



NEW LIFE

BIBLE-PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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“For the Word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev 1:9)

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REDEMPTION IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

Introduction

When God brought the Israelites out of Egypt and led them into the promise land, they were under a theocratic system of government where God is their King and Ruler. The people soon rebelled against such a system being influenced by the heathen nations around them and thus rejected God as their Ruler. Nevertheless God had established the laws through Moses which were to govern the lives of the Israelites as a nation and to show them through these laws how they ought to relate to God and to their neighbours and all that concern their well-being. One of those laws pertains to the Right of Redemption.

Definition of Kinsman/Redeemer or Redemption

It is quite clear from Scripture that Moses not only gave God’s laws to the children of Israel but he also instructed them clearly how it should be applied. Therefore to every Israelite’s mind the idea of redemption and the role of a kinsman/redeemer were well understood to have the following implications.

Firstly, the meaning of the word “redeem” (Heb – la;g|)) has to do with:

a) The act as kinsman, do the part of next of kin.

Responsibilities:

- taking a kinsman widow to raised up children by her (Ru.3:13)
- redeeming from bondage (Lev. 25:48-49)
- redeeming a field (Lev. 25:26,33; Ru. 4:4-6)
- claim as kinsman (Jb. 3:5)
- avenger of blood (Nu. 35:19,21,24,25,27)

Secondly, Redeem, by payment of value assessed, of consecrated things, by the original owner.

Thirdly, Redeem, with God as subject, implying personal relationship.

Example:

- redeem individual from death (Lam. 3:58; Ho.13:14)
- redeem Israel from Egyptian bondage (Ex.6:6; 15:13)

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The word “Redemption” (Heb – **hlag**.) has also the similar impression of:

- kin, men of thy kindred (Ez. 11:15)
- redemption, of field (Lev. 25:24; Ru 4:6)
- right of redemption (Lev. 25:29,31,32,48; Je 32:8)
- price of redemption (Lev 25:26,51,52)

Redemption in the society and theology of Ancient Israel

In the society of Ancient Israel, such a concept of redemption is to be practised by the Israelites and the clearest case from Scripture is the account of Naomi recorded for us in the book of Ruth chapter 4:1-15. In this account, Boaz acted as the “redeemer” because his position in the family gave him the right of redemption which entailed taking Ruth as his wife and effect the restoration of the land back to Naomi’s family.

Besides these, the reproach suffered by Naomi was also removed by the birth of Boaz and Ruth’s son whom Naomi called “a redeemer”. From this account we noted that the redeemer must do the part of purchase of the land which means a sum of money is paid for it and marry the widow. These 2 matters must go hand in hand and cannot be done one without the other. So this aspect of redemption is for the continuance of the family name, restoration of land/property and return of honour through the birth of a son by the redeemer, such is the custom of their society at that time.

This custom is not solely for the purpose of maintaining the rights of the kinsman or relative, it is also for uniting of the people as members of a clan and to prevent the disruption of such a unity as a nation.

The next aspect of this concept was for the redeemer to act as “avenger of blood”, that is to kill the murderer or the relative of the murderer’s clan if he meets him outside the city of refuge. The redeemer must be the dead man’s son, and then the other male relatives. In such a case the killing must not be premeditated or with intent to kill. The accused if found innocent by the congregation must stay in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest before he can return back to his own city. If the avenger should succeed in killing the accused, he is not to be murdered in turn. This practice was spelled out in the Mosaic Law (Nu. 35:11-29).

Under the theocratic form of government, the entire land belong to God and the Israelites only possessed the right to use the land and under such a system if the owner sold the land for whatever reason and cannot purchase it back, then the land shall be returned to the owner or owner’s family at the year of Jubilee which came every fifty years (Lev. 25:8-17).

The practice of such a law of redemption cannot be separated with the spiritual or theological aspect of such a concept. In fact such a system of redemption came about when God delivered the Israelites from their bondage of slavery in Egypt. After they were brought out, God gave the command to lay claim on the first-born of every Israelites male child and cattle which were supposed to be dedicated for God’s service (Exo. 13:2) because He spared every male child in the Israelites family during the final plague in Egypt.

Such a practice was lifted later on and in its replacement is the dedication of the tribe of Levi and its cattle (Num. 3:12,13,41,45). But when there were shortage of Levi, they ...

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were required to “redeem” the remaining first-born by paying a sum of money (Num 3:46-51). Only after this was done that the first-born were released from the divine claim and restored to their families.

The idea of redemption from the biblical point of view actually stem from the act of redemption by God in His deliverance of His people from bondage of foreign power. This act was carried out by God alone and thus shows the significance of the one who performs it and the means by which He effected it. In the account recorded for us in Exodus chapter 5-12, God was represented by Moses as redeemer and His act of redemption was to bring the Israelites out of bondage unto Himself to be consecrated for holy service. God had made a promise unto Abraham and kept His promise of the covenant to bring His chosen people into the land which He swears unto their fathers.

This concept was clearly a means by which God instituted to remind the children of Israel of their personal and intimate relationship with Him. Each time when they carry out the right of redemption or see it being done, they would be reminded of God’s redemption of them from the bondage of Egypt.

New Testament Concept of Redemption

The establishment of the concept in Old Testament was in fact a precursor to the work of redemption by Christ on the cross. John Murray says,

“The merciful provisions associated with the term in the ordinary life of Israel are here carried to the highest level in the relation of God to His people, and the kinsman’s action in recovering possession is likened to God’s action in salvation.”

In Gal. 3:13; 4:5; Rev 5:9, the word “redeem” (*exagorazw*) is used which means ransom or redeem and the Greek root word *ag* means to buy or to purchase. Therefore the redemptive act of God through His only begotten Son was:

- 1st - to send Jesus Christ to the cross
- 2nd - to pay the ransom price by His death on the cross through the shedding of His blood

What Christ had done on the cross through His death was to satisfy the demand of the law of God and the shedding of His blood was for payment of the claim (Rom 3:24-25).

The salvific work of Christ is comprehensive not only to procure the deliverance of the redeemed but also to release from sin’s guilt, defilement, bondage and liability even unto the Day of the Lord.

Conclusion

Quite clearly right from the beginning of the Old Testament Scripture, God intended to bring this concept of redemption into fulfilment by His only begotten Son in the New Testament era so that all those whom He had chosen before the foundation of the world will be fully redeemed before His return again.

This blessed truth which is now revealed to His people is not only a testimony of our all-wise and all-knowing God but it is also a truth that speaks of God’s amazing grace, compassion and love for His chosen people.

WELCOME TO NEW LIFE B-P CHURCH LONDON
CHURCH THEME: WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION WITH FEAR
AND TREMBLING. (Philippians 2:12)

Our worship services begin promptly at **11.00 am and 4.00 pm.**

Please stay back for Bible Study and fellowship lunch after the morning worship and for tea after the evening service. Do invite your friends to come to Church.

Worship Services			WELCOME
Morning	Today: 04/05/2008	Next Week: 11/05/2008	We extend a warm welcome to all worshippers this Lord's Day.
<i>Chairman:</i>	Jonathan Kim	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Elder Teo Chong Gee	Pr Mark Chen	
<i>Message:</i>	The Problem of Pleasure	Living the Gospel, Promoting the Gospel	NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS
<i>Text:</i>	Psalms 111:1-4	Philippians 1:27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome: We would like to welcome Elder Teo Chong Gee, our speaker for this Lord's Day. • No Prayer Meeting: Please note that there will be no Prayer Meeting & Bible Study next Saturday, 10 May. • Catechism class: Catechism class will begin on today. Those seeking baptism and transfer of membership must attend. Please approach Pr Mok for more information. • School of Theology at Metropolitan Tabernacle: The theme for this year programme is "Stand Fast in the Faith". It will be held from 8th – 10th Jul 2008. For further details, please help yourself to the application form available at the Book Table. • Journey Mercies: Pray for those who are travelling: John & Sharon (Singapore, Malaysia, Japan), Joshua & Hannah (Wales), George and Susan Teoh (Malaysia). • Sabbath School: Leaflets are placed on the book table to encourage children of ages 6-12 to attend Sunday School. Please feel free to distribute those leaflets to any child, especially yours, who may be interested in joining in. Please note that class will be held at the Library after the morning worship service.
<i>Organist:</i>	Anthony	Grace	
Evening			
<i>Chairman:</i>	Pr Mok Chee Cheong	Jonathan Kim	
<i>Preacher:</i>	Pr Mark Chen	Pr Mark Chen	
<i>Message:</i>	Who is the Sluggard?	The Seven Deadly Sins	
<i>Text:</i>	Proverbs 6:6-11	Proverbs 6:16-19	
<i>Pianist:</i>	Hubert	Sophia	
Other Duties			
	Today: 04/05/2008	Next Week: 11/05/2008	
<i>Ushers</i>	Daniel / Pr Mok	Anthony / Evelyn	
<i>Sunday Sch:</i>	Hui Min	Esmeralda	
<i>Lunch:</i>	Maureen	Maureen	
<i>Washing-up:</i>	Volunteers	Volunteers	
<i>Bible Study:</i>	Catechism Class	Catechism Class	
Appointments of the Week			
Fri 09 May	7:30pm	Young Adults Fellowship: Led by Pr Mark Chen	
Sat 10 May		Prayer Meeting & Bible Study: No Prayer Meeting & Bible Study	
Last Week's Worship Service Collections			
Offering: £303.10		Lunch: £31.76	
<h2 style="margin: 0;"><u>Memory Verse</u></h2>			
<i>Last Week (Apr 08 Wk 5): Philippians 1:21</i>			
For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.			
<i>This Week (May 08 Wk 1): Psalms 139:1</i>			
O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me.			