

REDEMPTION AS A RELEASE FROM SOMETHING

INTRODUCTION:

This morning I want to begin to look at the Biblical concept of *redemption*. Redeemed and redemption go hand-in-hand. *Redeem* is the verb—the doing of an action; *redemption* is the noun—the result of the action performed. What does it mean to **redeem** something?

1. One definition of redeem we are familiar with is to “exchange for something of value.” Many of us have “redeemed” coupons and gotten money taken off the original purchase price because of the coupon. Others of us have “redeemed” our 11% Menards rebate slips in the same way—we exchange it for “money” and use it on the next item that we buy at the store (when we can **find** it and remember to **bring** it 😊!)

2. Another definition that we may be familiar with is this: “to do something that will improve what other people think of you, after you have behaved badly or failed.” A man that forgets his wife’s birthday—or their anniversary—ends up in the proverbial “dog house” (which, of course, is actually the couch or spare room). What does he do after discovering his error? He tries to “redeem himself” by asking for forgiveness, bringing home chocolate and/or flowers, and taking her out for dinner. In sports, if a player makes a game-changing mistake, he tries to “redeem himself” by making up for it the next chance he gets. How many 2nd and 3rd interceptions did Brett Favre throw in a game trying to make up for the first one he threw....????

Neither of these definitions are overly helpful when it comes to understanding what redemption means in the Bible, though. Notice the following Biblical definitions of redemption:

M.G. Easton: “the purchase back of something that had been lost by the payment of a ransom.”

Harold Shaw: “free someone from bondage by paying a ransom.”

Charles Ryrie: “liberation because of a payment made.”

In Ryrie’s *Basic Theology*, he concludes his section on redemption with the following quote: “Redemption may be summarized around three basic ideas. (1) People are redeemed **from** something; namely, from the marketplace or slavery of sin. (2) People are redeemed **by** something; namely, by the payment of a price, the blood of Christ. (3) People are redeemed **to** something; namely, to a state of freedom; and then they are called to renounce that freedom for slavery to the Lord who redeemed them.” (pg 336)

Over the course of the next few weeks, I want to use the three aspects of redemption mentioned by Ryrie as an outline to study this important Biblical concept. This morning we are going to look at the first one on his list: “Redemption as a Release **from** Something.”

I’m not 100% sure I will follow this format every week, but at least for today we are going to look at an example of this aspect in the OT, then see how it applies to salvation through Christ in the NT.

1. OT Example—God’s People Redeemed from Bondage in Egypt

Please turn to Exodus, chapter 1. We are going to consider first...

A. Their Background (Ex 1:5-10)

--v 5 Why was Joseph in Egypt already? Because his brothers had sold him for 20 pieces of silver to a caravan of Ishmaelites that were on their way to Egypt.

--vs 6-10 Joseph dies—and his brothers die—but their offspring “were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied and waxed exceeding might; and the land was filled with them” (v 7).

B. Their Burdens (Ex 1:11-14)

--v 11 “Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.” Did God’s people build the Egyptian pyramids? Probably **not** because most of them were built between 2686 and 2160 B.C.; whereas God’s people were not in Egypt until around 1525 B.C.—meaning between 600 and 1100 years later.

That does not change the fact that life was hard, though.

--v 11 and 12 says they were “afflicted;” v 13 says they served with “rigour” (hardship)

--v 14 “And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them to serve, was with rigour.”

--They did outside work in the heat of the day

I personally experienced the oppressive environment of desert living while in Saudi Arabia during ODS. The best I can describe it is the feeling you get when you open an oven door at 450 degrees. The air temperature is obviously not 450—it is only between 100 and 120—but there is no escaping it!

Not only were their burdens—their hardships—unimaginable, they were also **inescapable**. Why? Because they were in bondage—they were slaves to the Egyptians.

C. Their bondage (Ex 1:15-16; 5:1-2)

We see that in verses 15-16 because the king of Egypt ordered all the Hebrew infant boys that were born to be **killed**. We also see it in Chapter 5, verses 1-2. God had appeared to Moses from the burning bush and commissioned him and his brother Aaron to go to Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and demand that he let God’s people go. Notice verses 1-2. “I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go.”

The point simply is this—they were slaves and could not do what they wanted. They had to work when they were told to work, they could only eat and drink and sleep when they were allowed to, their children were being killed and they could do nothing about it, and when they wanted to go hold a feast unto God in the wilderness, they couldn’t do that either!

D. Their being “brought out” from Egypt (Ex 12:40-42)

Let’s jump ahead to Chapter 12, verse 40-41. Notice now v 42 “It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for **bringing them out from the land of Egypt...**” They were free now from slavery in Egypt!

Notice the following verses from Deuteronomy that emphasize them being redeemed—freed from—the **bondage of Egypt**:

Deut 7:8 “But because the LORD loved you...hath the LORD **brought you out** with a mighty hand, and **redeemed you out** of the house of bondmen...”

Deut 9:26 “...O Lord God, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which thou hast **redeemed** through thy greatness, which thou hast **brought forth out** of Egypt with a mighty hand.

Deut 13:5 “...the Lord your God, which **brought you out** of the land of Egypt, and **redeemed you out** of the house of bondage...”

Deut 15:15 “And thou shalt remember that **thou wast a bondman** in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God **redeemed thee...**”

Deut 24:18 “But thou shalt remember that **thou wast a bondman** in Egypt, and the Lord thy God **redeemed** thee thence...”

Much more could be said, but it is obvious that *redemption* for God’s people was their **liberation**—being set free from—the burden and bondage of Egypt. They were no longer slaves because they had been redeemed—a price had been paid to set them free!

I want us now to turn our attention to the NT and examine this same aspect of redemption in regards to salvation in Christ. What is it that Christ sets us free **from**?

When talking to someone about salvation, a good thing to bring up early in the conversation is what it is that we need to be saved **from**. What we are saved from is the same thing that we are redeemed from.

Before we look at what the Bible says we are redeemed from, I want to consider first some...

2. **Common Errors regarding what we are redeemed from**

A. Error #1—we are redeemed/freed from—Satan

Are we free from Satan once we become a child of God? Are we ever bothered by him again? Yes—we are bothered by him; no—we are not free from him.

--We see that in the temptation of Jesus. We aren't going to turn there, but in both Matthew 4 and Luke 4 we see Jesus being "tempted of the devil." Becoming a child of God does not free us from temptation.

--We also see it in NT warnings.

II Corinthians 2:11 "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of **his devices.**"

Ephesians 6:11 "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the **wiles of the devil.**"

I Peter 5:8 "Be sober, be vigilant; because your **adversary the devil**, as a roaring lion, walketh about, **seeking whom he may devour:**"

B. Error #2—we are redeemed/freed from—sin

Are we free from **sin** after we become a child of God? No; we aren't, are we? Our goal should be to **not** sin, but our sin-nature is not removed when we trust Jesus as our Savior and become a child of God. We get a new nature because we are born again—but the old nature is not removed and, sadly, we still sin. The Bible is abundantly clear in this regard, but we will just look at one passage.

I John 1:8-10 "If we **say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves**, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.¹⁰ **If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar**, and His word is not in us."

To be redeemed means to be set free from *something*—just as the children of Israel were set free from Egypt. If we are not freed from Satan or sin when we are redeemed, what is it that we are now free from that we weren't before?

3. **NT Examination—Redemption from what through Christ?**

A. The curse of the law

Please take your Bibles and **turn to** Galatians 3, verse 13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

What is the curse of the law? The curse of the law is **not** some kind of voodoo spell cast upon us by a witch or witch-doctor—it is the **punishment** due to our failure to **keep** the law.

--The **requirement** of the law is that it is to be perfectly **kept**. Notice verse 10: "Cursed is every one that **continueth not** in **all things** which are written in the book of the law **to do** them." The "law" here, does not refer to just the first five books of the Bible—or even the entire OT. The law refers to **all the commandments** of God as found in the Word of God. It doesn't matter if we keep **most** of them because if we break one, we are **guilty of all**.

James 2:10 "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is **guilty of all.**"

So here's the requirement: to **always** keep **every** commandment of God **perfectly all the time**. And if we don't perfectly keep every commandment all the time, we are under the curse of the law. So why did God give us the law if no one can perfectly keep it?

In verse 24 we see the **purpose** of the law. What is the purpose? The purpose of the law is to show us that we **can't keep it!** It is our school-master—our teacher—to bring us to Christ. It shows us that **works don't work**—and that we can only be justified—declared right in God's sight—by **faith**.

No one keeps the law perfectly—and breaking even one commandment makes us guilty of all and puts us under the curse of the law. What, exactly, is the curse of the law? Simply put, it is “the wrath to come.”

B. The wrath to come

Three thoughts regarding the wrath to come.

i. Declaration of the wrath to come

Revelation 6:15-17 “And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; ¹⁶And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the **wrath of the Lamb**: ¹⁷For the **great day of His wrath is come**; and who shall be able to stand?”

Other verses: II Peter 3:10-12; Jude 14-15; Isaiah 63:1-4

ii. Explanation of the wrath to come

II Thessalonians 1:7-9 “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸In flaming fire **taking vengeance on them that know not God**, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: ⁹Who shall be punished with **everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power;”

Listen carefully—*everlasting destruction* does **not** mean annihilation. It does not mean an end to existence. It does not mean that you are dead and in the grave and that there is no more you. No; everlasting destruction means **eternal** separation from God in a place called hell. Jesus says that very thing in Matthew 25.

Matthew 25:41 “Then shall He [Jesus as King] say also unto them on the left hand, **Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire**, prepared for the devil and his angels....”

Matthew 25:46 “And these shall go away into **everlasting punishment**: but the righteous into life eternal.”

We are all sinners—we are all law-breakers—and the punishment for being law-breakers is that we are all under the curse of the law—the punishment for breaking the law—which is the wrath of God. We are all destined for hell; none of us is **worthy** of escape—but, praise the Lord, there is a way of escape!

iii. Salvation from the wrath to come

Romans 5:9 “Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be **saved from wrath** through Him.”
I Thessalonians 1:10 “And to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which **delivered us from the wrath to come.**”

Who escapes the wrath to come? There are a number of verses we can turn to, but we will look at just one. Please **turn in** your Bibles to John 3, verse 36, and follow along as I read. John spells it out, doesn't he?

--If you believe on the Son you **have** everlasting life. The wrath of God has been **removed from you**—it is no longer hanging over your head—because Christ redeemed you from the punishment of the law. Being redeemed from the **slavery of Egypt** was no doubt a wonderful thing, but what can compare to being free from the punishment of your sins?

--What can compare to being free from **fear** and **guilt** and **shame**?

--What can compare to being free from **eternal misery** and **pain** and **torment**?

--What can compare to being free from a **place of weeping and gnashing of teeth**?

What a wonderful, incomprehensible thing it is to be **free from the punishment we deserve for our sin!**

But there's a second group of people referred to in this verse, isn't there? Who are they? They are those “that believeth **not** the Son.” What is their fate? They shall **not see** life—talking about everlasting life in heaven with God. Instead, they have the **wrath of God abiding**—resting—on them.

--They will experience **fear** and **guilt** and **shame** when they meet God

--And they will be sentenced to a place of eternal **misery** and **pain** and **torment** and **weeping and gnashing of teeth**. No wonder it says in the book of Hebrews "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb 10:31). Every one of us here today are in John 3:36. Where are you?

CONCLUDING CONSIDERATIONS:

1. Have you been redeemed—delivered from—the wrath of God? All of us are in John 3:36. We have either trusted Christ and have been freed from the eternal punishment for our sins—or that punishment awaits us.
2. For those of us who have been delivered, are you grateful? Our natural response should be to love and serve the One who paid our price so that we don't have to.