

# Christ OUR REDEMPTION

**R**edemption—the most important of all gospel truths—is at once the sweetest note in the song of Bible believers and a favourite target for the derision of Bible deniers. It offends the pride of fallen men to learn that they need to be redeemed, but it rejoices the souls of regenerate men to know their need has been graciously met.

The word *redemption* is the most pictorial word associated with salvation. Indeed, many of the stories recorded in the Old Testament are eloquent depictions of our redemption. The deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt (Psalm 106:6–12) is a remarkable picture of our redemption by Christ in that it was particular (only for the people of God, the Hebrews), it was effectual, and it required a blood sacrifice. Israel had been brought into Egyptian bondage by an act of sin—the selling of Joseph (Genesis 37). It was redeemed by the hand of a man God raised up—Moses the deliverer (Acts 7:35). The price of Israel's redemption was the blood of the paschal lamb (Exodus 12:13), and the power behind its redemption was the omnipotent hand of God (Exodus 14:13–14; 15:1, 2–16).

Another beautiful picture of redemption is found in the book of Ruth, where Boaz, a near kinsman, entered into a legal contract to buy back Ruth from poverty. He was

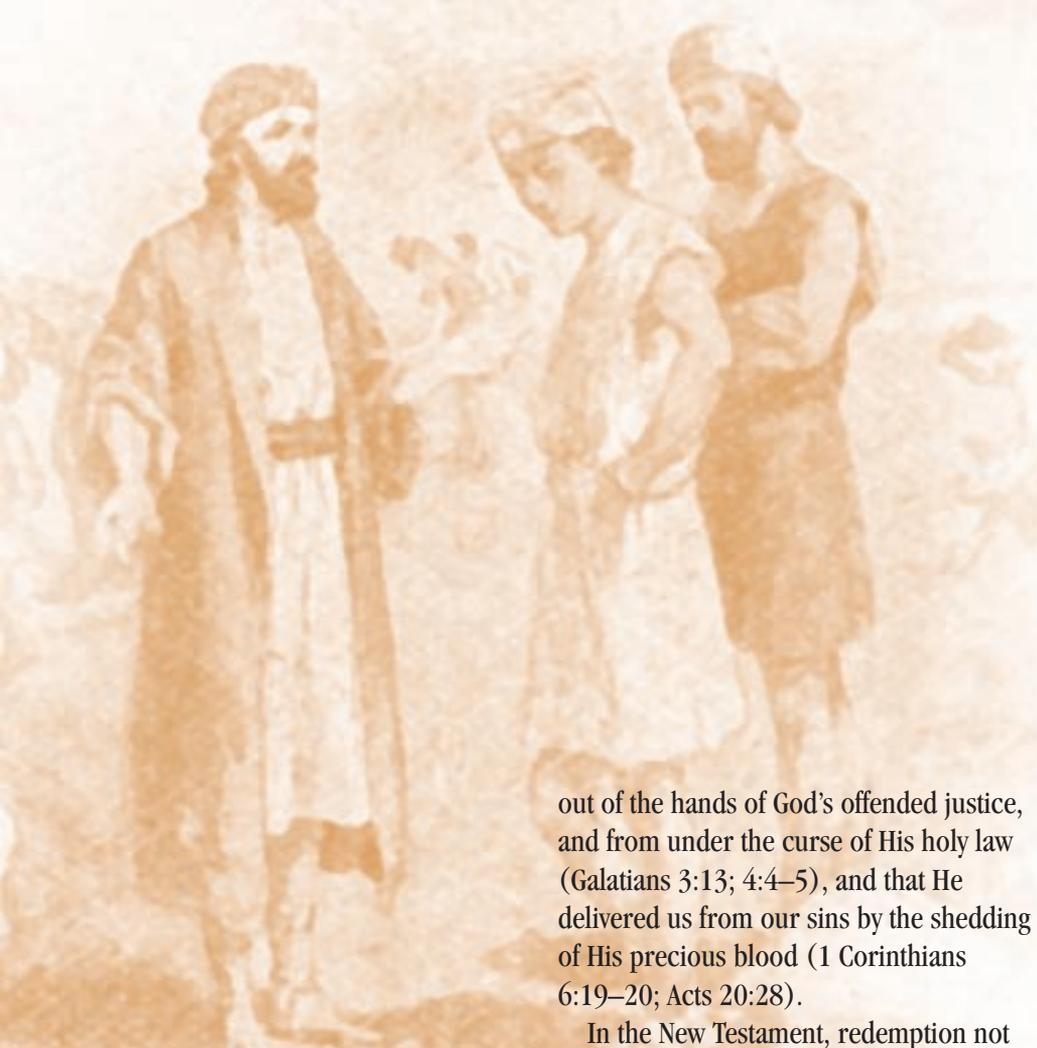
exercising the right of the kinsman redeemer (Leviticus 25:47–49) to buy back an Israelite, who by reason of poverty had sold himself into bondage. So our kinsman redeemer, Christ Jesus, is both able and willing to redeem us from our bondage to sin (Hebrews 7:25).

Other depictions of redemption are found in Exodus 30:11–16 (the atonement money paid by Israel), in Isaiah 49:8–10; 61:1–3 (the deliverance of a debtor from prison), and in Job 33:24 and Zechariah 9:11 (the ransom of a slave). But redemption is not only pictured in Scripture, it is explained as well.

## **The definition of redemption**

Our English word *redemption* comes from the Latin and means “to buy again.” In the Greek New Testament several words are commonly used in reference to our redemption by Christ. The

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chief term is *lutroo*, which means “to set free” or “to loose.” It is the word used to describe the deliverance of a slave or prisoner from bondage and captivity by paying a ransom price for him. Our Lord Jesus Himself declared that He came into the world to give His life a ransom price for many (Matthew 20:28). Peter tells us that we have been redeemed, not with silver or gold (the usual price of a ransom) but with the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18–19). Paul also makes it clear that this ransom price was the sacrificial death, the atoning blood, of the Lord Jesus Christ (Titus 2:14).

The New Testament also employs the Greek verb *exagoradzo* (or, when it is used without the prefix, *agoradzo*), where the basic meaning is “to buy out of.” The way the Bible employs this term leaves us in no doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ bought His people from among the fallen sons of Adam (Revelation 5:9; 14:3–4),

out of the hands of God’s offended justice, and from under the curse of His holy law (Galatians 3:13; 4:4–5), and that He delivered us from our sins by the shedding of His precious blood (1 Corinthians 6:19–20; Acts 20:28).

In the New Testament, redemption not only denotes the present deliverance from sin enjoyed by God’s people (Ephesians 1:7), but also includes the future deliverance of their bodies from all the effects of sin (Romans 8:23). Their deliverance has been purchased and is now the possession of every believer; but the full effects of that purchase wait on the return of our Lord Jesus Christ when our bodies will be transformed (Philippians 3:21; 1 John 3:2).

### **The demand for redemption**

If someone should ask why this redemption is necessary, the following facts provide the answer:

1. All men and women since the fall of Adam are sinners, alienated from God (Romans 3:23; 8:7). The wages of our sin and enmity toward God is death. All sin must be punished, either in the sinner or in the sinner’s substitute (Hebrews 2:2).

2. It is the will of God to save sinners. There are people in this world who must

be saved because it is the will of God to save them (John 10:16; Ephesians 1:3–7; Matthew 1:21), and the will of God cannot be frustrated.

3. It is impossible, however, for a holy, just, and true God to save any sinner apart from the satisfaction of justice (Hebrews 9:22). God must punish sin! In fact He has declared that He “will by no means clear the guilty” (Exodus 34:7). Therefore, if He is ever going to forgive our sins, He must do so by a method that satisfies the demands of His justice.

4. The only way the justice of God could ever be satisfied is by the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 3:24–26). Only the sinless Son of God could pay the penalty for our sin and purchase our redemption.

### **The design of redemption**

It is clear that God designed that the Lord Jesus Christ, by His redemptive work, should actually offer an effective ransom for all for whom He died. If Christ offered to God an acceptable sacrifice for our sins, as He did, we must draw the necessary conclusion that it is impossible for a holy God to punish any sinner for whom justice has been satisfied by the blood of Christ (Isaiah 53:11). Satisfied justice demands the release of every prisoner for whom the price has been paid. That price has been paid in full by our Lord Jesus Christ. It is no surprise then that Thoro Harris, in his hymn “All That Thrills My Soul Is Jesus,” describes our ransom by Christ as “a wonderful redemption.” ■



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