

"Adoption"- the Basis for Our Relationship to God

Adoption under the Old Covenant

Because of God's promises to Abraham, Israel had a unique relationship to God the Creator. This relationship was one of adoption as a *nation*, under the Old Covenant.

Romans 9:4 - The Israelites - ... theirs is the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service, and the promises; (etc.).

Some of the Old Testament verses that describe Israel as a "son" are: Exodus 4:22; Deut. 14:1; Jeremiah 31:9, 20; Hosea 11:1. This verse in Romans describes the *nature* of that relationship: one of adoption.

Adoption under the New Covenant

Because Israel refused to live by the Old Covenant, God has replaced it with a new covenant that has a different emphasis (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-12).

Under this new covenant, God adopts people as *individuals* who have repented from their sinful lifestyles and trusted Jesus for salvation. This adoption was made possible because of what Jesus has done: He bought (redeemed) us, by his death and resurrection. Because of this, the Holy Spirit has been sent to us.

Galatians 4:5-6 - [God sent his Son] that he might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of children. And because you are children, God sent out the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!"

At the present time, we experience only the "firstfruits" of the Spirit (who is also called "the Spirit of adoption"). There is more to come! Our adoption will not be complete until it is extended to our *bodies*, at the resurrection. Because of this, our adoption can be described as both a *present* reality and a *future* event, as seen in these two verses:

Romans 8:15 - For you didn't receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" [This is our present situation.]

Romans 8:23 - Not only [does creation groan], but ourselves also, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for adoption, the redemption of our body. [This is still future.]

We need to remember that our adoption is something that *God* freely chose to do. It was not out of obligation; it was not because we deserved it (because we *didn't*). Rather, it was simply because he wanted to do it. In this adoption, there is nothing in us that we can boast about; rather, all the glory and praise goes to God.

Ephesians 1:5 - [God chose us...] having predestined us for adoption as children through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his desire, [to the praise of the glory of his grace] ...