

LOOK UP FOR YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH

The coming of the prophesied day of redemption is near. What does that redemption imply? The best starting point is the OT law of redemption in Leviticus 25. Like other aspects of the Mosaic Law, it is a prophetic shadow of a deeper spiritual reality.

The OT Law of Redemption

Why a need of redemption?

Sometimes straitened circumstances forced an Israelite to sell his land or even himself.

- **Lost inheritance:** *If thy brother be waxen poor and hath sold away some of his possession (v25).*
- **Lost freedom:** *proclaim liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants (v10) (cp 2 K 4.1).*

The hope of redemption

But the Law of Moses offered a hope of redemption. The essential meaning of redemption is a full restoration of the original, a full recovery of all that is lost or sold.

- **Restored possessions/inheritance**
 - *ye shall return every man unto his possession (v10).*
 - *the land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine (v23).*
- **Recovery of personal freedom**
 - *after he is sold, he may be redeemed again (v48).*
 - *if thy brother... be waxen poor and be sold unto thee ... he shall serve with thee ... and then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children, and shall return unto his own family (v39-41).*

When is redemption possible?

- **In the year of jubilee**, without price, every 50th year, on the Day of Atonement, at the sounding of the jubilee trumpet proclaiming liberty throughout the land, (10th day of the 7th month) (v9-10).
- **Earlier**, if a redemption price was paid.
 - **By the man himself** becoming able to pay the price (v26).
 - **By a redeemer** (v25).

What are the qualifications of a potential redeemer?

- **Willing to pay the price:** (Cp Jer 32.7-8, *the right of redemption is thine, i.e. not the obligation.*)
- **Able to pay the price:** *if he be not able to restore it (v28).*
- **A near relative or kinsman**, not merely a friend. (The root meaning of the word "redeem" is a near relative.): *if any of his kin come to redeem it (v25); one of his brethren may redeem him: either his uncle, or his uncle's son ... or any that is nigh of kin (v48-49).*

An example of the OT law of redemption

The widowed Naomi and her daughter in law, Ruth, had fallen on difficult times requiring a forced sale of their inheritance (4.3).

- In view of their straitened circumstances, hoping to find grace (2.1-2), Ruth asked to glean in the fields behind the harvesters.
- She found herself in the fields of a wealthy kinsman of Naomi, Boaz.
- If willing, Boaz was qualified to redeem as he was both able and a kinsman.

- But, as Naomi's husband and sons (the heirs of the estate) were dead, a prospective redeemer would also have to marry Ruth, the childless widow of one of the sons, to ensure perpetuation of the family name (4.5) (cp Dt 25.5).
- In other words, since Ruth was a Moabitess, to redeem the Israelite Naomi would also entail the taking of a Gentile bride.
- Naomi advised Ruth to seek the covering of Boaz, a token of his willingness to marry her.
- Furthermore, his taking Ruth would not merely satisfy the legal conditions. Naomi detected an attraction also, for Ruth was a virtuous woman (2.11; 3.11): *the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing* (3.18).
- Boaz was indeed willing to take her, but a nearer kinsman, also able to pay the redemption price, had first choice.
- But he was unwilling to take Ruth, a stranger and an alien (3.12-13; 4.1-6).
- So, Boaz paid the redemption price and thereby,
 - Restored the lost inheritance of the Israelite sons of Naomi (4.9).
 - Purchased the Gentile widow of one of the sons to be his bride (4.10).
- Boaz satisfied all the legal requirements for a redeemer.
 - **Willing** (both to pay the redemption price for the property and to take Ruth to wife): *then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee* (3.13; 4.4).
 - **Able**: *a mighty man of wealth* (2:1).
 - **A near kinsman**: *The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen* (2.20; 3:12).
- He was also a direct ancestor of David and so of the Son of David, the coming Redeemer (4.21-22; Mt 1.5-16). He was also a native of Bethlehem, the birthplace of the Redeemer (Mi 5.2).

What a beautiful type/shadow of redemption in Christ. Just as Joseph, rejected by his Jewish brethren, took a Gentile bride before revealing himself to his repentant brethren, so Boaz' redemption of a lost inheritance of Israel required him to take a Gentile bride.

Spiritual Redemption

Having seen the *literal* OT meaning of redemption, let us now look at its deeper *spiritual* meaning. In brief, OT redemption is a prophetic foreshadow of the full recovery of everything Adam originally was and had, but had lost.

Man's lost liberty & inheritance

After the fall, man lost his original liberty. He is now sold under sin (Ro 7.14) (cp 1 K 21.20; 2 K 17.17; Isa 50:1) and,

- ***In bondage/servitude to sin***; it has dominion over him (Ro 6.14,17; 7.23).
- ***In bondage to corruption*** and subject to death (Ro 8.21).

As well as his liberty, he also lost his inheritance.

- Dominion over the earth (Ps 8.5-8).

The age-old plan of redemption

But God was not unprepared. From the beginning He had a plan to redeem our debts and restore our lost liberty and inheritance.

1. Foreshadowed at the fall

The essential features of that plan were foreshadowed at the fall.

- ***How was the shame of nakedness covered, making possible a way back to the Tree of Life?*** By God Himself. The efforts of Adam and Eve were futile. He Himself provided a covering.

- ***What was the nature of the covering?*** The skin of an animal (Gen 3.21).
- ***What was the cost of that skin?*** The shedding of its innocent blood.

2. Known from earliest times

This plan of redemption was the hope of the godly from earliest times. The oldest book in the Bible is probably Job, covering the period before the law of redemption was first given at Sinai. Yet even then Job was aware of the principle (19.25-26).

- He knew a Redeemer would stand on the forfeited earth at the last day.
- He would see Him face to face in a resurrected, restored body of flesh.

So, he knew that Redeemer would restore what had been lost at the fall,

- Delivering from death and the bondage of corruption.
- Restoring face to face fellowship with God.

3. Fulfilled in Christ

The slaying of that innocent animal in Eden foreshadowed the coming Redeemer, Christ, the Lamb of God (Jn 1.29), whose blood would pay the price to redeem everything lost at the fall (Ro 3.24; 1 Cor 1.30; 1 P 1.18-19).

In fact, God had prepared His plan of redemption through Christ before the fall and even before the beginning.

- The blood of the Lamb was shed from the foundation of the world (Rev 13.8).
- We were redeemed before the foundation of the world (Eph 1.4-7; cp 2 Tim 1.9).

Christ fulfilled the legal requirements of a redeemer

Christ fulfilled all the requirements of the Mosaic law of redemption.

1. He was willing to pay the redemption price

- Like Boaz, He looked with compassion upon our helpless, fallen state.
- He was willing to redeem our original inheritance.
- Though, like Ruth, strangers and aliens (Eph 2.12), He was willing to purchase and marry us that the memory of our race be not cut off.
- The cost of our redemption was such that we could never pay it. Yet He was willing to pay it: *Ye have sold yourselves for nought: and ye shall be redeemed without money* (Isa 52.3).
- The price was high indeed. His own life blood (Eph 1.7; Rev 5.9).
- Despite this, He willingly laid down His life of Himself. No one took it from Him (Jn 10.17-18).
- Though rich, for our sakes He became poor (2 Cor 8.9).

2. He became a Kinsman

- No angel could pay the price, however perfect. It could only be a man.
- So, although in the form of God, Christ Himself took upon Him the likeness of man, partaking of flesh and blood (Jn 1.1,14; Phil 2.6-7; Heb 2.14,16).

3. He was able to pay the price

- A sacrifice must be perfect. So, the blood of redemption could not be just any blood. It had to be perfect, sinless blood.
- The blood of man is unsuitable. Why? Man is born of blood (Jn 1.13), but not only have all sinned (Ro 3.25), since the fall all are born in sin (Ps 51.5). So, his blood is now tainted and imperfect (Job 15.14; 25.4).
- Though a man, however, Christ was born sinless. How? He was born of a virgin by the Holy Ghost. So His blood was perfect. In fact, it was the very blood of God (Acts 20.28). Truly, as Isaiah said, *I the Lord am thy Redeemer* (Isa 60.16).

- Furthermore, not only was He *born* sinless, He *lived* sinless. Though tempted in all points like us, yet He was without sin (Heb 4.15; 1 P 1.18-19).

The Day of Redemption

Looking for redemption

Although we are now already redeemed (Eph 1.7-8), full redemption is still future.

- We are sealed by the Spirit ***unto*** the day of redemption (Eph 4.30). That day has not yet come.
- The Spirit is an earnest of our inheritance ***until*** its redemption (Eph 1.14).

How can redemption be both present and future? The price has already been paid, the blood shed and the work finished. True, but He has not yet taken possession of that for which He has already paid the purchase price.

What are we to do in the meantime while we await *the redemption of the purchased possession*, (Eph 1.13-14) and *the redemption of the body* (Ro 8.23)?

- Like Ruth, ***we sit still and quietly wait*** for our Redeemer to fully complete the work of redemption (Ru 3.18). For, like Boaz, He is still finishing His kinsman redeemer work and will not rest until it is fully settled.
- At the 1st Coming, the godly were described as ***they who looked for redemption*** in Jerusalem (Lk 2.38) (cp Lk 24.21).
- As for NT believers, although not yet tasting its fulness, they have the Spirit as an earnest and firstfruits of the future redemption and inheritance (Ro 8.23; Eph 1.13-14).

That day of redemption will certainly come. And it is very near.

The Day of Redemption: The Lamb takes the book

Finally the wait is over. Revelation 5 describes the day Christ, the slain (i.e. blood-stained) Lamb, ends His intercessory ministry and comes to take possession of what He has already purchased.

- He takes the book from Him who sat upon the throne.
- That book is the title deeds/the rights of ownership of our redemption.
- How do we know? By the words of the song after He takes the book.
 - ***Thou art worthy to take the book ... for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood ...*** (Rev 5.9). Note the link between taking the book and redemption.
 - ***We shall reign on the earth*** (Rev 5.10). This highlights one of the fruits of redemption, recovery of dominion over the earth (Ps 8.6-8).

The full plan of redemption will now be realised and the full implications prophetically foreshadowed in Leviticus 25 experienced.

- Restoration of the original ***liberty***.
- Restoration of the original ***inheritance***.

1. Redemption of the original inheritance

The day of redemption means a restitution of our original inheritance, dominion over the earth (Gen 1.26; Ps 8.6-8).

- Although that dominion was lost at the fall, there was a promise that it would be repossessed by the godly (Ps 37.11; Mt 5.4).
- The god of this world, offered its kingdoms to Jesus (Mt 4.8).

- He refused the offer. Instead He shed His blood to pay the full purchase price, thus enabling Him to claim our original inheritance by right.

Furthermore, that blood not only restores to us our original inheritance. It restores that inheritance to its original condition before the fall. The same plan of redemption that redeems the inhabitants of the earth redeems the earth itself.

- Like us, the creation is delivered from the bondage of corruption (Ro 8.21).
- Like us, the earth is made new (Rev 21.1). Just like us, it is not a **different, replaced** earth but a **renewed, regenerated** earth. Although in Christ, we are new creations, and all things have become new (2 Cor 5.17), we are not different people. We are still ourselves.

2. Redemption from the bondage of sin

As well as a recovery of our original inheritance, the day of redemption also means full recovery of the liberty lost at the fall, a complete freedom from the bondage, dominion and power of sin (Ro 6.14,18,22; Ti 2.14).

This means far more than being **forgiven** from our sins.

3. Recovery of the original glory

Recovery of our original liberty is directly linked with recovery of our original glory.

- The first man was the image and glory of God (1 Cor 11.7).
- When he sinned, he lost that glory (Ro 3.23).
- Christ came to restore that original glory (Ro 5.2; Col 1.27).

What is the connection between recovering that original glory and recovering the original liberty?

- Redemption includes recovery of the glorious liberty (Ro 8.21-23).
- Why does Paul speak of "**glorious liberty**"? This phrase is far more than an exclamation of praise about our original liberty. It means a restoration of the original glory.
- How do we know? Because the literal rendering of this phrase is "*the liberty of the glory*", i.e. the liberty associated with possession of the **original** glory.

(The same link between liberty and glory is found in 2 Corinthians 3.17-18. The same Spirit that gives liberty changes us from glory to glory, i.e. back to the original glory.)

4. Redemption of the body from corruption

Our redemption from bondage to sin also means to be fully set free and delivered from bondage to corruption (Ro 8.21).

In this context, corruption refers to our mortality (1 Cor 15.53-55), not our sinfulness. So, to be free from bondage to corruption means the redemption of our mortal bodies (Ro 8.23).

- Man's original body was free from corruption and death (Gen 2.17).
- Since the fall, however, it is a body of death (Ro 7.24), mortal (Ro 8.11; 2 Cor 5.4), corruptible (1 Cor 15.50) and abased from its original glory (Phil 3.21).
- Yet from the very beginning there was an expectation of the redemption of the body (Job 19.25-26).

Although we still earnestly wait and groan for that day (Ro 8.23), the day of redemption is very near. Then our body will be resurrected (or changed).

What will that soon-coming redeemed, resurrected body be like?

- 1 Cor 15.44 Spiritual, i.e. not spectral, but under the full control of the Spirit.
- 1 Cor 15.53-4 Incorruptible and immortal.
- Phil 3.21 Glorified, like the body of His glory.

So, what does the day of redemption mean? Full restoration to the original image and glory of God. To bear the image of the Man of heaven (1 Cor 15.49).

Hallelujah!

Conclusion

Soon the Redeemer will come to take full possession of the purchased possession. It will be the grand finale of the plan of redemption:

- A redeemed people in their redeemed bodies, the Bride of the Lamb (Rev 21.9, 11),
- Seated on the throne with her Redeemer Husband (Rev 3.21; 21.9),
- Living together on a renewed, redeemed earth, in the original paradise of God (Rev 21.1).

This is the day the whole creation has been eagerly waiting for, the adoption and manifestation of the redeemed children of God (Ro 8.19,23; Gal 4.5).

At last, the plan of redemption is about to be fully realised, a total restoration of all that was lost - our original liberty, our original glory and our original inheritance - in full compliance with the prophetic foreshadow prefigured in the Mosaic law of redemption.

No wonder all heaven - the four beasts, the four and twenty elders and a vast multitude of angels - erupt into song when the Lamb comes to take the book of redemption, symbolising His coming to take possession of that for which He has already paid the purchase price.

And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: 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 our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

(Rev 5.8-14)

Amen and amen.