



As we open to Revelation 5, we are seeing ourselves in the future. And what is it we are doing when God lets us see ourselves? Singing praises to *our Redeemer!*

There are few times that God's Word allows us to actually see what we will be doing in Heaven, and they always involve us seeing ourselves worshipping the True and Living God and His Son, *our Redeemer*.

Notice what we are focused upon in Heaven—a Redeemer who died in our place!

Redeem, Redeemer, and redemption are words that show up 169 times in the NKJV of the Bible. These are the last two times the word redeem is used in the Bible.

Redemption is viewed by many Bible teachers to be the unifying theme of all the Scriptures. In fact, one man entitled his commentary on the Bible *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*; and another man wrote this in his introduction to his commentary on every part of God's Word:

"The Bible reveals God's plan for this redemption from its inception in eternity past to its completion in eternity future. Covenants, promises, and epochs are all secondary to the one continuous plan of redemption.

There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible. Only four of them don't involve a fallen world: the first two and the last two—before the fall and after the creation of the new heaven and new earth. The rest is the chronicle of the tragedy of sin".[1]

Redemption is a word that speaks of debts being paid, freedom being purchased and a life going in a completely new direction from the point of redemption onward.

So this morning join me for the greatest theme in all the Bible—the redemption of lost sinners by the God who so loved the world that he gave His Son to die on a cross and shed His blood to pay the price of sin! And where better to see that theme than the way we will be—singing the new song of our worthy Redeemer.

***Revelation 5:9-12*** *And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our*

God; And we shall reign on the earth.” 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

**Revelation 14:2-4** And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps.<sup>3</sup> They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. 4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

You and I are really in debt this morning. I’m not talking about the trillions of dollars of our national debt, nor the trillions more dollars of credit card, auto loans, and mortgage debt. I am referring to the debt we owe to God for our sins.

In a real sense every time we sin it is an offense to God; we are obligated as His creations to obey Him—and we don’t. So we go through life racking up an ever larger, un-payable debt of sin (**Gal. 3:10**; **James 2:10**; cf. **Matt. 18:23-27**).

The legal obligations of debt were an illustration Paul liked to use. When Paul wrote to the Colossians, he was writing to a church he had never visited. When he explained to them salvation he used a picture they would instantly recognize and never forget.

Open with me to **Colossians 2:13-14** and watch Paul masterfully take those saints from Colosse and the world they lived in each day and transport them before the Holy God of Heaven and then back with a clear understanding of Christ's work on their behalf.

In the Roman Empire that surrounds the New Testament, whenever a person was convicted of a crime, the law courts that convicted them also produced a “certificate of debt” that listed the exact crime and the punishment that had to be paid, before the criminal would be freed.

The convicted criminal or debtor would have to sign the certificate and acknowledge the debt or punishment for the crime was rightfully his. This certificate of debt was then nailed to the door of the cell where they were

imprisoned until their sentence was completed and the crimes were “paid” for.

**Colossians 2:13-14** *And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

This is precisely the legal imagery that Paul draws upon in **Colossians 2:13-14**. The word 'handwriting' in v. 13 is the exact word for the list of crimes and/or debts the person was responsible for. Jesus took each of those “Certificates of Debt” upon Himself as He hung upon that cross.

“Believers’ sins were all put to Christ’s account, nailed to His cross as He paid the penalty in their place for them all, thus satisfying the just wrath of God against crimes requiring punishment in full”.[2]

So as God the Father looked down at Christ He saw your sins and mine. John calls it “the sin of the world”; and it was the totality of the sin of all humans that was nailed on Christ’s Cross. The Cross was Jesus declaring that He was guilty of every sin listed off for every one of us and all who would ever live.

Now turn to the record of Christ's death upon the cross. The climactic end of Christ's redemption as the Lamb of God was captured by John as he stood at the foot of the Cross. Looking up through the darkness, he heard and recorded Christ's one word.

**John 19:30** *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

In English we say “it is finished”; but in Greek those words are summed up in the single word that John heard Christ gasp on the cross—*tetelestai*.

Tetelestai was Jesus declaring to God His Father that the price of salvation was paid; and the debt of the sin of the world was paid; and the work of redemption was complete.

This word was a word that was very familiar to those of the New Testament times. This word tetelestai should burn into our hearts and minds because it was exactly the same word that a Roman judge would write on a criminal’s certificate of debt when he was released from prison—tetelestai, your debt to the Roman law is paid in full.

It is the same word that would be written on the certificate of a slave who had been enslaved to pay off a debt—tetelestai, your debt is paid in full, you may now go forth as a free man!

Paid in full is what Jesus cried from the cross of His redemption as the work of salvation was once and for all time completed; and paid in full is what He declares each time we come to Him confessing our sins.

Paid in full is what Jesus our advocate says while standing before God the Father, as Satan the Accuser points out yet another time we have sinned.

Paid in full, redeemed, bought by the blood of the Lamb, and redeemed—that is what we shall forever sing in Heaven around His throne.

The wonder of Christ's redemption is always before us. When Charles Wesley wrote down his meditation on redemption in 1738, it took the form of a hymn called “And Can It Be”.

And can it be that I should gain  
An interest in the Savior's blood?  
Died He for me, who caused His pain—  
For me, who Him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! How can it be,  
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?  
Amazing love! How can it be,  
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?  
He left His Father's throne above  
So free, so infinite His grace—  
Emptied Himself of all but love,  
And bled for Adam's helpless race:  
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,  
For O my God, it found out me!  
'Tis mercy all, immense and free,  
For O my God, it found out me!  
Long my imprisoned spirit lay,  
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;  
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray—  
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;  
My chains fell off, my heart was free,  
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.

My chains fell off, my heart was free,  
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.  
No condemnation now I dread;  
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine;  
Alive in Him, my living Head,  
And clothed in righteousness divine,  
Bold I approach th'eternal throne,  
And claim the crown, through Christ my own.  
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And claim the crown, through Christ my own.

There is one great word that captures the essence of our salvation this morning, and that word is redemption.

Redemption involves the blood of Jesus shed as He died on the Cross to pay the purchase price of our salvation. So redemption sums up Christ's death, His blood shed, His life given as a substitutionary sacrifice. So if any portion of salvation can be ranked as any more vital than any other, redemption would be at the top of the list.

Remember the illustration of the “Big Three Doctrines” from youth ministry many years ago? The big three we need to always understand are: redemption, justification, and sanctification.

We started life on earth as dead in our trespasses and sin (pictured by my pen laying on the palm of my hand); *redemption* is when Jesus reached down and bought us out of the slave market of sin (that is my hand grasping the pen); *justification* is Jesus lifting me to be seated with Him already in Heaven. We are completely freed from the penalty and record of our sin; *sanctification* is God forever binding our souls into His grasp and pulling us closer and closer to Him until at the end of our earthly life, He safely lands us into His Presence forever.

So we may say that salvation starts with Christ's work on the cross, and Christ's work on the cross as He shed His blood in death for our sins is redemption.

Peter at the end of his life summed up our redemption with these precious words in [\*\*1 Peter 1:18-19\*\*](#):

*“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”*

So Christ's sacrifice as a lamb is the picture of redemption. Immediately that should remind us of many verses that are vital and central to salvation.

**John 1:29** *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Because of our sin, we are all slaves in bondage to sin and death; so we need Christ's payment of His death to buy us and take us out of the slave market of sin.*

The gift of salvation is about Jesus who died to take slaves and make them free forever—that's redemption! A Sinner stands before God as a slave and is granted freedom by Christ's payment.

In Redemption we go from being a slave chained to our sins to complete freedom by God and a new focus.

Christ's death to pay the price of our sin is so wonderful that we, the redeemed of all the ages, will be joined by the angels so that together we may sing a new song, as Revelation records:

*And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!"* (**Revelation 5:9–12**)

### **OPEN THE GIFT OF REDEMPTION**

We need to experience what the Scriptures often declare—God has liberated us from our slavery to sin, broken sins chains that long had enslaved us and freed us to focus our lives on what really matters to Him.

- **Romans 3:24** *being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus".* Because I'm redeemed, Jesus destroyed the records of my sins and took my punishment.
- **Romans 8:23** *Not only that, but we also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.* Because I'm redeemed, I have a new body coming!



- **1 Corinthians 1:30** *But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption.* This verse summarizes the three tenses of our salvation. In the past we *have been saved* from the penalty of sin (righteousness); and in the present we *are being saved* from the power of sin (sanctification); and in the future we *shall be saved* from the presence of sin (redemption). Because I'm redeemed, Jesus is all I need!
- **1 Corinthians 6:20** *“For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s”.* Christ bought me from the slave market with a high price, I belong to God.
- **2 Corinthians 5:14-15** *For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.* Because I'm redeemed, I will live for my Redeemer.
- **Galatians 2:20** *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.* Because I'm redeemed, I no longer live for myself!
- **Ephesians 1:7** *In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. Since we have not been saved by our good works, we cannot be lost by our bad works.* Because I'm redeemed, my sins are forgiven forever.
- **Ephesians 2:10** *“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them”.* Because Christ bought me in redemption, I am God's workmanship.
- **Philippians 1:6** *“Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ”.* Because I'm redeemed, God will finish what He started in me.
- **Colossians 2:13-14** *And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it*

to the cross. Because I'm redeemed, my sin debt is forever paid in full.

- **Titus 2:14** *who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.* Because I'm redeemed, I am set free from every bondage to be zealous for God!
- **Revelation 5:9-12** *And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth." 11 Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice: "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!"* Because I'm redeemed, I will worship the Lord forever!

Communion is celebrating our Redeemer, thanking Him for our redemption, and declaring the truths of our redeemed lives.

Be sure you have opened the gift of salvation, given by Jesus.

- Because I'm redeemed—Jesus destroyed the records of my sins and took my punishment.
- Because I'm redeemed—I have a new body coming.
- Because I'm redeemed—Jesus is all I need!
- Christ bought me from the slave market with a high price—I belong to God.
- Because I'm redeemed—I will live for my Redeemer.
- Because I'm redeemed—I no longer live for myself!
- Because I'm redeemed—my sins are forgiven forever.
- Because Christ bought me in redemption—I am God's workmanship
- Because I'm redeemed—God will finish what He started in me.
- Because I'm redeemed—my sin debt is forever paid in full.
- Because I'm redeemed—I am set free from every bondage to be zealous for God!
- Because I'm redeemed—I will worship the Lord forever!



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[1] John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.

[2] John F. MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, (Dallas: Word Publishing) 1997.