). States are rarely formed voluntarily. They come from outside a culture, when another culture conquers them militarily, yet does not want to assimilate them. A new level of government of an imperial nature is superimposed over the existing tribal government to provide control on behalf of the conquering tribe, army, or nation. This is the state. Empires, or super-states called "nations," are additional layers of imperial government that are added to preexisting layers of provincial government which have occurred from previous conquests. Although buttressed with euphemistic terms, such as colonialism, federalism, liberationism, patriotism, and so on - it is really a structure designed to enforce slavery.

For example, the ancient Celtic cultures of pre-Saxon Britain were tribal. When the Anglo-Saxons invaded, they dispossessed the Celtic Britons of lower England and used them as slaves. The Celts lost their tribal and family identities and became chattel to the Saxons.

At that time, the Anglo-Saxons were tribal, also. So there was assimilation which gradually occurred during the early centuries of the Middle Ages. However, when England was invaded by the Normans in 1066, they imposed yet another layer of government over that of the Saxons. And it was not tribal, but imperial. There was little mingling or assimilation. The Normans became an aristocracy, isolated from the people they ruled (see the movie *Rob Roy* for a depressing depiction of how this aristocracy worked in relation to the Celts of Scotland).

It is the unhappy story of mankind, repeated over and over again. Like the small fish being eaten by a large fish, which is, in turn, eaten by an even larger fish, the conquerors of the world have been themselves the conquests of new and greater conquerors.

If we want a society which is not founded on conquest, but rather upon the consent of the governed, we must return to this primeval and organic pattern of social organization. I might add that the American system of government, while ostensibly based upon the consent of the governed, is really a system of consensual slavery, because once the governing institutions are empowered, they became uncontrollable by the organic unit of government (see *Political Polytheism* by Gary North, Institute for Christian Economics, 1989). Only the very rich and powerful can use these institutions to their advantage. Individuals can to some extent when they represent voting blocks, but that is only because they belong to special interest groups. Never are people, organized as families as I have described above, represented and defended by any of these other levels of government. Indeed, large family groups are viewed with suspicion as potential rivals of the state - and the church, the handmaiden of the state, is quick to label such groups as "cults" to justify state persecution.

Returning to our discussion of the kinsman-redeemer, you must remember that prior to Moses, these patriarchs or family elders were a spiritual and sacerdotal ministry, as well. The Levites and the Aaronic priesthood did not exist then. Indeed, the rite of circumcision, which you might recall was replaced by baptism in the New Testament (Colossians 2:11-12), was administered by the clan chieftain. Sacrifice, prayer, and spiritual instruction found their source in this family leader. Perhaps he delegated some of his tasks, but in any case, he was the spiritual overseer of the clan.

It was all-encompassing. Ritual, liturgy, education, vocational instruction, health care, courtship and marriage, business planning, military training and battle, social entertainment, conflict resolution and matters of justice, as well as the usual needs of sustenance were all under his purview. It sounds frightening to the Westerner who is accustomed to different institutions which control him, but it is really a better system. In the West, the individual is just a number and a file in someone's computer, whether it is at a university, a charity, or a court docket. In the name of a pretended efficiency, the West has created a very cold, abstract, and sometimes inhumane system of social philosophy. And this appeals to some people, who don't want to be personally involved with the important matters of a community. They are the kind of people who don't want to confront problems. They want friends and buddies to play with, but they don't want the responsibility and burdens that go along with it. When times are tough, they want to take their chances with government and similar public institutions when their friends need help, rather than to get personally involved.

In the East, where tribal ties still linger, there is a face to the person to whom you are accountable. And that person knows who you are. In this system there is loyalty. To the Westerner, the concerns of tribal groups seem trivial and complicated, impeding progress. The Westerner is impatient with this system and it often leads to war. At the moment, the West is trying to bomb Muslim radicals into oblivion. Failure is probable, of course, because the family and tribal ties between these groups are inextricably and organically tied to even larger family and tribal groups. It is like World War I all over again, when the attack upon one nation was an attack upon an alliance which brought more countries into the war.

We are doing all of this with determined zeal, not, as some say, to punish terrorists, but because the West wants an oil pipeline through Afghanistan and we have grown weary of that country's decentralized government (see <http://www.paranoid.com>). If that is true, it would be nothing new. Our own Constitution was repeatedly attacked during the 20th Century for its "inefficiency" by large business interests.

There are five situations identified in the Torah when the *ga'al* would be called upon to make redemption: **First**, he was a *redeemer of a brother's liberty* (Exodus 15:13; 21:30; Leviticus 25:35-55; Deuteronomy 7:8; 13:5). If the redeemer's kinsman was enslaved or taken hostage because of debt, war, crime, and so on, the Ga'al liberated him by satisfying the claims of the custodial party. This also included issues pertaining to divorce, because concubines were classified under the category of maidservants and

under certain circumstances, they could be redeemed (Exodus 21:8; Leviticus 19:20; Deuteronomy 15:17). [2]

Second, he was a *redeemer of the widow* (Deuteronomy 25:5-10; Exodus 22:22; Ruth 4). We see this prominently in Ruth. This pertained to the law of the levirate (pronounced *lever - it*) identified in Deuteronomy. Here, the kinsman-redeemer would marry the widow to raise up an heir to the deceased. It is a strange custom to Westerners (Is it because we are unbiblical in our world view?), but it was also designed as a safety net.

Presumably, the heir would preserve the family estate that would provide for the widow in her old age. The widow's brother-in-law likely would have been married already. In which case, she would have been forced to share in his estate, rather than that of her deceased husband. (It might be worthwhile to note that women lawfully divorced can be classified in the same category with the widows, as it constitutes a covenantal death).

Third, he was a *redeemer for the land* (Leviticus 25:24-34; Ruth 4). If family estates were alienated - that is sold to strangers - the kinsman-redeemer had the right to buy them back. Unlike the Western practice of treating land like a commodity, the land of Israel had to be restored to the clan every 50 years at the Jubilee. But if the kinsman-redeemer had the resources to buy back the land, he could do so at anytime. This was a forced sale. The kinsman-redeemer had the right to make redemption.

Fourth, he was a *redeemer of blood* (Numbers 35:12-27; Deuteronomy 19:6-12; Joshua 20:3-9). In our Bibles it is translated as "Avenger of Blood" . Although shocking to modern sensibilities, Biblical law provided a right to the kinsman-redeemer to kill the person responsible for the wrongful death of a relative. This was not limited to murder, but to involuntary manslaughter, as well. There were "Cities of Refuge" to which the guilty could flee and be safe. But they had to stay in them until the death of the High Priest. Then, they were free to go. While this custom seems strange, it does provide precedent for several modern practices.

For instance, since Israel did not have prisons as a part of its penology, the City of Refuge was like a place of banishment, or a prison comparable to a house arrest. Consider also, that our modern laws require some kind of punishment for involuntary manslaughter, whether it is imprisonment or compensation to the family.

Do not forget that the size of these ancient families was between a hundred and a thousand. They were equivalent to many modern municipalities. Thus, the job of the kinsman-redeemer in this task was comparable to the city prosecutor or city constable. He was required to apprehend the guilty party and bring him to justice.

Why was blood revenge permitted? Well, let's look a little closer. Deuteronomy 19:6 tells us that the unintentional killer would be pursued by the avenger of blood "while his heart is hot". The Scriptures are here recognizing a fact of law enforcement: those who enforce the law are capable of blind rage which can lead to the abuse of their power. The Cities of Refuge served as a safety zone to protect people from the excesses of the police.

On the other hand, a killer who failed to flee to the Cities of Refuge - which were scattered throughout Israel and easily accessible - did so for one of two reasons: either he was picking a fight or he was guilty of malice. In either case it represented blood lust on the part of the guilty. Jesus said there is such a thing as murder in the heart. In other words, if you persist in hating someone, you may passively allow him to die in an accident even though you are not directly the cause of it. God allows these things to happen to judge our evil hearts. While blood feuds are contrary to the Golden Rule, the law of the Avenger permitted hatreds to be brought out into the open and dealt with.

Every death had to be accounted for and absolved in Israel (Deuteronomy 21:3-6). Without the Avenger of Blood, a society risks sinking into murder and mayhem because there is no officer to demand accountability for the loss of human life.

Finally, **fifth**, the ga'al was a *redeemer of the oath* (Leviticus 27). The breaking of vows was a serious offense in Biblical law (Deuteronomy 23:21-23). Sometimes, rash vows were made and were not kept. This led to legal and spiritual problems for the person who made the vow. Perhaps, a person made a pledge to God or the temple, or made some other kind of promise. In any case, failure to fulfill the promise was considered a sin and indebted the promissory to God or to whomever the promise was made. If it was made to a person, it created a contract which could result in a claim of tort. If it was made to God and left unfulfilled, it might result in disease or other calamities indicative of Divine displeasure.

The kinsman-redeemer had the right to take the oath upon himself and fulfill it. [3]

In all of these cases above, the kinsman-redeemer was the relative who came to your rescue. He was your savior, your deliverer.

Who was the kinsman-redeemer?

The family elder had a deacon, an assistant. He was generally the **firstborn son**. He was his father's right-hand man and successor. (I have written at length on the role of the firstborn in a Biblical society and the reader is encouraged to obtain those studies. It is not my intention to repeat those studies here. [4])

It is enough to say for the benefit of those unfamiliar with them, that the firstborn as a class performed all of the functions in Israel that were later done by the Levites. The tribe of Levi was appointed to replace the firstborn of Israel (Numbers 3:45) as deacons to the Aaronic priesthood (3:9) and to serve all Israel in the cities as teachers, counselors, and the professional class in general (35:2-8). Since the cities were cosmopolitan, they served as missionaries to visiting foreigners, as well. A complete study of the Levitical office can be found in R.J. Rushdoony's *Tithing & Dominion*. That study not only demonstrates the abiding need of the Levitical ministry in the Church and society, it also explains why the tithe was integral to it.

Remember that the Levites were chosen because of the moral failure of the Israelites in the Golden Calf incident (Exodus 32:26-29). Their ministry was meant to be remedial and restorative. I argue that the Levitical ministry has passed away, as has the priesthood, and that it has been returned to the family and the firstborn as before. This view differs from the prevailing opinion that the clergy have succeeded the Levites. As I will show that is not the case.

However, many of the functions of the firstborn were retained and never given to the Levites in the first place. Among them was the role of the kinsman-redeemer which remained a familial office.

While a man's firstborn son was usually his father's deacon and the leader of his brethren, this was not always the case. There was a succession of this office and it could be passed on to other members of an extended family group. In the case of Ruth, for example, there were no longer any brothers. They were all dead. The responsibility fell to Boaz after an even closer relative declined the option. But they were still related by blood.

With this perspective in mind, I want to draw from our understanding of Jesus as our kinsman-redeemer and show how it is applied in the life of the Christian and the Church.

The Procession of Redemption

Failing to see how the principle of redemption operates in human history, traditional theologians want to make the kinsman-redeemer an ancient novelty attached to the ceremonial laws of the Old Testament which are done away in Christ. They see no abiding validity to it as a part of human government.

This spiritualizing is unsupportable from the texts which plainly state Christ's mission to the world. Jesus had a Divine office and a human office. In His Divine office, He was our Redeemer and Savior from sin and the author of eternal life. In His human office, He was the Davidic Messiah who promised a millennial reign of peace and blessing for mankind upon Earth.

Consider the words of Zachariah who was the father of John the Baptist and who spoke, not as a myopic Israelite nationalist, but under the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost:

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people. And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

- Luke 1:68-75

Review the language closely. Verse 68 blesses the "Lord God of Israel." He uses liturgical language drawn from King David's praise in 1 Kings 1:48:

Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes having seen it.

Compare it with the words of Simeon in Luke 2:25-32 who looked "for the consolation of Israel" and said upon seeing the baby Jesus, "Lord, let now thy servant depart in peace . . . For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Anna the prophetess then enters and also praises God "and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem" (v. 38).

It should be remembered that Jerusalem was King David's private estate which was passed down in succession to his heirs to the Throne. He acquired it by conquest (2 Samuel 5:7-9). Thus, only a Davidic prince, as the nation's firstborn, had standing to redeem the people of Israel, which explains why Jesus was a Davidic heir. This argument is strengthened by a description of the Israelite monarchy in 1 Samuel 8 as the nation's **federal head** (Deuteronomy 17:14-20) and Psalm 72, which is a Psalm for Solomon by David his father, but is really a description of the Messianic character of the Davidic throne. It uses what we might call "redemption language." David and his heirs were Israel's saviors from its enemies. In His Messianic office, so was Jesus (Luke 1:73).

While salvation from sins is clearly in view here as the primary mission of the Messiah (v. 77) and its effect in removing "the sting of death" in the promise of eternal life, redemption clearly means a deliverance from bondage - both spiritual and physical - so that the righteous are free of internal and external restraint in their service to God, that is, in their obedience of Old Testament law (v. 74-75). Since Satan's bondage extends to the soul, where man experiences failure of will to obey God, and then it proceeds to matters of the flesh, where demonically controlled civil magistrates and rulers forbid obedience to God's laws (Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 1:16; 2:15), it follows that Christ's redemption should proceed likewise: from the heart in a deliverance from sin and then to the realm of government in a deliverance from unbiblical laws and life styles.

Recall Ezekiel 36:25-38 which ties the restoration of Israel with the restoration of a righteous heart:

And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

(v. 27-28)

The Israelites of old may have wanted Palestine restored to them for dominion, but they had a global vision, as says the Apostle Paul:

For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

- Romans 4:13

The Abrahamic Covenant always had worldwide implications (Genesis 12:3), as did, by extension, the eternal Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7, read this carefully, especially David's description of redemption - v. 23-26).

All of this explains why the loss of a redeemer became associated with a vacancy in the throne of David (Hosea 3:4-5) and why Jesus announced the Jubilee in Luke 4 as an end of the exile. It was the righteous king who executed Divine law and in his absence, the heathen ruled (1 Samuel 26:19).

The crisis of succession is the central issue of whether redemption is mediated to the earth or not. In Jude, a strange reference to the *Assumption of Moses*, an apocryphal book, cites a confrontation between Satan and Michael the archangel. Jude tells us that they were "contending for the body of Moses" when Michael prevailed by invoking the Lord's rebuke (v. 9). Apparently, *The Assumption of Moses* is a work no longer extant; however, some suppose that another text, *The Testament of Moses* contains the first half of it. If that is the case, then the issue is clearly one pertaining to succession; for in *The Testament of Moses*, Joshua, Moses' successor, fears that Moses' death will leave Israel without "a sacred spirit" (i.e. "the holy spirit"), and that the demonically inspired Canaanite nations will overwhelm her. Moses, of course, assures Joshua that Yahweh will be with him, just as He was with Moses (chapters 11-12).

Whether this text is the one from which Jude quoted or not, most Biblical scholars agree that the expression "the body of Moses," while an unusual one, does not refer to the soul of Moses, as if it were a contest between Satan and Michael over Moses' eternal destiny. Rather, the word "body" ought to be interpreted in the same manner as we would say "a body of literature" or "the body of Christ" (e.g. Adam Clarke). In this sense, Jude was referring to the Old Testament Church which was "redeemed" by Moses in passing through the Red Sea and saved to serve Yahweh in the sacred mount (Exodus 20:2).[5]

A similar contest occurs in Zechariah chapter three between Satan and an unnamed "angel of the LORD." In this text it appears that Satan was challenging the legitimacy of the restored priesthood in Jerusalem. Again, the angel says, "The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan . . ." and the prophet encourages the high priest (who curiously is named "Joshua") with the promise of a future deliverer called the BRANCH (v. 8-9):

Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:

Even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.

This is a clear reference to Jesus who is the true Messiah, for He does not need a priest to validate His throne. And unlike the imperfect Aaronic priesthood, the glory cloud of God does not compel Jesus to flee the Temple (1 Kings 8:1).

The fact remains that Michael was Israel's guardian in Jude's account, and whatever it was that Satan wanted with "the body of Moses," it threatened the very existence of Israel. Ultimately, Jesus Christ has come and vanquished Satan's legal claims upon wayward Israel, requalified the house of David for dominion, and opened the gates of the Kingdom to the whole world.

In what Gustaf Aulen calls the "Classical View of the Atonement" - the one found in the patristic writings of the early Church - proper consideration is given to the existence of the heavenly host and their interference in the affairs of mankind. Satan, of course, is identified as the Tempter and Prosecutor of the claims of justice against fallen man. We see this in the book of Enoch concerning the fallen angels, called the Watchers. Jude also quotes Enoch and embraces the Enochian view of the status and role of the angelic hosts.

Following the Atonement, the Accuser of the brethren was cast down from Heaven (Revelation 12:7-11), a process which began even before the Atonement (Luke 10:18). The Satanic host has been "bound with chains of darkness" (Jude 6); for Satan himself - the "strongman" - has been bound (Matthew 12:29; Revelation 20:2-3). We are plundering his house. The only power he has now is what mankind gives him in their evil imaginations.

After all of this, it hardly seems possible that the claims of the spiritualizing interpreters can have any validity. One would be truly amazed to find that after such an agonizing and exhausting celestial contest which ultimately involved shedding our Lord's precious blood, that the Almighty would simply abandon Israel's world mission to conquer the hearts of men and to transform their institutions.[6] It seems to be a theological Trojan Horse and a surrender to the very accusations of Satan himself, who has denounced the human race and God's plan for its dominion over the terrestrial universe.

The spiritualizers sometimes think they find support in Paul. Yet, even Paul acknowledged the continuing purpose and plan of God in Israel (Romans 9-11) and in a restored Davidic monarchy (Acts 13:22,34,36 "the sure mercies of David" cf. Isaiah 55:3). Jesus came not only to redeem the world but to redeem Israel and to restore Israel to world dominion through the throne of David (Luke 24:21; Isaiah 9:6-7; Revelation 3:7), mediated through His kinsmen according to the flesh (Jeremiah 33:15-26; Psalms

122:5). As says James, the bishop of the Jerusalem Church, to whom Paul submitted himself as the leader of Christianity (Acts 21:18; Galatians 1:19; 2:9):

After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:

- Acts 15:16

In James' ruling at the Jerusalem Council, he defended the conversion of the Gentiles to "the Way" and their admittance to the new Israel without circumcision, justifying it as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Amos. In Amos 9:11-12 the House of David is restored to dominion, but it is no longer confined to Israel. It is a rule which encompasses "all the nations" (Psalm 2).

Thus, as Zacharias in Luke demonstrates, the quest to restore the Davidic monarchy symbolized this yearning for a redeemer and deliverer who would save Israel from her enemies. Yet, the wise knew Israel's enemies were angelic in nature, of which human enemies, such as the Romans, were merely pawns in a great cosmic contest for the whole world.

Before His Ascension, the Apostles questioned Jesus about the restoration of the Kingdom (Acts 1:6). They knew He was the Davidic Messiah. Would He stay to found an earthly dynasty?

Jesus demurred, only saying that its time was in the Father's hands.

Nevertheless, the answer was soon to come. Pentecost was just days away. While it was insignificant chronologically, it was light years in terms of the understanding and the spiritual maturity of the disciples. Jesus simply promised "the enduement of power" from the Holy Spirit.

Thus, Pentecost marks the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom over which Jesus presides from His Throne in Heaven. There is no earthly throne worthy of Him (Acts 2:32-36).

We see Peter taking the lead at Pentecost as the spokesman for the Church, but just as we ought not confuse the White House Press Spokesman with the President of the United States, we should recognize that Peter speaks with the counsel and consent of James (Acts 12:17), the brother of Jesus and bishop of Jerusalem - also a Davidic prince. So here we find, from the very beginning of the Christian church, a continuation of the house and throne of David manifested in a Christian caliphate consisting of the Lord's kinsmen according to the flesh (the Desposyni), and they demonstrate the intention - as James declares in his ruling in Acts 15 - for a procession and infiltration of the ruling bodies of the earth, until "the whole lump is leavened".[7]

Redemption in Prophecy

There is a redemption to come (Romans 8:23). Jesus speaks in Luke 21:28 concerning the "drawing nigh of redemption" (and equates that with "the kingdom of God" v. 31) when the "times of the Gentiles" are fulfilled". Is this the redemption Paul speaks of in reference to the physical resurrection? Not likely. If we believe that the last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Corinthians 15:24-26), then we must expect that the resurrection will occur at the end of history (John 11, where Jesus repeatedly says the resurrection will occur at "the last day"), after Jesus has subjugated all other foes.

What we have promised here is the kind of redemption the people of Israel were expecting: the Davidic kingdom and the millennial reign. In James 5:7-8, James identified this redemption with the "coming of the Lord" to deliver the oppressed and to restore the Jubilee. **It is the Jubilee which inaugurates the Messianic government.**

When will "the times of the Gentiles" end? Paul describes it in Romans 11:25 as the consummation of history, resulting in the resurrection (v. 12, 15). What is transpiring during this "time of the Gentiles"? It is their conversion and this progressive Jubilee to the nations who embrace their redemption. And that process ends when kings and rulers of all the nations have cast their crowns at the feet of Jesus and have abdicated earthly power to the Desposyni: who represent the Messianic government and enforce these laws of redemption (Psalms 2; Revelation 5:9-10).

The Church as the New Israel

Remember, the Church is supposed to be organized like an extended family group. It is called "the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10), the "household of God" (Ephesians 2:19), and so on. The Church is led by the elders, a continuing structure of government inherited from the old Israel by the new Israel (Acts 15:4,6; 14:23; Titus 1:5, etc.) And they were expected to be family men (1 Timothy 3:1-7, where the "bishop" is the elder).

These texts in Acts are important; for these are the elders of the old Israel who were transferred over to the new Israel by swearing allegiance to Jesus as the Davidic Messiah and to James as His viceroy. These family elders were the result of a line of family succession which extended back to the times of the Patriarchs and which we identified in Exodus as antedating the Mosaic government. That eldership was transferred over to the Church.

Antagonists who adhere to a spiritualized model for the Church see these references as analogies only. They do not accept the proposition that the Church is co-extensive with the family as an institution nor a continuation of the old Israel. In other words, they do not believe that a man can call his family a church, his household a congregation, and himself its priest or pastor. Nor do they believe there is a continuation of the Davidic Covenant or that Christians may refer to themselves as "Israelites" in any literal sense. They believe that the Church is a discontinuity in history and that succession has come

through the Apostles to the elders whom they ordained in an imperial way, not by election or an outgrowth of family government.

They support such views with texts like 1 Timothy 3:5 which distinguishes a man's family from the Church:

For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?

Their argument is strengthened by the text on deacons which indicates that the church is a separate institution from the family (1 Timothy 3:8). It is not commanded that the bishop's deacon be his son, as was expected in the Old Testament among priestly families and the Levites. In those times a man's successor began as his deacon or servant (e.g. Joshua was Moses' deacon and Abraham's servant, Eliezer almost became his heir). Rather, it appears that the Pauline pattern follows the pre-dynastic system of judges established by Moses, except that it is a single-tiered (perhaps, double-tiered) system and not the decimal system that we find in Exodus 18.

We would do well to remember that when the Apostles used the term "church," they were not thinking of the "kirk" or the structure which we use for worship. Indeed, the early Church had no such structures. The "church" was the "ecclesia," which were the people of God. Wherever they gathered to worship, even if they were few, there was the church. In setting forth ecclesiastical officers of bishops, deacons, widows, and so on, the Apostles were establishing leaders for the people, not custodians of buildings.

And in these texts, it is quite clear that they were non-familial offices (see also 1 Clement 42-44). It ought to be asked why Paul made a departure from the ancient practice of family elders? Or was he simply following Moses and establishing a layer of Divine imperial government over the family elders of Israel? If he was establishing an imperial layer of government, why was it not Desposynic?

While we might say they were Desposynic in a derivative way, since Paul himself was in submission to James at Jerusalem (as indicated earlier), closer examination of the texts suggest that these offices were provisional. In 1 Timothy 3:14-15, immediately following his episcopal instructions, Paul tells Timothy, "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly" - implying that there was more that needed to be said but that this would suffice for the moment. It suggests that the provisions of 1 Timothy 3 on ecclesiastical offices, and indeed the whole of the pastoral epistle, were temporary, requiring better organization when the Apostle arrived.

The same is true of Paul's counsel to Titus (1:5):

For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee.

Here the Apostle tells us that the Christians of Crete lacked leadership. They lacked elders and Titus was required to establish a government for the churches "in every city". Such statements allow the inference that these might be viewed as temporary provisions to meet an emergency. Yet, most commentators overlook these passages which establish the context and assume that the order that Paul is setting forth is the ideal standard for all times.

Thus, **the spiritualizers first fail to make a distinction between the Gentile churches and the Jewish churches**, and that Paul's apostolic authority (Galatians 2:7) extended to the Gentile churches and not to those of the Dispersion. We lose all sense of proportion because most of the New Testament was written by Paul. Prior to the Bar Kochba rebellion, the churches of Palestine were filled with hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of Christians, while the infant Gentile churches were widely scattered and were numbered in the mere thousands, perhaps tens of thousands. The churches of Palestine were organized around pre-existing family elders.[8] The Gentile churches, often representing a gathering of fractured families, slaves from the households of unbelieving masters, and unattached men and women, did not have this familial heritage and needed an external source for church government. Thus, these instructions in the Pastoral Epistles were ministerial in character, serving the provisional needs of the Gentile Christians at the time, and not didactic in the sense of setting forth universal principles. (Lest some take issue with this interpretation of the text, let it be noted that virtually no religious group adheres to these standards of clerical candidacy today. If they did, they would have to wait until men completed the successful rearing of their children, which usually doesn't occur until 50 or 60 years of age, and never occurs in those churches which require celibacy. I know of no group which requires its elders to be old.)

Second, they fail to understand the words of James the Just in his ruling of Acts 15. There he identified the eschatological objective of the Church "to raise up the tabernacle of David" amongst the Gentiles. This is a clear reference to the Messianic government of the Desposynic eldership. In other words, Paul's counsel in the Pastoral Epistles was in anticipation of this impending eschaton: the purging of the unbelieving Jewish eldership from the life of Israel to make way for the Desposyni. This occurred after Paul's death in 70 AD at the fall of Jerusalem and represents the period from that event to the Bar Kochba revolt.

Third, these Gentile elders, while family men themselves and presumably the priests of their own homes, were receiving the kind of sacerdotal training at home that would equip them to be spiritual leaders of the Church. The Church being the collection of Christian families in a village or city over which he was a general supervisor, required a unifying figure that represented the Throne of Christ. Thus, for the Gentiles, it was an imposition from the outside of an imperial government: the government of Jesus Christ. **But it was restorative in character.** And because it was not Desposynic, it had various limitations and restrictions to prevent the formation of competing, non-Davidic dynasties.

Why You Need a Kinsman-Redeemer

We have established that the Desposynic elders were the legitimate successors of the old Israel which formed the nucleus of the Church and that they retained the office of the Kinsman-Redeemer as a continuation of the Davidic Covenant. One last question remains: why do you need such an elder as your Kinsman-Redeemer? The answer is found in the need for spiritual covering.

Currently, perhaps for most people in the world, the state serves as their covering. The problem with that kind of provision is that the state is a manifestation of the satanic principle in government. The state operates by coercion and the threat of violence. Deadly force backs-up the state's claim to authority. You will recall that the Scriptures teach that Satan is the angel of death. Jesus came to destroy him and the principle of death (Hebrews 2:14).

That does not mean that there is no death penalty and no natural death in the Messianic Kingdom. It still exists, but during the Millennial Period, it is so rare as to be an oddity. Why? It is because the principle of sin, which is the cause of death, is destroyed. Jesus and His Messianic viceroys nip sin in the bud before it can manifest itself into a deadly force. There is no provocation; there is no temptation. Contrary to this, Satan and his followers in the state encourage sin and crime in order to sustain their positions. It is a kind of perverse job security mentality. They profit from sin and violence and they covertly, if not overtly, promote lawbreaking to justify state violence and policing.

You have two choices: the Messianic government of Jesus Christ mediated through the Desposyni on the one hand or satanic government mediated through the officers of the state on the other. **To reject a Desposynic Bishop is a vote for satanic government.**

In saying this, I do not mean to say that satanic government is so evil as never to be obeyed. Indeed, the Apostles and the Fathers are quite clear that we must submit to these rulers "for conscience sake," meaning in submission to their intended purpose, whether perfectly fulfilled or not. If they fail, if they are under satanic influence, we must pray for them, even exorcise them, so that they will do our Lord's bidding. Whether they admit it or not, civil rulers are under the iron scepter of Jesus Christ. That is why tyrants do not rule very long. Christ destroys them through war, disease or treachery. And if they are good rulers, conscious of their mandate to punish evil doers and reward the righteous, then they are fulfilling the objectives of Messianic government in a *de facto* sense.

Enthroning Desposynic Bishops in our churches is the first step toward a *de jure* as well as a *de facto* government. The officers of state are the deacons of these Desposynic princes in the civil realm. A twisted version of this system was copied by Medieval Catholicism, but it failed because it was not organically connected to the family structure. Indeed, it was at war with the family. But that is not what we are talking about here.

The Cambrian Episcopal Church serves as a nurse-maid for the Messianic government. We encourage you to join as catechumens, to support our efforts, and to submit yourself to its discipline. We encourage you to tithe to us, even if it is the meager widow's mite. It's not that we need your money. To the contrary, we are self-sufficient. But **you** need to do it to show honor to the Messianic kingdom. If you fear the tax man, why don't you fear the Messiah? "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry with you" (Psalm 2). The Messiah is the Lord of the tax man, too. If you don't like the tax man, the representative of the *de facto* government, why don't you tithe to the Desposyni, the representatives of the *de jure* government? In doing so, you empower the Messianic government over your life. It is your vote for your Kinsman-Redeemer. Then gradually, perhaps imperceptively at first, but indeed certainly, the satanic government will weaken in its control over you.

You will be tested. At first, you may find confusing thoughts and doubts. Perhaps your life will seem to fall apart. Have faith. You are shedding the old covering. Satan is unhappy that you have found your Redeemer. He will threaten you and frighten you with impending doom. Ignore his deceptions and press on. **The day dawns for you.**

- James Wesley Stivers, author

Footnotes:

Footnote 1: see *Christus Victor* by Gustaf Aulen (Macmillan, 1969) which demonstrates that this view of the Atonement was the dominant one of the pre-Nicene Fathers. It was also the Desposynic view taught at the Jerusalem Church and rooted and grounded in the Torah.

There are distinct Hebrew words to describe different aspects of redemption. *Ga'al* - 1350 - refers directly to the kinsman-redeemer. *Kapar*, 3722, refers to the thing used as the ransom by the kinsman-redeemer. *Padah*, 6299, indicates that it is used in a substitutionary way. The Desposyni did not teach the ransom theory of the Atonement as it is conceived by classical theologians, as if Satan was some kind of self-dependent god who had to be appeased. It was a satisfaction of public justice which was required and is best answered by a Trinitarian Governmental View of the Atonement. The standards of public justice are set by the immutable Divine Nature of the ontological Trinity. Satan was created to serve God as "the Adversary" of evil. Satan existed as a voice for public justice, but in his corruption as "the Accuser of the Brethren" (Job 1; Revelations 12), he provided a pedagogical opportunity for God to display the glory of His moral perfection to all of His creation (moral influence) in the substitutionary death of His Son. Jesus, as the kinsman-redeemer (*ga'al*) offers His blood as the ransom (*kapar*) that Satan is required to accept as the substitution (*padah*) for the blood of all mankind. The views of Anselm and Abelard are humanistic theories of the Atonement and find little support in the patristic writings of the Church.

Footnote 2: Lest you think that this is a moot issue in our day - since concubinage is illegal - think again. Most modern marriages fall under the Biblical category of concubinage and are not real marriages. In recognition of that fact, the no-fault divorce laws of a generation ago were passed to fit the real conditions of our marriage customs. Christian leaders who hate the divorce industry should first analyze the marriage industry which they have been willing participants. How many times have you heard a priest or reverend solemnize the marriage vows by saying, "by

the power vested in me by the State of _____, I now pronounce you man and wife"? By law, the clergy can only witness marriages as civil contracts, not as sacraments. In this respect they are no better than notary publics.

Footnote 3: (It should be noted that Leviticus 27 describes two kinds of vows: the *neder* and the *cherem*. The *neder* was the kind of vow to which the laws of redemption applied. The *cherem*, or the devoted thing, could not be redeemed. It became "most holy" unto Yahweh. As the text reads in vs. 27-28:

Notwithstanding no devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the LORD of all that he hath, both of man and beast, and of the field of his possession, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto the LORD. None devoted, which shall be devoted of men, shall be redeemed; but shall surely be put to death.

Some have mistakenly construed this text to imply human sacrifice. Human sacrifice was not a part of the Mosaic system and for good reason: it would have been efficacious for nothing. As it was, the blood sacrifice of animals existed not to expiate sins, but as a means of moral influence - as spiritual pedagogy - until such time as the Lamb of God should come into the world. There were "devoted" persons who were offered up for slaughter in war or in punishment for crime. The Canaanites are an example of this kind of *cherem*. But for their wickedness, the Canaanites were the victims of justice, not of human sacrifice. However, even among the Canaanites, there were interesting exceptions. For example, there was Rahab, the harlot of Jericho. All the inhabitants of Jericho were *cherem*. Yet, Rahab escaped. She ransomed herself by saving the Israelite spies. The Midianites are another example. By using duplicity, they obtained a treaty from Joshua and the Israelites which spared them from attack. So there were exceptions to this rule, but they were rare and involved acquiescence by the representatives of Yahweh before they were effective.

Presumably, the priest had the option to "de-sanctify" something that was pledged as a devoted thing to God. An example of this can be found when the high priest permitted David and his soldiers to eat the shewbread of the Tabernacle (1 Samuel 21). Only priests were allowed to eat of this holy food. It was a sacrilege requiring the death penalty for anyone else to eat it. Yet in this case, the priest had the power to suspend the rule and de-sanctify the bread so that it could be eaten without fear of Divine displeasure.

This was not without consequence, however. In the case of David and the shewbread, the priests were slaughtered by Saul shortly afterwards. Could it not be that the high priest bore the guilt of de-sanctifying the shewbread? Even though Saul killed them for unholy reasons, might not the high priest have lost Divine protection because of this decision?

A "devoted" person in Israel was usually someone who was given in service to God. It was a lifetime commitment. The prophet Samuel is an example of *cherem*. In every other respect he lived a normal life (e.g. he had children). But he was bound by his mother's oath to serve a Divine calling, rather than the interests of his father's house.

Thus, we see how Jesus is the most perfect of redeemers. As our kinsman according to the flesh, he can redeem us from Satan's power; yet also, as the High Priest of Heaven, He has the power to release us from those sins which seem to have no redemption.

This pertains to our eternal salvation, yet it does not nullify the need for penance or restitution in the case of presumptuous sins (see [Presumption & the Sin of Uncleaness](#)).

Footnote 4: See [Restoring the Foundations](#) and [The Ministry of the Firstborn](#)
Another important study is Isabel Hill Elder's [James: the First Bishop of Jerusalem](#)

Footnote 5: As Adam Clarke's Commentary quotes Dr. Macknight: "In Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1, Michael is spoken of as one of the chief angels who took care of the Israelites as a nation; he may therefore have been *the angel of the Lord* before whom Joshua the high priest is said, Zachariah 3:1, to have stood, *Satan being at his right hand to resist him*; namely, in his design of restoring the *Jewish Church and state*, called by Jude the *body of Moses*, just as the Christian Church is called by Paul *the body of Christ*. Zechariah adds, *And the Lord*, that is, *the angel of the Lord*, as is plain from v. 1, *said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan! even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee!*" A strong allusion to Jude's language and perhaps referring to the same incident.

To summarize Clarke's other observations, he notes that the Apostle in Romans 7:24 refers to "the body of sin," meaning the principle of sin itself, not our physical bodies. Thus, for Jude to speak of the "body of Moses," he is speaking in the same sense as Jesus does to "the seat of Moses" (the nation and authority established by Moses). Among the Jewish rabbis, *Samael* is the name for Satan - as says the Book of Enoch, which Jude also quotes - who opposes Michael in the battle over Israel. Samael is the accuser and Michael is Israel's advocate before the Judge of Heaven.

Richard Baukman in his important study, *Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church*, (T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1990), marshals the writings of the early Fathers to show that it was indeed a dispute over the body of Moses (Satan charging Moses with the murder of the Egyptian) but that was not the central message which Jude was wanting to convey. Rather, it was how the archangel handled the confrontation which was central:

It is important to take account of the fact that in our reconstruction of the story the devil appears in his ancient role as a legal accuser trying to prove Moses' guilt. This means that Michael's behaviour is exemplary not in his treatment of the devil himself (in treating the devil with respect) but in his response to the accusation brought by the devil. Even though he recognized it as slanderous, he could not dismiss it because he was not the judge. Therefore the moral of the story is that no one except God is in this sense a judge, a moral authority. Even if it were true, as the false teachers alleged, that when the law accused them of sin it was only the malice of the angels that prompted these accusations, they would still not be justified in rejecting them on their own authority. Even if they were as righteous as Moses and had the authority of an archangel, they would not be above accusations of sin under the law. They remain subject to the moral authority of the Lord. We can finally see that verse 9 is linked not only to the third of the charges against false teachers in verse 8 (they "slander the glorious ones") but also to the second (they "reject the authority of the Lord").

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Baukman here sees Jude challenging the Gnostic teachers' supposition that they can reject the moral authority of Old Testament law because, according to their cosmology, it was mediated and enforced by fallen angels. Jude reminds them that the law still finds its point of origin in God Himself and that Satan, while a fallen creature, still must do God's bidding.

Footnote 6: "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow into it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways,

and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem". (Micah 4:1-2)

Footnote 7: See also the Clementine literature which shows Peter as reporting to James concerning his activities (*Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8, Alexander edition)

Epiphanius is an important source of information about James. This is what he said as to why James became the first leader of Christianity:

Now at that time all Christians alike were called Nazoraens, although for a short time they were also called Jessaeans before the disciples began to be called Christians at Antioch. I think that they were called Jessaeans because of Jesse, since David was from Jesse, and from David through successive generations came Mary, the sacred scripture being fulfilled where in the Old Testament the Lord says to David, "The fruit of your loins I will set upon your throne."

But some may ask: Christ having been begotten from David's seed according to the flesh, that is from the holy Virgin Mary, for what reason does he not sit upon David's throne? . . . (For some people have thought that this has not been fulfilled.)

David's throne and royal seat is the priesthood in the holy church, which royal and high priestly dignity the Lord joined together into one and bestowed them upon his holy church, transferring to it David's throne, which will never disappear. For there David's throne continued to exist until Christ himself, the rulers from Judah not failing until he came "to whom belonged the things reserved, and he is the expectation of the nations", as it says.

For those who in succession from Judah were rulers ceased with the advent of Christ.

For once the two tribes, the royal and the priestly, meaning Judah and Aaron and the whole tribe of Levi, had been joined together, the kings were also made priests . . .

*Now when the royal chair was changed, the royal dignity was in Christ transferred to the church from the house of Judah and Israel which is of the flesh, but the throne is established in God's holy church forever, the throne whose royal and high-priestly dignity rests on two bases - the royal dignity coming from Our Lord Jesus Christ in two ways, from the fact that he is of King David's seed according to the flesh and from the fact that he is, as is certainly true, a greater king from eternity in his divinity, and the priestly dignity coming from the fact that he is high priest and chief of high priests - James having been ordained at once the first bishop, he who is called the brother of the Lord and apostle . . . **But we find as well that he is of David's stock through being Joseph's son** and that he was a Nazarite (for he was Joseph's firstborn and consecrated), and we have found furthermore that he exercised the priesthood according to the priestly order of old. Thus it was permitted him once a year to enter the holy of holies, as the law ordered the high priests according to what is written. So say may of the historians before me of him, Eusebius, Clement, and others. He was also allowed to wear the plate on his head . . . There is much to say about this.*

- The Penarion, 29 emphasis added

Here we find the criteria used by the elders of the new Israel in determining who occupied the bishop's chair: 1) was he a holy man? and 2) was he a man of the house of David?

Footnote 8: These family elders, as I have already described, were in their line of succession from the Patriarchs of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. By becoming Christians, they were brought

into covenant unity with the House of David as represented by Jesus Christ and mediated by His brethren, James in particular. This eldership became one with the Desposynic eldership, through intermarriage, and was called "the Vine of David" (*Didache*) and the "Root" of the grafted branches (Romans 11:16) (see *Biblical Midwifery*). The "elders" mentioned at the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15 and elsewhere, were probably the heads of Desposynic families, as they were the families which embraced their Messiah first. In other words, the Desposyni were the elders of the remnant of Israel who became the elders of the Church in Palestine.

Appendix

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is the Hebrew word for the kinsman-redeemer?
2. True or False. Redemption is the central message of the Gospel.
3. Man is God's property because he was made in the _____ of God.
4. Redemption means to _____ something back that once belonged to you.
5. Find the best answer. The redemption of mankind is accomplished through:
 - a. the Atonement of Jesus
 - b. the baptism of Jesus
 - c. the ascension of Jesus
 - d. the birth of Jesus
6. Like the store coupon, the idea behind redemption is that a transaction must occur upon demand because the purchaser:
 - a. has lots of money
 - b. has a legal right to the property
 - c. the current owner of the property obtained it by deceit
 - d. he is more powerful

7. Satan had to accept Christ's blood as a ransom for the redemption of mankind primarily because:

- a. Jesus lived a sinless life**
- b. Jesus was a man**
- c. Jesus was the Son of God**
- d. Jesus rose from the dead**

8. True or False. The doctrine of the kinsman-redeemer has to do with life and government, as well as eternal salvation.

9. The ancient government of Israel was first by

- a. priests**
- b. Levites**
- c. family elders**
- d. the firstborn sons**

10. True or False. Additional layers of government usually come from rulers or governors imposed by conquerors.

11. Colonialism and federalism are euphemistic terms to hide the truth from the people that they are _____.

12. "Mishpachah" is the Hebrew word for:

- a. the kinsman-redeemer**
- b. the Hebrew republic**
- c. a thousand people**
- d. the family**

13. In the government of Israel, the kinsman-redeemer could redeem five things:

a redeemer of a brother's _____, who was enslaved,
a redeemer of the _____, who lost a husband,
a redeemer for the _____, which was the family estate,
a redeemer of _____, as an avenger,
a redeemer of the _____, when a man broke his vow.

14. Usually, the kinsman-redeemer was:

- a. an attorney
- b. the firstborn son
- c. the grandfather
- d. the mother

15. True or False. Only the firstborn son could be the redeemer.

16. The federal _____ of Israel was the king who was the nation's kinsman-redeemer.

17. True or False. As an heir to the throne of David, Jesus had the right to declare the Jubilee (Luke 4).

18. "Spiritualizers" interpret the Bible to:

- a. deny any application of Biblical law to this life
- b. enforce Biblical law in this life
- c. to become spiritual people
- d. to have correct doctrine

19. The first leader of the Jerusalem Church was

- a. James the brother of Jesus**
- b. James the brother of John**
- c. Peter**
- d. Paul**

20. The old Israel continued in the Church through:

- a. the elders of Davidic descent**
- b. the Apostles**
- c. the priests**
- d. the kinsman-redeemer**

21. The “messianic government of Jesus Christ” refers to:

- a. preachers**
- b. disciples**
- c. Desposynic bishops**
- d. civil government**