

Truth for Today

The Bible Explained

For reply: Email: truthfortoday@aol.com

Broadcast Date: 26 June 2016

No. T0943

Speaker: Mr. Gordon Kell

Things which accompany salvation: Redemption

There was once a young boy who made a model sailing boat. It was his pride and joy and he used to sail it in local ponds and streams. Everyone admired it. One particularly windy day when he was sailing his boat, the wind caught its sails and the boat sped off downstream and before the boy could catch it the boat had disappeared. He was understandably very upset after all the time and effort he had put into building his fine model.

A few weeks later, he saw his boat in the window of a model shop. He was overjoyed and ran in and explained the boat was his. The shopkeeper said he was sorry but someone had sold it to him and if the boy wanted it back he would have to pay the asking price. The boy was very disappointed, but went home and got all his savings together which were just enough to pay for the boat. He went back to the shop and bought his boat back. As he left the shop holding his precious model he said to himself. "This boat is twice mine. I made it and I bought it."

I always think of this story when I think about redemption. The word used for redemption in the Bible means to buy something in the sense of buying it back. For example, buying a slave to allow him to be set free.

In Galatians 3:13 Paul describes how Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us - in other words buying us back by paying a ransom. "*Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.')*"

Ransom is associated with redemption. Ransom means loosing or setting free. Paul uses it to describe the work of Christ in 1 Timothy 2:5-6, "*For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.*"

Christ gave His life as a sacrifice upon the cross and this ransom was great enough to provide salvation for all.

In our story, the boy is a simple illustration of God. He created us just like the boy made the boat. But then we were lost to Him through sin and He had to buy us back and He did this at the enormous cost of giving His only Son. "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*" (John 3:16).

The word "redemption" is not often used today. But I remember as a boy living in a poor working class area that it was quite common for families to go to a pawnbroker and pawn belongings when they were in financial difficulties. The pawn broking system was simple. People would hand over to the pawnbroker a valuable possession in exchange for money. Later, when they could afford it, they would "buy back" or "redeem" the goods. To buy back the possession two things were needed, firstly, the pawn ticket had to be produced as proof of ownership and secondly, the debt had to be paid in full. When both these things were done the possession was redeemed.

The pawnbroker would only lend an amount of money considerably less than the true value of the possession knowing that if the person could not buy it back the pawnbroker would sell it and make a profit. The shop would always have things for sale, often precious, which people could not afford to redeem.

Thank God we were not left unredeemed but He was able to pay the cost of our redemption through the sacrifice of Christ. Peter writes of this in his first epistle, "*You were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver and gold... but with the precious blood of Christ*" (1 Peter 1:18-19). Paul also explains in Ephesians 1:7 that the cost of our redemption was the life of Christ when he writes, "*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins...*"

The Lord Jesus has paid the price of our redemption in His death and the shedding of His blood, and through faith in Him we are cleared of every liability and set completely free as Jesus explains in John 8:36, "*Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*"

There is a story told of a friend of Nicholas, the Tsar of Russia who got into terrible debt. One night he sat at his desk with his accounts laid out in front of him. He knew there was no way he could pay his enormous debts and drinking

heavily he decided to shoot himself. Overcome by his drinking he collapsed over his desk in a deep sleep with his pistol still in his hand. Hours later he woke up and looking at the bills in front of him saw that everyone one had written across it, "Paid by your friend Nicholas Tsar of Russia."

This story reminds us of how Jesus came to where we were and at His own cost paid for our sins so that we could be set free and enjoy life in Him. This morning each one of us who knows Christ as our Saviour can say, the is price paid.

The idea of the price being paid is conveyed in the Old Testament when the children of Israel were redeemed out of Egypt on the Passover night when the lambs were killed and their blood shed (see Exodus 12:1-32. It was something they never forgot but the prophets spoke of a coming Messiah who would bring about a greater redemption.

This Redeemer was spoken of as a redeemer of the nation, *"But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you. For I am the LORD your God, The Holy One of Israel, your Saviour; I gave Egypt for your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in your place'"* (Isaiah 43:1-3)

Interestingly, we can see the connection in these verses between redemption, *"I have redeemed you"*, (Isaiah 43:1) salvation, *"your Saviour"*, (Isaiah 43:3) and ransom, *"I gave Egypt for your ransom"* (Isaiah 43:3).

But we also find the thought of a personal redeemer in the Old Testament, for example, Job says, *"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God"* (Job 19:25-26).

And David writes in Psalm 19:14. *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer."*

In the beautiful story of Ruth in the Old Testament, we also have a wonderful illustration of redemption. Ruth the young Moabite widow chose to return with Naomi, her Jewish mother-in-law, to Israel (Ruth 1:16-17). They returned in the words of Naomi, *"empty"*. But as the story progresses Ruth meets her redeemer, Boaz, who comforts her with the words, *"The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge"* (Ruth 2:12).

Later Boaz redeems her with the words, *"And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, 'You are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, from the hand of Naomi. Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife'"* (Ruth 4:9-10).

This story is so remarkable. Ruth was, in the words of Paul in Ephesians 2, *"an alien from the commonwealth of Israel and a stranger from the covenants of promise, and had no hope and was without God in the world"* (see Ephesians 2:12). But this young woman was redeemed in a remarkable way. It is all the more remarkable because the event was also the basis of the blessing of a nation. Ruth became the great-grandmother of King David and was part of the genealogy of Christ (see Matthew 1:1-17). And Bethlehem, where her story of redemption took place, was the birthplace of the coming redeemer, Jesus Christ. *"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord"* (Luke 2:11).

But it is in the New Testament that the full story of redemption is unfolded. At the beginning of the Gospel of Luke Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, is released from his inability to speak (see Luke 1:5-25, 59-66), and filled with the Holy Spirit prophesises about redemption, *"Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people"* (Luke 1:68).

In the following chapter, when the child Jesus is presented in the temple at Jerusalem, Anna, the old prophetess, is introduced, *"...coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem"* (Luke 2:38).

People were looking for a coming Redeemer and the Gospels record the wonderful birth, life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. Jesus explains this Himself in Mark 10:45, *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

We see the perfection of the Redeemer in the Gospels and they also show us how He laid down His life in love for us, *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep"* (John 10:11).

This was the most powerful expression of God's love for us and it was enacted in power as Jesus explains, *"Therefore*

My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father" (John 10:17-18).

In Paul's letters he unfolds the full extent of God's redemptive work in Christ. In Romans he shows that the grace of God is demonstrated in redemption, *"being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus"* (Romans 3:24).

Our redemption is through grace. We could not like some slaves save sufficient funds to buy our freedom. The debt was too great. We needed a Saviour to pay the price of cost of redemption in one glorious act of free grace.

Paul goes on to explain, in Romans 8:23, that the redemption we now have in the Lord Jesus Christ is a complete redemption which extends beyond time. He writes of a future redemption of the body when the Lord comes at the rapture, *"Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body."*

The redemption of the body is expounded more fully in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4.

Paul explains some of the present and future blessings we have in Christ in 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."*

These blessings of righteousness, sanctification and redemption are related to the wisdom of God manifested in Christ. We have the righteousness of Christ and we are to live righteously. We are sanctified or set apart as the people of God and we are to demonstrate practical holiness in our lives. And we are redeemed from sin now and look forward to the future we have in Christ when we experience the redemption of the body as explained in Romans 8:23.

In Ephesians 1:13-14 we read, *"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."* In these verses Paul explains that we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and that this indwelling is a proof of how God has purchased us in view of our future complete redemption.

There is an important moral aspect to this because our bodies are described as temples of the Holy Spirit, *"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"* (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

The fact that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit is linked to our redemption, *"For you are bought with a price..."* Paul is saying can we who have been bought at such a high price and enormous cost to God live lives which are other than lived to the glory of the One who so redeemed us.

Paul warns us not to grieve the Holy Spirit because He is the assurance that we have been redeemed by Christ and are awaiting the day of redemption referred to in Romans 8:23, *"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption"* (Ephesians 4:30).

As we saw earlier, the cost of this redemption is described for us by Paul in Galatians, *"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.')*" (Galatians 3:13).

This poignant verse gives us a sense of the price Jesus paid for our redemption. In Galatians 3:13 the word "redeemed" has the sense of being bought back so that we could be set free.

Through Christ's sacrifice of Himself we have a redemption which is based on the riches of God's grace. *"In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace"* (Ephesians 1:7).

This richness of grace is expressed through Christ's poverty, *"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich"* (2 Corinthians 8:9).

In Hebrews we are taught that the redemption we have is an eternal redemption, *"Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption"* (Hebrews 9:12).

Christ has not only redeemed us for time but for eternity.

Peter highlights in his letters the one perfect sacrifice of Christ, the Lamb of God, *“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”* (1 Peter 1:18-20).

In the Book of Revelation we have recorded a great response of praise and worship given to the Lamb of God for the work of redemption He accomplished. *“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’”* (Revelation 5:9).

There is one final aspect of the subject of redemption that we need to consider and Paul writes about this in his letters to the Ephesians and the Colossians:

“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:15-16).

“Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one” (Colossians 4:5-6).

We have already spoken about the wisdom of God revealed in the Person of Christ and in both Ephesians 5:15-16 and Colossians 4:5-6 Paul emphasizes the need for Christians to walk in wisdom and redeem the time. Paul was very accomplished at knowing how to live for God in his age and how to make good use of his time. He was always encouraging his fellow believers to devote their lives to God in response to the love they had come to know. This is why he writes in Romans 12:1-2, *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”*

We each have a unique opportunity to live our lives for the One Who has loved us and given Himself for us. We need to use this opportunity wisely. Spiritual maturity is required to witness for Christ in every circumstance and to decide how we best use that most precious resource - time.

As we begin another new week, may God give us an understanding of the greatness of our redemption and a deep sense of its cost. May He also give us the wisdom we need to live in today's world and the skill to use our time to His glory.

Please Note:

We encourage you to use this transcript for your personal or group Bible studies. This material should not, however, be used in any publications without the express permission from Truth for Today, whose contact details can be found on page 1. Large Print copies of this document are also available upon request.