

Redemption Through His Blood

Scripture: Ephesians 1:6–10

Code: 1904

INTRODUCTION

A. Redemption Characterized

1. The definition

Redemption is God's paying the ransom or price for sin Himself. Redemption is deliverance by the payment of a price.

2. The different terms

a) agorazo/exagorazo--Both those words are translated "redemption" in the New Testament. The Greek root of both is agora, which means "marketplace." b) lutroo/apolutrosis--The Greek word translated "redemption" in Ephesians 1:7 (apolutrosis) is an intensified form of lutroo, which refers to paying a price to free someone from bondage. During New Testament times the Roman empire had approximately twenty million slaves, and the buying and selling of them was major business. If a person wanted to free a loved one or friend who was a slave, he would buy the slave for himself and then grant him freedom. He would testify to that deliverance by a written certificate. Lutroo was used to designate such a transaction.

3. The deliverance

a) The captivity of sin We are all born in the state of slavery--everyone is held captive by sin from birth. (1) John 8:34--Jesus said, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (cf. Eccles. 7:20). (2) Romans 6:17--Paul described the Roman Christians as "the servants of sin" before they were saved. (3) Romans 7:14--Paul also said that he was "sold under sin." (4) Romans 8:21--In the future, creation will be "delivered from the bondage of corruption." b) The consequence of sin Sin demands a price be paid. (1) Romans 6:23--Ultimately the price that must be paid is death: "The wages of sin is death." (2) Hebrews 9:22--"Without shedding of blood [imagery of a violent death] is no remission [of sins]." (3) Ezekiel 18:20--"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." c) The conqueror of sin Jesus redeemed us by paying the price sin required. (1) Galatians 5:1--"It was for freedom that Christ set us free" (NASB). (2) Galatians 1:3-4--"Our Lord Jesus Christ ... gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil age." (3) Colossians 1:13--God "hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear son." (4) Romans 6:18--"Being, then, made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." (5) Galatians 3:13--"Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." (6) Hebrews 2:14-15--"As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same [i.e., God became a man], that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage."

B. Redemption Compared

There are five Greek legal terms that help us understand redemption.

1. Defined

a) Justification (Gk. dikaiosis) This term refers to acquittal in a court of law. b) Forgiveness (Gk. aphesis) This speaks of a canceled debt. Whenever a debt was canceled, retribution made, or the price paid, the word aphesis was used. c) Adoption (Gk. huiothesia) This refers to the legal process of going to court to adopt a child. The Bible uses that term to speak of sonship--of becoming a son of God. d) Reconciliation (Gk. katalasso) This term was used to indicate that peace had been made

between two warring parties (eg., 2 Cor. 5:20).e) Redemption (Gk. apolutrosis) This term refers to purchasing a prisoner for the purpose of setting him free.

2. Distinguished

a) Justification--the sinner stands before God accused, but is declared righteous because of his position in Christ (Rom. 8:33).b) Forgiveness--the sinner stands before God as a debtor, but his obligation brought by sin is canceled (Eph. 1:7).c) Adoption--the sinner stands before God as a stranger, but is made a son (Eph. 1:5).d) Reconciliation--the sinner stands before God as an enemy, but is made a friend (2 Cor. 5:18-20).e) Redemption--the sinner stands before God as a slave, but receives freedom (Rom. 6:18; 22).

All those terms are different facets of the magnificent diamond of the doctrine of salvation. Redemption is just one facet of our salvation.

REVIEW

I. THE BLESSING'S ELEMENTS (v. 3)

II. THE BODY'S ETERNAL FORMATION (vv. 4-14)

A. In The Past--Election (vv. 4-6a)

LESSON

B. In The Present--Redemption (vv. 6b-10)

1. The redeemer (vv. 6b-7a)

"Through [grace] He hath made us accepted in the beloved; in whom we have redemption."

Our Redeemer is "the Beloved"--Jesus Christ. We are acceptable to God because we have been made one with Christ through faith. In Him that we are made acceptable and given redemption.

a) His ascription The term "Beloved" was God's special name for His Son. (1) Mark 1:11--When Jesus was baptized the Father spoke from heaven, saying, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (2) Mark 9:7--At the transfiguration the Father again spoke from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved son; hear him." (3) Colossians 1:13--Paul tells us that God has "transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son" (NASB).b) Our acceptance God gives His abundant riches to Christ, and because we are in Christ, we are recipients as well. Christ is accepted by the Father and we are accepted because of our relationship to His Son. The Greek word translated "accepted" in Ephesians 1:6 means "graced." We could translate Ephesians 1:6, "We have been graced by God's grace." God extends His grace to us because we are in Christ.

2. The redeemed (vv. 6b-7a)

The redeemed are "us" (v. 6) and "we" (v. 7). But who are they?

a) Ephesians 2:1-3--"You ... were dead in trespasses and sins; in which in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air [Satan], the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our manner of life in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."b) Ephesians 2:11-12--"Remember that ye, being in time past Gentiles ... without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."c) Ephesians 4:17-19--"Ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." The people God redeems are sinners. They were at one time lewd, greedy, blind, ignorant, alienated, and darkened with no hope because they were without God. In Titus 2 Paul says that Christ "gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people of his own, zealous of good works" (v. 14). Jesus said, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:13). Before a person can be freed from the

slavery of sin he must acknowledge his sin. And as Paul says in Romans 3, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (v. 23).

3. The redemption (v. 7b)

"Redemption through his blood."

a) Its proper meaning Romans 3:23 says, "The wages of sin is death." The price of sin is death. Someone had to die, and Jesus did. "His blood" is a metonym for the violent death of Christ on the cross. Through the shedding of His blood, Christ poured out His life as a sacrificial, substitutionary payment for sin. In the New Testament we find that Christ gave not only His blood (Acts 20:28), but also His very life (Matt. 20:28) and self (Gal. 1:4). Though stated differently, they all refer to the same thing--Christ's death on our behalf. Through the sacrifice of His Son God showed us mercy without violating His justice. b) Its permanent effectiveness The death of Christ purchased our redemption. The Old Testament sacrificial system was only symbolic of the coming death of the Lamb of God. Hebrews says, "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (10:14). c) Its perceived value 1) 1 Peter 1:18-19--"Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver and gold, from your vain manner of life received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ." 2) Revelation 5:9-12--"They sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy take the scroll, and to open its seals; 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 God a kingdom of priests, and we shall reign on the earth.... Worthy is the lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." The blood of Christ--emblematic of His sacrificial, substitutionary death--frees us from the guilt of sin, the condemnation of sin, the power of sin, the penalty of sin, and will remove us from the presence of sin.

4. The results (vv. 7c-8)

a) Forgiveness (v. 7c) "The forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Speaking to the disciples about the Lord's Supper, Christ said, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission [forgiveness] of sins" (Matt. 26:28). (1) Its portrayal Israel understood the concept of forgiveness in the Old Testament. On the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), the high priest sacrificed a goat and sprinkled its blood on the altar. Then he placed his hands on the head of another goat, confessed the people's sins over it, and sent it out into the wilderness where it could never find its way back. That goat symbolized forgiveness-- sending sin where it could never be seen again. The Greek word translated "forgiveness" in Ephesians 1:7 (aphiemi) means "to send away never to return." 2) Its origin Remember that the events described in the first chapter of Ephesians happened before the world began. Depressed Christians forget that God looked down the corridors of time even before He fashioned the earth and placed the sins of His elect on the head of His Son, who took them an eternal distance away. So our sins were forgiven before God created the universe. (3) Its extent a) Psalm 103:12--"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." b) Isaiah 44:22--"I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, like a cloud, thy sins; return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." c) Micah 7:18-19--"Who is a God like unto thee, who pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again; he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Shakespeare's King Richard III said, "My conscience hath a thousand several tongues, and every tongue brings a several tale, and every tale condemns me" (Act V.iii. 194-96). That isn't true of the believer. When Jesus comes into our lives, He tells us what He told the woman at the well, "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more" (John 8:11). In Romans 8:1 Paul says, "There is ... now no condemnation to them who are in Christ." Our sins have been forgiven--not because we deserve it but because of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf.

You Are Responsible?

There is one school of thought in modern psychology that undermines personal responsibility in wrongdoing. Its adherents claim that we are merely victims of our past and attempt to remove personal guilt. Although their intentions are good, in the end they do mankind a disservice. That's because we all have an emotional, psychological, and spiritual need to acknowledge guilt. The gospel clearly declares the guilt of men. All men are personally responsible for their sins. However, the gospel also proclaims good news: that Christ paid the penalty for our sins for us. He suffered to set us free. The Bible presents the only effective prescription for guilt: forgiveness. It is available to all men who receive it. The apostle John said, "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake" (1 John 2:12). Ephesians 4:32 says, "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you." And Colossians 2:13 says, "You, being dead in your sins . . . hath he [God] made alive together with him [Christ], having forgiven you all trespasses."

(4) Its perpetuation God did not forgive only our past sins. Christ paid for all our sins--past, present, and future. Jesus said to Peter that once a person has had a bath (being saved), all he needs is to wash his feet when they get dusty (confess his sins; John 13:10). First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, his is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." That's how to deal with sin on a day- to-day basis. Why the Lingering Sense of Guilt? We are accepted by God because of our union with Christ. In fact, those who receive Christ are the children of God (John 1:12). Yet so many believers continue to feel a sense of guilt or inferiority. That's because they don't have an adequate understanding of God. Name droppers boast that they are friends with famous people. However, a Christian can legitimately boast that the God of the universe is his friend. In fact, Christ is now in heaven preparing a place for him to spend eternity (John 14:1-3). In addition, God has granted him everything he needs (2 Pet. 1:3). Many times a believer's low view of himself is caused by his failure to understand his position in Christ. But know that our worth is based upon the worth of God's Son. Because of Christ, we have value to God. Because of Christ, we should value ourselves and others. 5) Its abundance God's forgiveness is "according to the riches of his grace" (v. 7). God's grace is boundless. It is far beyond our ability to comprehend or describe, yet we know it is "according to the riches" of that infinite grace that He provides forgiveness. If you were to ask a millionaire to contribute to a worthy ministry, and he gave you a check for twenty-five dollars, he would only be giving out of his riches. Many poor people give that much. But if he gave you a check for twenty-five thousand dollars, he would be giving according to his riches. God gives according to His riches not out of His riches. b) Wisdom and prudence (v. 8) "In which he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence." 1) Distinguished (a) Wisdom (Gk. sophia) That term frequently refers to wisdom in eternal things such as life, death, God, man, sin, and eternity. Its emphasis is on theological issues. (b) Prudence (Gk. phronesis) Prudence often refers to insight into earthly things. Its emphasis is on practical living. 2) Displayed God forgives our sins and then gives us insight to live for Him in a hostile world. The modern French author Andre Maurois was a relativist and wrote a book on the subject. He believed the universe was indifferent, convinced that there was no way for anyone to attain total, absolute truth in any area, including creation. Yet the truth is that God has "hidden these things from the [self-proclaimed] wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Luke 10:21). James says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him" (1:5).

5. The reason (vv. 9-10)

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in him."

At the completion of history, when the millennial kingdom is phased into the eternal state, God will gather together all the redeemed. At that time "every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and

things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God, the Father" (Phil. 2:10-11). Christ will gather the entire universe into unity (Ps. 2; Heb. 1:8-13). At the present time the universe is anything but unified. It is corrupted, divided, and splintered. Although Satan rules the world now, God will cast him and his demons into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10).

When every trace of evil has been disposed of, God will establish an incomparable unity in Himself of the things that remain. That is the inevitable goal of the universe.

Shakespeare's Macbeth said that life is "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing" (vv. 23-27). Not true. God has an absolutely clear and wonderful purpose in mind, and at the completion of history He will bring all things together to Himself.

Focusing on the Facts

1. Define redemption.
2. What are we in bondage to that redemption delivers us from?
3. What price was paid to release us from sin's grasp?
4. What are five legal terms used in the New Testament to describe the different facets of salvation?
5. How do those five terms differ from each other ?
6. What name is used to identify our Redeemer in Ephesians 1:6? Why?
7. What makes an individual acceptable to God? Explain
8. What characteristic is common to all the redeemed ?
9. What purchased our redemption (v. 7)?
10. What did the Old Testament sacrifices symbolize?
11. What are the results of redemption (vv. 7-8)?
12. How did the Day of Atonement picture redemption for the nation of Israel ?
15. When were our sins forgiven?
16. Explain the difference between wisdom and prudence .
17. Why did God redeem us?

Pondering the Principles

1. Read Romans 6:16-22. Are Christians and non-Christians free to live as they please? Explain your answer using Paul's teaching in this text. Believers have been set free from bondage to sin. Does any part of your life reflect that you are still living as though you're under bondage? After you have confessed and repented of that sin seek out another believer to whom you can be accountable.
2. Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. The gospel has the power to transform even the most wicked of men and women. Yet, sometimes we think that some people are beyond the power of God. But remember, every soul that is saved is a miracle because everyone is a sinner in God's sight. This week, pray for God to do such a miracle in the life of someone you know.
3. Even though all your sins have been forgiven, it is important to confess your sins before God. Why? What do the following passages teach about the importance of confession (Psalm 32:1-5; 38:17-18; 66:18; Prov. 28:13-14; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32)? Why is confession important before you study God's Word?

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