

**Vicarious Sacrifice: Contract of Suretyship Explained: Mankind Is the “Principal; Jesus Is the “Surety”; Salvation Occurs When the Unbeliever Professes Faith Alone in the Surety Alone, Rom 4:3 cf. Col 2:13–14; John 10:11; the “Hired Hand” & the “Big Bad Wolf,” John 10:12; Paul Warns Ephesian P-Ts to Beware of Wolves, Acts 20:28–30; Isa 54:17**

**CONTRACT OF SURETYSHIP.** Contract whereby one party engages to be answerable for debt of another. A lending of credit to aid a principal having insufficient credit of his own; the one expected to pay, having the primary obligation, being the “principal,” and the one bound to pay, if the principal does not, being the “surety.” A surety is an original promisor and debtor from the beginning, and is held ordinarily to every known default of his principal.<sup>1</sup>

18. In eternity past, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit conferred to develop a plan by which they would manage the introduction and management of the human race into world history.
19. God the Father came up with the plan, Jesus Christ volunteered to execute the plan, and the Holy Spirit volunteered to explain the plan.
20. Through omniscience, the Trinity knew that original Homo sapiens – Adam and Ishah – would sin.
21. A solution to their fall was necessary in order to demonstrate during Lucifer’s appeal that even a creature less than the angels is every way but with free will, would choose to respond to the divine provision of salvation.
22. Salvation would be made available by the incarnation, public ministry, judgment, execution, burial, resurrection, and ascension of the divinely provided Substitute, Jesus Christ.
23. As our Substitute, Jesus Christ volunteered in eternity past to be our “Surety.” He entered into a Contract of Suretyship by which He was bound to pay the debt of the principals – the human race – if they were unable to maintain the required status quo of perfection.
24. Following the fall, the One on whom the obligation of restoring perfection fell was Jesus, the Surety.
25. It was Messiah’s obligation to pay the debt by incurring the imputation of all mankind’s sins and being judged for them.
26. This payment consisted of His substitutionary spiritual death. He qualified for the duty since He had no sin and thus could become sin for us.
27. Since the “principals” were unable to pay, the “Surety” did so on their behalf.
28. When informed of the payment in the form of the gospel, each individual had the opportunity to confirm the payment on his behalf through faith alone in the Surety alone.
29. Belief in Jesus as the Surety resulted in the imputation of God’s righteousness to that person.

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Campbell Black, *Black’s Law Dictionary*, rev. 4th ed. (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1968), 1611.

**Romans 4:3** - Now what does the Scripture say? Abraham had believed in God and it [ faith in Messiah ] was credited to his account for righteousness.” (EXT)

30. The mechanics of this process is recorded by Paul in:

**Colossians 2:13** - When you were dead by your transgressions and by the uncircumcision from your flesh [ metaphor for unbelievers ], He [ Christ ], having graciously forgiven us all our transgressions, has given you [ believers ] life together with Him,

**v. 14** - having canceled the certificate of indebtedness against us [ execution of the Contract of Suretyship ], by means of the decrees against us [ the Surety requiring perfection ] which kept on being hostile to us [ because of the sin nature and personal sins ], and He removed it [ the barrier ] permanently out of the way [ as original Promisor ], having nailed it [ the debt ] to the cross. (EXT)

30. The “unobjectionable, blameless, and excellent,” Shepherd will soon be made sin for everyone including His adversaries, but only those hearing His voice will be classified as sheep.

31. The self-righteous Pharisees, who consider themselves the premier theologians of the day, are being schooled by “The Teacher” which is how the Lord refers to Himself in Matthew 26:18; Mark 14:14; and Luke 22:11.

**John 10:11** - “I keep on being the unobjectionable, blameless, excellent Shepherd; the good Shepherd puts down as a surety His spiritual life for the sheep.” (EXT)

**John 10:12** - “He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.”

1. The “hired hand” in this verse is the noun **μισθωτός (*misthōtós*)**: “hired worker”:

**Sometimes indicating one who is not showing real interest in his duty and who is unfaithful, a hireling (John 10:12).<sup>2</sup>**

2. The man that is hired to watch, lead, and protect the sheep is not trustworthy. He is in it only for the power and status which means he has no personal integrity.
3. Thus, the *misthōtós* does not have invested interest in the sheep. In fact, the Lord’s proclaims that he is “not a shepherd.”
4. The reason the *misthōtós* is not a *poimén* is because he is not the “owner of the sheep.”
5. These are the religious leaders who have instituted a stringent legalism on the flock.
6. Entering the Lord’s parable at this point is a new character, the Big Bad Wolf, famous predator of sheep and, in context, the one that has designs on becoming the new shepherd of the flock.
7. The *misthōtós* sees the wolf coming, leaves the sheep, and flees, leaving the sheep helpless before the wolf that snatches and scatters them.

<sup>2</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 988.

8. Here is some information about the wolf:

**Wolf.** The gray, or timber, wolf is the best-known species.

The gray wolf has a larger natural distribution than any other mammal except human beings. It formally inhabited all of North America from Alaska and Arctic Canada south to central Mexico and was found throughout Europe and Asia southward to the Mediterranean Sea, the Arabian Peninsula, and parts of India and China.

Excluding certain domestic breeds of dogs, it is the largest living canid. A northern male may be about 6.5 feet long including a 20-inch tail, and weigh 44 to 175 pounds.

An intelligent, social animal ... the gray wolf usually lives in packs of several to two dozen individuals. A pack is basically a family group consisting of an adult pair and their offspring of various ages. There is a clearly defined dominance hierarchy in the pack, with only the lead male and female (the alpha pair) possessing the right to mate. They are usually the parents of the other pack members.

Wolves move and hunt mostly at night. A wolf pack feeds primarily on large herbivores such as deer, moose, and caribou, which it catches by a stalk and a chase. The pack gorges when food is available, usually reducing the carcass to hair and a few bones.<sup>3</sup>

9. The *misthōtós*'s job is to protect the sheep. By executing proper tactics, he could have defended the sheep with no danger to himself. But he became a one-man democracy and voted to forsake his duty and abandon his charges to certain death.

10. James Bovard, a noted libertarian, had this to say about democracy:

**Democracy must be something more than two wolves and a sheep voting on what to have for dinner.<sup>4</sup>**

11. Sheep are incapable of defending themselves and must have a shepherd to protect them, a necessity that Paul communicated to the pastor-teachers of the various churches in Ephesus:

**Acts 20:28** - "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He has purchased with His own blood.

**Acts 20:29** - "I know this, that after my departure savage wolves shall infiltrate among you, not sparing the flock;

**v. 30** - and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking distorted things, to seduce away disciples after them." (NASB)

**Isaiah 54:17** - "No weapon that is formed against you will prosper; and every tongue that accuses you in judgment you will condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their vindication is from Me," declares the Lord. (NASB)

12. Paul warns this group of pastor-teachers that their flocks will be attacked from the outside by savage wolves and also from among themselves by those who do not regard doctrine as priority one from their pulpits.

<sup>3</sup> *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, 15th ed. (2010), s.v. "wolf."

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.libertarianquotes.net/B/James-Bovard.html>, (accessed March 19, 2014).

13. The Lord is now delving into current events and prophecy. The sheepfold is Palestine. The Lord has entered in and His voice is made clear to those who hear His voice, the formally blind beggar being one.