

The Church of the Servant King
Soteriology Series

SO_5_What Christ Accomplished in His Death-Part 1-Redemption

Introduction

Three of the most basic soteriological doctrines are redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation. This next series of lessons will focus upon defining and describing these three key doctrines. Redemption focuses upon sin. Reconciliation focuses upon man's depravity. Propitiation focuses upon God. "The basic principles in these three doctrines apply to all dispensations, although it should be evident that the complete revelation of them did not come until Christ had died, risen again, and ascended to heaven, from whence He revealed these truths."¹ In future lessons, we will examine other soteriological truths related to the work of Christ such as sanctification, justification, regeneration, expiation (verses atonement), identification of the believer with Christ, imputation (real verses judicial), etc.

Redemption

Old Testament Usage

The focus of our study in this series is upon those soteriological truths applicable to the Church Age believer as a result of the finished and past work of Christ on the Cross. Nevertheless, we need to acknowledge their part in the salvation experience of the believer prior to the Church Age.² Redemption is not a Truth that is unique to the New Testament or more specifically to the Church Age epistles. In fact, the various forms of the word "redeem" occur 139 times in the Old Testament and only 22 times in the New Testament.³ Even though in the Old Testament, redemption often has to do with things (e.g. *redemption money* in Numbers 3:49), on many occasions redemption was used to describe God's relationship to His people. For instance:

- God redeemed Israel out of Egypt (Ex 6:6; 15:13) – a reference to a physical deliverance
- Isaiah speaks of the future redemption of Israel (Isa 52:3 cf. 1 Pe 1:18, 19)

The Kinsman-Redeemer Typology of Ruth: The basic facts of this wonderful story are as follows. They are a perfect illustration of the omniscient Holy Spirit inspiring the writer of the book of Ruth in a magnificent manner that anticipated through typology certain truths relating to Jesus' work on behalf of the Church Age believer.

The story unfolds as a woman by the name of Naomi, her husband and two sons leave Judah because of a famine and settle in Moab where her husband and sons died. When she returned to Bethlehem, Ruth, a Moabitess and the wife of one of her two sons returned with

¹ Charles F. Baker, *A Dispensational Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Grace Publications, 1994), 353.

² I believe that it is important that we recognize the similarities that exist between dispensations with regard to certain truths while acknowledging the distinctions, otherwise we risk the possibility of having an imbalance in our understanding of God's plan and the truths related thereto. Dispensationalists are accused on occasion of focusing upon the distinctions to the exclusion of the similarities. Non-dispensationalists are sometimes viewed as focusing upon the similarities to the exclusion of the distinctions. As is true in many cases in life, the Truth lies somewhere in between.

³ Ibid.

Naomi. (The other daughter-in-law decided to remain in Moab). Ruth's decision to remain with Naomi reflects Ruth's faith in the God of Israel and is one of the most beautiful expressions of love between a mother-in-law and a daughter-in-law that has probably ever been recorded (see Ruth 1:16-17).

During her stay in Moab, Naomi had lost everything, i.e. her husband and her sons and the hope of provision through them. However, when she returned to Bethlehem, Naomi had a kinsman through her husband who was very wealthy. His name was Boaz. Boaz was not only wealthy, but he was a man of great wisdom and integrity that resulted from his spiritual life (see Ruth 2:11-12). Upon Ruth and Naomi's return to Bethlehem, it was barley harvest time. The Mosaic Law allowed the poor to glean in the farmer's fields after the reapers and collect what the reapers had missed (Lev 23:22). Boaz became aware of the situation of Naomi and Ruth (Ruth 1:11-12) and recognized the character that Ruth had displayed. Boaz knew that Ruth was a woman of substance even though she was not of Judah (Ruth 3:11). Ruth appealed to Boaz as a near kinsman to exercise his rights and duties under the principle of levirate marriage (Deut 25:5-10) and provide her deceased husband with an heir. Boaz consented to do so as long as another man, who happened to be closer in relationship refused to take Ruth. Boaz purchased all the estate that had belonged to the deceased father and two sons and took Ruth as his wife in order to provide an heir to the deceased father and son (Ruth 4). The son of Boaz and Ruth was Obed who was the grandfather of David, the recipient of the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7:12-16).

There are several types in this story that find their fulfillment in Christ as our kinsman-redeemer. The requirements for a redeemer and their related fulfillment typologically through Christ are as follows:

Requirements for a Redeemer	Fulfillment in Christ
Kinsman	Jesus, the second Person of the Godhead, had to become a kinsman with man in order to redeem man
Wealthy enough to pay the redemption price	Jesus possessed the coin of the realm, i.e. a righteousness that could satisfy God's righteousness.
The nearest of kin had the priority if he was able to redeem	Ruth's nearest of kin was unable to redeem and thereby typified the Law which was unable to redeem.
Redeemer must be willing to redeem	Philippians 2 records how Jesus voluntarily humbled Himself to become man and purchase our redemption through His death

New Testament Usage

There are four words used for redemption in the New Testament and all of them embody a concept of payment – we have been redeemed from the slave market of sin (Ro 3:23; 5:12-21; .6:23) by means of the price paid by Christ in His death since we are powerless to redeem ourselves. “When anybody heard the Greek word lutron, ‘ransom’ in the first century, it was natural for him to think of the purchase money for manumitting slaves. The four words used in the New Testament all relate in some manner to the work of Christ on behalf of Israel as the Messiah (in the Gospels), on behalf of the Church (in the Pauline epistles), or on behalf of Tribulation believers (in the book of Revelation). They are as follows:

Word for Redemption and Basic Meaning	Used in Such Passages As
<i>Agorazo</i> – to buy in the market and	1 Cor 6:20; 7:23 – “For ye are

used to refer to spiritual redemption	bought with a price" 2 Pe 2:1 – “Denying the Lord that bought them” Re 5:9 – “For thou wast slain, and hast redeemed God by thy blood” Re 14:3, 4 – “The hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth... these were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and the Lamb.”
<i>Exagorazo</i> – to ransom or buy out of the market. Used twice of Christ redeeming or setting men free from the dominion of the Mosaic Law.	Gal 3:13 – “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.” Gal 4:5 – “To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”
<i>Lutroo</i> – to liberate upon the payment of a ransom. (Related nouns are <i>lutron</i> and <i>lutrosis</i> which are used 2 and 3 times, respectively)	Titus 2:14 – “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” 1 Pe 1:18 – “Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things but with the precious blood of Christ.”
<i>Apolutrosis</i> – a releasing effected by the payment of a ransom	Luke 21:28 – “When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.” Rom 3:24 – “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” Rom 8:23 – “Waiting for the adoption, to wit the redemption of our body.” 1 Co 1:30; Eph 1:7, 14; 4:30; col 1:14; Heb 9:15

Redemption and the Church Age Believer

We have already seen several passages that relate to and explain the concept of redemption in view of the Church Age believer. In the doctrine of redemption, the freedom and the liberty of the redeemed one is emphasized. For instance, Galatians 5:1 – “Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Paul illustrates the legitimate use of that freedom when he calls himself a bondsman of Jesus Christ (Ro 1:1; Tit 1:1). The believer is not bound to make himself a bondsman to Christ. He is free to make himself a bondsman or not. This has similarities to the principles governing the freed slave in the Mosaic Law (Ex 21:1-11). When a slave was freed under the Mosaic Law, he could choose to remain a slave to his master for life.

The Future Aspect of Redemption

There is a sense in which our redemption has been completely accomplished and another sense in which it awaits a future day for its fulfillment. The ransom price (the acceptable sacrifice of Christ) has been paid and the believer has received the redemption of his soul. However, Christ's redemption includes not merely the souls of believers, but the creation itself (Rom 8:21). In Ephesians 1:13-14 and 4:30, the "day of redemption" for believers is seen as future and in Romans 8:23, the "day of redemption" is equated to "the day of adoption." "The future day of redemption is called the adoption because it is the time when the believers will be manifested with Christ in all of their rights and privileges of sonship, (which is the scriptural meaning of adoption)."⁴ The sealing of the Holy Spirit is the earnest (downpayment) of our inheritance of those rights and privileges. This day of redemption for the Church Age believer will occur at the time of the Rapture.

In one other passage, a future redemption is related to a different dispensational setting. In Luke 21:28, Jesus instructs His disciples and says "now when these things [signs associated with Christ's Second Advent] begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." Of course, this refers to the deliverance of believers at the end of the Tribulation via the Second Advent of Christ. Those who endure to the end of the Tribulation will be delivered into the Messianic Kingdom (Matt 24:13).

After the thousand year reign of Christ and the final rebellion of Satan (Re 20:7-10) Christ will subdue the final enemy, i.e. death (1 Co 15:26) and the entire creation will be delivered from the effects of sin. At this point, redemption will be finally complete in every sense.

⁴ Ibid., 358.