

## BELONGING TO THE LORD (part 1)

Isaiah 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."

The Book of Isaiah is filled with words that declare the Lord's displeasure and detest of sin. The Children of Israel were rebuked over and over by the Lord through the mouth of His prophet Isaiah. This people needed to hear the words that declared their sin. But the Lord in His mercy, also gave them words of comfort and peace. What an abundant, precious blessing it was for this people to hear the Lord say, "Thou art mine."

Often, when we read verses of scripture such as the one previously cited, we struggle to see how those words find application with us today. A closer look at this verse, while comparing it with other places in God's Holy Word, will help us to see how the nation of Israel often represents the family of God (Israel by Grace, Romans 2:28-29; 11:26). When viewing this verse through that lens, we can clearly see how the Lord, even when we have failed Him as we often do, never ceases to claim us as His own, "Thou art mine". The truth is, if we ever belonged to God, we will never cease to belong to Him. According to John 10:27-30 and Romans 8:35-39, there is nothing that can change that fact. Once His, always His! And we are His because:

(1) He chose us to be His (Jacob, Israel; representatives of the elect, Rom 9:13, Gal 6:16)! In Ephesians 1:4 we read, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:..." The doctrine of election (God choosing us to be His) is taught throughout the Bible. David taught election in Psalms 65:4, "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee,..." Jesus Christ taught election in His personal earthly ministry, Luke 18:7, "And shall not God avenge his own elect,..." Peter taught election in 1 Peter 1:2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father,..." The Apostle John taught election in Revelation 5:9, "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;..." So for anyone to say that Paul stood alone in his declaration of this precious doctrine is to deny scripture. By the Inspired Word of God, we are able to declare that the children of God belong to the Lord because He, in His sovereign will, chose them to be His.

(2) He purchased us to be His (redeemed)! In 1 Corinthians 6:19, Paul informs us that "ye are not your own". We do not belong to ourselves, we belong to the Lord. How? Paul makes it clear, "For ye are bought with a price:..." The purchase price for the elect family of God was not silver, gold or precious stones, but the shed blood of the Only Begotten Son of God (1 Peter 1:18-19). Jesus Christ, on the Cross of Calvary, paid the purchase price for His people by the offering up of Himself unto the Father (Hebrews 9:14).

Now, if the Sovereign ruler of the universe chose us to be His, and the eternal Son of God purchased us to be His, does it make sense that we will always be His? And one precious day, when the Son of God appears in the clouds, He will claim everyone that belongs to Him and take them all, without the loss of one, into the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world (Matthew 25:34.) Amen !

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