

REDEMPTION BY THE BLOOD

1 Peter 1:18-19

INTRODUCTION

- One of the great differences between a Biblical world-view and an unbelieving world-view is manifest in the perceived value of human life
- The various elements that make up the human body would equate to around \$800 value for an 80kg person
- The market value of transplantable organs in a healthy person would be over a million dollars
- For the unbeliever, human life has no intrinsic value, seeing we are a mere cosmic accident, so the value in life comes from one's usefulness and desirability
- Hence, unwanted children, the physically/mentally handicapped, and the elderly are put to death
- This world-system views humans as no different to cattle, and is represented in Revelation 18 as the harlot, Babylon, who makes merchandise of "slaves [Gk. 'bodies'] and souls of men" (18:13)
- And whatever worth this world puts on human life, it is only temporary – there is no eternal value to life in a purposeless universe
- But how different to this is God's view of mankind!
 - ✓ He created us in his image (Genesis 1:26)
 - ✓ He has crowned us with glory and honour (Psalm 8:3-6)
 - ✓ He sustains our lives, blessing us with temporal supplies, and filling our hearts with food and gladness (Acts 14:17)
 - ✓ God showed his regard for mankind by himself becoming man
 - ✓ But much more than that, he, as Man, died for man in order to save us (Romans 5:8)

- If there is any doubt as to whether God regards and loves humanity, one need only to look to Calvary
- Today we are thinking about the doctrine of redemption
- The Greek word for “redeemed” (*elutrothete*) means “to ransom”, “to free by paying a price” (cf. Mark 10:45)
- From v.13, Peter exhorts the brethren to a holy walk in the fear of God, and he supports his exhortation with various reasons, such as our relationship to God as his children, God’s holiness, the commands of Scripture, and the day of judgment, etc.
- vv.18-19 give a further weighty reason for living in godly fear – Christ’s atonement
- Since you have been redeemed from sin at so great a cost – even by the very blood of the Son of God, you are obligated to live for him in holiness (cf. 1 Corinthians 6:20)
- How inconsistent would it be for one who has been purchased by this precious blood to then live in a worthless way according to the world!
- Let us now ponder this glorious word, “redemption” and the truths contained in it, that we might receive it and be transformed by it

I. OUR PLIGHT THAT CALLS FOR REDEMPTION

A. We are as slaves under bondage

1. The concept of redemption was well known to those in the first-century Roman Empire, which contained about 60 million slaves
2. A slave could purchase his own freedom, or another could pay for it and set him free
3. Man is a slave to sin and in bondage to Satan
 - a. In the original creation, man was righteous and at complete liberty

- b. In the fall, man forsook his free state before God and put himself into a state of bondage to sin and Satan
4. The consequences of this state of bondage to sin
- a. The guilt of Adam's first sin abiding on us (Romans 5:19)
 - b. The absence of righteousness (Romans 3:10)
 - c. The corruption of our whole nature (Ephesians 2:1; Psalm 51:5)
 - d. The loss of communion with God (Genesis 3:8,24)
 - e. The wrath and curse of God (Ephesians 2:3; Galatians 3:10)
 - f. The miseries of this life (Genesis 3:16-19)
 - g. Death (Romans 6:23)
 - h. The torments of hell forever (Matthew 25:41)
5. Yet how few people realise their true spiritual state
- a. Satan and sin blind us to our state of slavery (2 Corinthians 4:4)
 - b. The pride of man abhors the notion that we are in a state of slavery (Revelation 3:17)
 - c. The vanities of this world continually divert our attention from our state of slavery
 - d. The prosperity of life deceives us as to our state of slavery (Matthew 13:22)

II. OUR POWERLESSNESS TO CLAIM REDEMPTION

A. Man's efforts to deliver himself

- 1. Despite man's inherent ignorance of spiritual reality, the light of conscience has awakened many to an awareness of sin

2. This has led people throughout history to devise means by which man can be delivered from sin and reconciled to God
 3. The false religions of this world all have one thing in common – man's efforts to atone for sin and please "god" through good works
- B. Yet nothing man can do will free us from our bondage
1. Even the sacrifices prescribed in the Old Testament cannot satisfy the demands of divine justice for our sin
 - a. The nature of an animal is distinct from human, and therefore cannot adequately pay for man's sin
 - b. Sin is transgression against an infinite God, deserving an infinite punishment, or an infinite substitute
 2. "Corruptible things" – things deemed "precious" by the world, are of no consequence when it comes to redeeming from sin
 - a. God has no need of such things as they belong to him already (Psalm 24:1; 50:10)
 - b. Silver and gold have their limitations even in this world to deliver from sickness or judgment, how much less effectual are they with God? (Psalm 49:6-10)
 3. The cost of redemption is beyond anything and everything that this world can provide
 - a. The worth of a soul of more value than "the whole world" (Mark 8:36)
 - b. The magnitude of our sin is far greater than we can comprehend, and far greater than man can provide for (Ezra 9:6)

III. GOD'S PROVISION OF COMPLETE REDEMPTION

- A. Redemption is God's purchase of his people from sin to salvation through Christ
1. Of all God's work, redemption is his greatest

2. “Great was the work of creation; but greater the work of redemption. It cost more to redeem us than to make us. In the one, there was only the speaking a word (Psalm 148:5): in the other, the shedding of blood (Hebrews 11:22). The creation was the work of God’s fingers (Psalm 8:3): the redemption, the work of his arm (Luke 1:51). In creation God gave us ourselves; in redemption he gives us himself.” (Thomas Watson)

B. Christ is the only eligible Redeemer of mankind

1. Because he is the Son of God
 - a. Only a sacrifice of eternal nature could redeem us from sins against an eternal God, from eternal judgment, unto eternal life (Hebrews 10:12)
2. Because he is the Son of Man (Romans 8:3)
 - a. Under the law, the “kinsman redeemer” was a near kin who redeems the property of an impoverished relative (Leviticus 25:25-28)
 - b. Boaz became kinsman redeemer for his relative, Elimelech, when he took Ruth to be his wife (Ruth 4:1-22)
 - c. This is a picture of Christ who became our kin in his incarnation, and redeems poor, helpless sinners who come unto him by faith (cf. Ruth 3:9)
3. Because he is free from all sin – original and actual (2 Corinthians 5:21)
4. Because he offered himself a ransom
 - a. Note that man did not take his life – laid it down (John 10:17-18)
 - b. He was the Offerer and the Offering; the High Priest, as well as the sacrificial Lamb

C. His blood is “precious”

1. "Precious" (*timios*) means exceedingly valuable (cf. 1 Peter 1:7; 2 Peter 1:4)
 2. His blood is precious in its divinity (Acts 20:28)
 3. His blood is precious in its purity (1 John 3:5)
 4. His blood is precious in its power
 - a. It is sufficient to redeem all mankind (1 John 2:2)
 - b. It obtains eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:12)
 - c. It cleanses from all sin (1 John 1:7)
 - d. It purges not merely the flesh, but the conscience (Hebrews 9:14)
- D. Christ is as a lamb without blemish and without spot
1. From the day that sin entered the world, God showed man that the death of an innocent was required to satisfy the just penalty of sin (Genesis 3)
 2. Throughout the Old Testament, the sacrificial lamb is repeatedly presented as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ
 - a. In Abraham's offering of Isaac (Genesis 22:7-8,13)
 - b. Israel was redeemed from bondage in Egypt through the blood of the Passover lamb (Exodus 12)
 - c. In Isaiah, the Messiah is presented as lamb brought to the slaughter (Isaiah 53:7), in meekness offering himself for the sins of his wayward sheep
 3. John the Baptist heralded the coming of Christ by saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29)
 4. In heaven, and for all eternity, Christ will be worshipped as the Lamb – this is the preferred title for Christ in Revelation, occurring 28 times in the book

E. What Christ redeems *from*

1. From our vain conversation
 - a. Life outside of Christ is vain, empty, futile (Ephesians 4:17-19)
 - b. Vain conversation describes idolatry, which is worshipping anything apart from the true God
 - c. Living for this world, without God, without hope, in bondage to sin, is a miserable existence, in this world and the next
 - d. Vain traditions received from fathers keep many in bondage to sin, and take many to eternity in hell
2. From the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13)
3. From the bondage of the law (Galatians 4:5)
4. From sin (Colossians 1:14)
5. From all iniquity (Titus 2:14; Psalm 130:8)
6. From the power of the grave (Psalm 49:15)
7. From destruction (Psalm 103:4)
8. From the hand of the enemy (Psalm 107:2)
9. From death (Hosea 13:14)
10. From the earth (Revelation 14:3)
11. From among men (Revelation 14:4)

F. What Christ redeems *unto*

1. Unto God (Revelation 5:9)
2. Unto justification (Romans 3:24)
3. Unto forgiveness of sin (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14)

4. Unto adoption (Galatians 4:4-5)

5. Unto purification (Titus 2:14)

CONCLUSION

1. Christ came “to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (Isaiah 61:1-3)
2. Have you realised your bondage to sin, your need of redemption, and fled to Christ for deliverance?
3. “Christianity is not for the well-meaning; it is for the desperate” (James Stewart)
4. The blood is of no effect to the sinner until it has been applied by faith
5. Be warned that to tread underfoot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing is to provoke the anger of God and his most sore punishment (Hebrews 10:29-30)
6. What is most precious to you – the corruptible, perishing things of this world, or the precious blood of Jesus Christ?
7. The Pentecostals/Charismatics “plead the blood of Jesus” repeating the phrase in their prayers like a heathen mantra, hoping their words will act as a lucky talisman as they pronounce it over all manner of circumstances
8. The Scriptures nowhere command us to “plead the blood” in such a manner, but rather we are to believe in, trust in and cling to Christ’s redeeming blood, as our only hope of justification, sanctification and glorification for all eternity