

Redemption

by

Dr. E. Harold Henderson

Dr. E. Harold Henderson was for 25 years, from 1972 -1997, the principal English language speaker on LifeWord Broadcast, an international radio outreach of the Baptist Missionary Association of America. Dr. Henderson was the Writer of the Adult Sunday School Quarterly (Baptist Publishing House, Little Rock, AR) for 39 &1/2 years. He authored four books and numerous religious periodicals

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The Bible uses many different words to identify various facets of salvation in Christ. One major concept involved is the process called redemption. This series of brief radio messages by E. Harold Henderson explores that concept in an effort to help the believer understand his position in Christ and appreciate it more.

Dr. Henderson raises five questions about redemption and summaries the answer to each with one key word. The first four are Greek terms which emphasize different implications of redemption. The last key word is kinsmen-redeemer and is illustrated in the Old Testament book of Ruth.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF REDEMPTION? (Lutron)

"Redemption!" What does that word mean to you? Perhaps you think of trading stamps which a merchant gives when you purchase articles from his store. You can save those stamps until you have a certain number and trade them for merchandise. In fact, those places where the stamps are exchanged for merchandise are called "redemption centers." Is that what the word means to

you?

"Redemption" has a much larger meaning to you who are acquainted with the vocabulary of the Bible. It is a cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith. Underlying all the ritual sacrifices of the Old Testament is the basic doctrine of redemption. The teaching about redemption permeates every aspect of the doctrine of grace. The Christian teaching of salvation in Jesus Christ, through His death and resurrection, is based upon the Bible concept of redemption.

There are two great concepts revealed in Holy Scripture: ruin and redemption. Man's fall into sin made his ruin a present fact. Christ's suffering in behalf of sinful man made redemption a present reality. One cannot understand the Christian Scriptures unless he understands the Christian concept of redemption.

I propose to lead you in a study of that blessed doctrine. We will pursue the study by asking and answering five important questions. (1) What is the meaning of redemption? (2) How is redemption accomplished? (3) What does redemption guarantee? (4) How complete is the work of redemption? (5) Who is qualified to do the work of redemption? The first four questions are answered by four distinct words used in the New Testament to describe salvation in Jesus Christ. The fifth question is answered in a beautiful illustration in the Old Testament and by sacred principles stated in the New Testament.

Let us turn to the first question, "What is meant by the term redemption?"

Titus 2:14 speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ as one *"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."* I Peter 1:18, 19 reads: *"For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."* Hebrews 9:12 reads: *"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he (Jesus) entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."* In each of the three passages the term *"redemption"* occurs. (1) Jesus redeemed us from all iniquity. (2) We were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. (3) He has obtained eternal redemption for us.

The literal meaning of redemption

In each of the three passages, the same word is used in the Greek language (in which our New Testament was first written). That word is *lutron*, and carries a special meaning. It speaks of redemption as a setting free. No particular reference is made in that word to the need of redemption, the price that it cost nor the purpose behind the act. It is the act of setting free which is emphasized in the term *lutron*. It looks upon redemption as a purchase and freedom already accomplished. It is an act performed.

That leads us to a definition of the term *"redemption."* It means *"to set free by the payment of a price."* The background of the meaning of redemption is poverty and need. It pictures a person who is in bondage because he is unable to deliver himself. Then there comes another who is able to pay the price necessary for his deliverance. The rescue is effected by the benefactor paying the redemption price and setting the captive free.

Lutron (*"redeem"*) means to release, to liberate, to deliver by payment of a price. Originally, the term referred to the price paid for redemption, but it gradually came to mean the act of paying the necessary price.

The Old Testament has many illustrations of the act of redemption. A Hebrew could sell his land

to pay debts in the event of dire circumstances. A relative could come and "redeem" the land, to restore it to its original owner, by the payment of the price held against it. Or, a Hebrew could sell himself into slavery to meet a debt he was unable to pay. But a relative could come and pay the debt, thus "redeeming" the person from slavery and restoring him to the privileges of a free man. In each case, the idea is to set free from the ownership of another and restore to its rightful owner by the payment of a price.

The Bible doctrine of redemption

It is against that background that the religious doctrine of redemption is set. The Bible reveals that man came from the creative hand of God. God made man from the dust of the ground according to divine design and by divine power. He breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. The man was in the image and likeness of God, able to enter into direct and personal fellowship and communion with God. But God saw that man was incomplete alone. So he designed a companion for the man and called her woman. He brought her to the man. The man and his wife were delightful companions to one another and rejoiced in the fellowship they had with God. If things had remained thus, there would have been no doctrine of redemption taught in Holy Scripture.

But then a tragic thing happened. The man and the woman rebelled against the clear command of God. They ate of the fruit of a tree of which God had told them that they must not eat. In that act, they fell from their high and holy estate. They were no longer at peace between themselves but tried to hide their bodies each from the other by a garment of fig leaves. They were no longer at peace with God but hid from His presence when they heard His voice as He walked in the garden of Eden in the cool of the day.

What had happened? Man, the creature of God, had become the bondsman to sin. Both the male and the female had fallen into sin. Jesus said, *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin,"* John 8:34. They had committed sin and had become the bondslaves of sin. So great and deep was their bondage that they could not possibly extricate themselves therefrom.

God was moved in love and grace toward the fallen couple. He promised that a Savior would come who would deliver them from the sin into which they had fallen and to which they had become servants. What would the Savior do to rescue them? He would give Himself as a ransom, giving His holy life as a substitute for their unholy lives, so they might receive forgiveness and restoration to peace with God.

That is the meaning of redemption! God came to rescue man by the sacrifice of Himself. He paid the price of the life of His only begotten Son. Christ has, by that sacrifice, become to us *"wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,"* I Corinthians 1:30. *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace,"* Ephesians 1:7. He paid the price for our redemption, and now we are free indeed because the Son has set us free (John 8:36).

What does redemption mean? To us, it means we have been set free from sin because Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has paid the full price for our ransom from the penalty, power and presence of sin. Because we are redeemed, we are free. Forever and totally free! That is what redemption means.

HOW IS REDEMPTION ACCOMPLISHED? (Agorazo)

A study of the Bible doctrine of redemption must give serious thought to the divine revelation recorded in I Peter 1:17-20. It reads, *"And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you."* The passage is important because it tells the method by which redemption of poor lost sinners has been accomplished. The key to the passage is in these words: *"Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things ...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without spot."* It declares the price that was paid for redemption.

By an act of God

The key word of the passage (Greek agorazo, "redeemed") is very interesting. It is a verb built upon a noun. The noun was agora, the Greek word for marketplace. The verb came to mean "to acquire by purchase in the marketplace; to make one's private property by payment of a purchase price." And this is the term the Holy Spirit caused Peter to choose to describe the method of our redemption.

What does agorazo mean to you and me today? In Bible terms, it means God has purchased us to Himself from the ownership of another by the payment of a price. It means purchase plus price. God Himself has gone to the trouble of making the purchase. God Himself has gone to the expense of paying a price.

If one asks, "How is the redemption of sinners accomplished?" we must answer, "The redemption of sinners is made possible by an act of God in which He personally paid a great price to purchase sinners from sin to Himself."

By the blood of Christ

What was the purchase price that was paid? The answer is twofold. First, the price that was paid for the redemption of sinners was not a price made up by corruptible things. The term "corruptible" does not mean "unclean" or "sinful " It rather refers to things which are confined to time and subject to decay or passing away. Wealth is corruptible, for instance. Therefore we were not redeemed with "silver and gold. " Customs or manners of living are subject to change. So we were not redeemed with the "traditions" and customs of our forbearers. No, nothing of earth could effect the payment of the price that was required.

Second, the price that was paid for the redemption of sinners was a price of that which is incorruptible, not subject to passing or decay. What is there in the earth which could be called "incorruptible?" There is nothing. All we are and all we see is temporal, finite, changing and subject to decay. Even the very earth on which we live will one day pass away with great noise and fervent heat (II Peter 3:10-12). The redemption price must be something other-worldly, heavenly, not of man nor the things of this creation. But where can such a price be found, and how can it be obtained? That requirement leaves man helpless in his sin.

That is the point where God moved in grace to effect redemption for us. We are told that the incorruptible price paid for our sins was *"the precious blood of Christ. "* He died as *"a lamb without blemish and without spot. "* It is in His sacrifice, which paid the redemptive price, that our salvation rests.

The suffering of Jesus Christ for sinners was no second-best plan with God. God knew from

eternity before time what He would do. Before He created Calvary's hill, He had planned Calvary's cross where His only begotten Son would die for guilty sinners. What a marvel of grace! God had ordained Jesus Christ as the sacrifice for sinners *"before the foundation of the world,"* even though the provision was manifest only *"in these last times."* But what about the price? What was it that paid the price? The answer of the Bible is the "blood of Christ." That is the unanimous testimony of the entire Bible, Old Testament as well as New.

The basic principle is expressed in Leviticus 17:11, *"For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."* That decree of God underlies every sacrifice offered in the Old Testament system. Every animal that was offered, from the annual Passover lamb to the daily sacrifice at the temple, was offered because God had decreed that He would accept the sacrifice of an innocent substitute in the place of the death of guilty men.

The ultimate price was paid. It was not the sacrifice of an innocent animal. Animal sacrifices were but pictures of the real sacrifice which was to be made. Neither was it the life-blood of a good and just man. Man could never atone for another man. It was, as the Holy Spirit said through the pen of the apostle Peter, *"the precious blood of Christ."*

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ is the theme of the New Testament revelation. "In whom we have redemption through his blood; the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace," Ephesians 1:7. *"In whom we have redemption through his blood; even the forgiveness of sins,"* Colossians 1:14. *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood;"* Romans 3:24-25.

Available to all

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ, through the shedding of His blood on the cross of Calvary, is sufficient for the redemption of all people in all of human history. Hear this word from Revelation 5:9 *"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."* Did you catch the thrust of that statement? There are no racial nor language nor national barriers which keep a person from the benefits of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. *"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world,"* I John 2:2.

Yes, redemption's cost is staggering in its proportions. It necessitated the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ, not as a good man but as the only begotten Son of God. His blood was outpoured in death. That was the price.

No other sacrifice would do. The sacrificial lamb must be *"without blemish."* Only Jesus, of all the people in all of human history, could meet that qualification. He was perfect in physical, moral and spiritual aspects. His life was without sin and none could bring reproach against Him. His death became a "ransom," a price paid for deliverance of the captives, as He laid it down. He came into the market place of the world where men were in bondage to sin. He paid the redemptive price of the sacrifice of Himself. He bought back to God those who received Him through faith. That is how we can be "washed, sanctified and justified" in the blessed experience of salvation.

What is the method of redemption? It is the payment of a ransom, the price of redemption. And what was the price? It was the shedding of the blood (and so the death) of the sinless and only

begotten Son of God. It was Jesus' dying, the Just One for the unjust ones, that brought us to God (1 Peter 3:18). That is how the redemption price was paid.

WHAT DOES REDEMPTION GUARANTEE? (Exagorago)

The Bible concept of redemption is to rescue from bondage and to set free by the payment of a price. We are investigating New Testament words which make that meaning clear to our finite understanding.

The first word we examined (Greek, lutron) emphasized the idea of setting free. It answered the question, "What is the meaning of redemption?" The basic idea is to set free one who has been the property of another .

The second word we examined (Greek, agorazo) emphasized the idea of buying in the market place and of setting free by the payment of a price. There we found an answer to the question, "How is redemption accomplished?" We saw the price paid for the redemption of sinners is nothing less than the blood of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God.

Now we come to a third word used in the Greek text of the New Testament to show the meaning of redemption. The word is exagorazo and carries the idea of buying out so there would be no return to former condition of bondage.

The third word for redemption is to be found in Galatians 3:13, "*Christ hath redeemed (exagorasen) us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.*" It is saying that Christ has bought us out from under the curse of the law with the intention that we would never enter under that curse again.

What a beautiful picture of the work of Christ in the saving of sinners. He is pictured as going into the market place, paying the price necessary to purchase us and bringing us out to be forever free. That is shouting ground for the Christian!

Bought out

We can understand better the wonder of it all if we think of it against the social background of New Testament times. When Paul wrote Galatians 3:13, slavery was common throughout the Roman empire. In fact, some have estimated that there were more slaves than free men in the empire in those days. God never approved of that cruel institution of slavery. Yet, He used it to illustrate a spiritual truth.

A slave owner could buy and sell his slaves at his will. He might buy a person to be a slave when the worker was young and then sell him off if his health broke or if the worker became inform.

The buying and selling of slaves was such a common event in the Roman Empire that there were markets where people were sold and bought every day of the week.

Redemption means that God buys sinners out from their slavery to sin. He buys them at the great cost of the life-blood of His own divine Son. The purpose of His buying sinners is that they might no longer be bondslaves of Satan in the realm of sin, but children of God in the kingdom of righteousness. Once the redemption price was paid for a slave, the previous owner had no more control over him. Once God has paid the redemption price for sinners and effected their salvation through their repentance and faith, the devil has no further claim or power over them. Then God went one step further in His revelation. He used a word for "redeem" which means "to buyout of slavery so as to never return to that slavery again." Paul said that is what Jesus has done for those who trust Him. He has so completely delivered us from the curse of sin through the law that we will never enter under that curse again, forever .

That is the meaning of Romans 8:1-4, *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* No condemnation! God has delivered from all bondage all who are in Christ Jesus. The price is paid. The deliverance is accomplished. There is no danger of returning to the possession or control of the former master in sin.

Never to return again

The glorious part of this truth is not that we are bought out of bondage to sin. That is indicated in other passages of scripture. The glory is that we are so bought out as to never return to sin's bondage again. Talk about security in Christ! It is bound up in one Greek word (aagarozo) which means to make free by buying out of the bondage in the market place. Consider that truth in the light of Jesus' words recorded in John 10:28-30: *"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."* Think about that statement.

(1) God claims personal ownership of each one who is His through faith in Jesus Christ. (2) God manifests His relationship and ownership by giving each one eternal life. (3) He further declares His intention for them by the declaration that they shall never perish. (4) He enforces His intention in them by the declaration that they shall never perish. (5) He enforces His intention by holding His own dear children in His hand, from which no power is able to pluck them. (6) What Jesus intends for those whom He redeems by His blood is the same as what the Father intends for them, for He and the Father are one.

I like that kind of teaching. Don't you? What blessed assurance and peace it gives to know that I belong to God forever and forever. His redemption guarantees it so. P. P. Bliss expressed the truth in these words of a grand old hymn: Now are we free -there's no condemnation, Jesus provides a perfect salvation; Come unto me, O hear His sweet call, Come, and he saves us once for all. Hebrews 9:11, 12 is a good passage of assurance to memorize. It reads: *"But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."*

Do you hear it? He has not only obtained redemption (purchase by payment of a price so as to set free), but He has also obtained *"eternal redemption."* His purchase price is eternally effective. When we are freed from sin, we will never again return to its bondage. We are set free to be eternally free in Christ. We are not only purchased, but also we are purchased-out, and freedom is forever assured.

Such an offer of redemption to sinners is beyond our comprehension. But that is because the love and grace of God is too much for us to understand. *"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen,"* Romans 11:33-36.

HOW COMPLETE IS THE WORK OF REDEMPTION? (Apolutrosis)

A study of those special words used in the New Testament to describe the redemption of sinners makes us stand in awe at the grace of God. They throw such a light upon the act of mercy and work of grace that we can hardly take it in-

Let us review what we have discovered thus far in our study. (1) The first great word for "redeem" or "redemption" (Greek, lutron) means to "set free." Particular attention is not given to the condition or the cost but to the fact that an act of deliverance has been performed for the redeemed person so that he is set free from the bondage of sin in which he has lived and suffered. (2) The second great word for "redeem" (Greek, agorazo) means "to purchase in the market place by the payment of a price." It is the cost of setting free that is emphasized here. God reveals in the Bible that the cost of redeeming sinners was no less than the life-blood of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. How important we must be to God that He would pay a price like that to set us free from sin. (3) The third great word for "redeem" (Greek, agorazo) means "to take out and set free by the payment of a price so the delivered one would not return to the former state of bondage." And that truth is almost too good to be true! God not only pays the ransom to set us free, but He gives us a freedom in Christ which guarantees eternal deliverance and freedom from the bondage of sin.

(4) That brings us to a fourth great word for "redeem" or "redemption." It is a Greek work (apolutrosis) which takes the idea of setting free (lutron) and adds the idea "from" (apo) to it. It means we are totally separated and set free from all slavery to sin. It speaks of a through- and-through salvation in Jesus Christ. It encourages us by showing that our salvation is not partial but includes the redemption of the whole person: body, soul and spirit. It is a word to make a Christian shout!

Redemption affects the whole man

Think about it! Salvation includes the totality of man's being. It is such a mistake to think that God saves the "soul," while the rest of man is left unchanged and unaffected. Not so! Salvation is complete. It is applied in grace to the totality of the human person. All of man that was affected by sin (and that includes every aspect of his being) is affected by redemption from sin. Those who are redeemed in Christ are saved through-and-through, totally and forever. Praise God!

In a book entitled Christian Manual, H. S. Miller makes a list of those things from which the Bible says the Christian has been redeemed. The list includes our redemption from all iniquity (Titus 2:14), the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13), the bondage of the law (Galatians 4:5), the power of sin (Romans 6:18, 22), any bondage (Deuteronomy 15:15), all evil (Genesis 48:16), all trouble (Psalm 25:22), all distress (1 Kings 1:29), all adversity (II Samuel 4:9), deceit and violence (Psalm 72:14), destruction (Psalm 103:4), death (Hosea 13:14), hell (Psalm 49:15), the hand of the enemy (Psalm 1~:10) and all our enemies (Psalm 136:24). How much wider could the scope of redemption be?

Redemption Is past, present and future

To stress the idea of total redemption in our understanding, the Bible speaks of it in three tenses: past, present and future. Those three tenses relate to the three parts of our human person: spirit, soul (life), and body.

In reference to redemption in the past tense, you can find such Bible passages as these. "*Christ*

HATH redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, " Galatians 3:13. The verb "hath redeemed" indicates something that has transpired in the past. Again, reference is made to Jesus Christ as the one "in whom WE HAVE redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, "Ephesians 1:7. To say "we have redemption" means the redemption was accomplished in past time and we have it in the present time. The past tense is always used when redemption is spoken of as a purchase price that was paid for sinners. That past tense aspect of redemption is applied to the immortal human spirit which was redeemed at the instance of repentance and faith.

The present tense of redemption is used when reference is made to the daily deliverance and help of Christ for the redeemed. You find it in the reference to Jesus Christ, *"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, " Titus 2:14. As redemption is applied in the past tense to the saving of the eternal spirit of man, redemption is applied in the present tense to the saving of the daily life of the convert.*

The future tense of redemption is applied to the physical body of man. There will come a day when Jesus Christ will return to earth and a resurrection of our physical bodies will take place. He *"shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself; " Philippians 3:21. Do not be surprised when I say that redemption in Christ includes the eventual rescue of the very physical body in which man lives here. It is true!*

Redemption is a complete purchase

The apostle Paul wrote of the scope of salvation in these words, *"Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's, " I Corinthians 6:20. Yes, you are purchased in redemption in both physical and spiritual terms. Recognizing that the redemptive deed is not complete when the spirit is saved and redeemed eternally, or when the life is sanctified for the good of man and the glory of God, Jesus spoke of signs of His return (when the physical body will be resurrected in a new and glorified form) and said, when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption (of the body) draweth nigh," Luke 21:28. Redemption could be no more complete than to include the whole of the human person, physical and spiritual.*

We could go a step beyond that. The whole creation, even the inanimate objects of the material creation, will profit from the redemptive work of God in Jesus Christ. *"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of Corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body, " Romans 8:19-23.*

Dear Christian, all that God has to give you is provided by His redemption in Jesus Christ. Therein lies the blessing of union with Christ, regeneration, conversion, justification, sanctification, preservation and all other blessings of grace. Rejoice in your deliverance. Rest in your security. He who has paid such a price as to set free the whole universe from the bondage and corruption of sin can surely redeem you from all iniquity and make you eternally His dear child.

To guarantee your full salvation, God has given His blessed Holy Spirit to live in you every day. And that blessed Spirit indwelling *"is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory,"* Ephesians 1:14

WHO CAN DO THE WORK OF REDEMPTION? (Kinsman-Redeemer)

Our review of the Bible doctrine of redemption has left one question crying to be answered immediately and distinctly. It is to that question that we turn our attention just now.

We have seen that to redeem means to set free from bondage. We have seen that to redeem means to set free by the payment of a price. We have seen that to redeem means to set free so that the delivered one will never return to the condition of slavery from which he has been delivered. We have seen that to redeem means complete, through-and-through deliverance of all aspects of the human person.

But, when those concepts of redemption are applied to the condition of man in his sin, an important question arises: "Who is qualified to do such work of redemption?" The Bible has taught us that mere man cannot redeem another man in the spiritual aspects of that word. Is there any person who is morally and spiritually qualified to be the Savior of sinners by providing eternal redemption for them?

Yes, praise God, there is such a person! We call His name Jesus. *"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us,"* Hebrews 9:11, 12. Jesus has *"obtained eternal redemption for us."*

But that redemptive work of Jesus was no small thing. Even He had to undergo a special qualifying before He could become our Savior. Hebrews 5:8, 9 reads, *"Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."* What does it mean that Jesus was "made perfect" so as to become the author of eternal salvation? It means what He did in His coming in human flesh gave Him the equipment by which He could save sinners. That does not mean He was imperfect before His experiences here but that what happened here in His incarnate state made it possible for Him to be our Redeemer.

What was necessary for one to be the Redeemer of men? We find four qualifications required in the teaching of Holy Scripture. Those four qualifications are set forth in the beautiful pastoral story of Ruth and is recorded in a book which bears her name and is found in the Old Testament scriptures. The story informs us of a ministry of the "kinsman-redeemer" in ancient Israel. That custom of kinsman-redeemer was placed in the society of Bible lands that we might have an illustration today of how Jesus can be our Redeemer.

In the book of Ruth we are introduced to another family before we are introduced to Ruth herself. A man named Elimelech and his wife Naomi lived in Bethlehem with their two sons Mahlon and Chilion. Famine struck southern Palestine, so the man and his family moved eastward to the land of Moab. The boys grew to manhood in Moab. In due time Elimelech died, and the sons both married. The wife of one was named Orpah, and the wife of the other was named Ruth. Ten years after their migration to Moab, both the sons died. Naomi was left with two widowed daughters-in-law. She decided to return to her original home in Bethlehem and instructed the daughters-in-law to return to their original homes. Orpah did so. Ruth refused, choosing rather to cast her lot with Naomi whom she loved dearly.

Now the idea of kinsman-redeemer comes into the picture. There was a man who was a relative of Elimelech. He was a man of great wealth. It became his duty to redeem the property and assume protection over the widow of his deceased relative. Naomi sent Ruth to meet him and let him know of the need in their household. His actions as a "kinsman-redeemer" for the two women is one of the beautiful stories recorded in the Bible.

What does that teach us about Jesus as our redeemer? There are four qualifications which a redeemer must meet. Jesus met them all ideally. He is qualified.

One who is related

The redeemer must be a relative of the person whom he would redeem. Boaz was "a kinsman" of Elimelech. Without that relationship, he might have been full of sympathy for Naomi and Ruth, but he could not have fulfilled the duties of a kinsman-redeemer .

Jesus is related to you and me. He established that relationship by coming into the world in a flesh-and-blood body. *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage,"* Hebrews 2:14, 15.

One who is able The redeemer must be able to pay the redemption price. The reason Boaz could be a kinsman-redeemer for Naomi and Ruth was that he was *"a mighty man of wealth,"* Ruth 2:1. One gets the impression that the household of Elimelech and Naomi had gone into bankruptcy and abject poverty. It would take a lot of money to rescue them.

The good news of the Christian gospel is that Jesus is able to pay the ransom for sinners. It was such a great price to pay. The price was nothing less than the life-blood of the only begotten Son of God. It was not His death as a man, but His death as God, which was sufficient to pay the ransom price. He was able to pay that price, and He paid it for us.

One who is willing

The redeemer must be willing to pay the redemption price. Boaz reported to Naomi and Ruth that there was a relative more closely related to them than he. That nearer relative had to have first chance at the redemptive deed. That nearer relative did not want to act as kinsman-redeemer, however, so Boaz gladly took the part.

Was Jesus willing to come into the world and redeem sinners? Oh, yes! He came without hesitation or complaint (Philippians 1:6). He came saying, *"Lo, I come-to do thy will, O God,"* Hebrews 10:7. He could have called legions of angels to rescue Him from the cross (Matthew 26:53), but He did not. He suffered for sinners willingly.

One who is sinless

The redeemer must not need the redemption He would provide for another. A slave could not rescue another slave. Nor can a sinner provide spiritual rescue for another sinner .

That is why the Bible puts such great emphasis on the fact that Jesus *"was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, "* Hebrews 4:15. Since He *"did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, "* I Peter 2:22, He could bear *"our sins in his own body on the tree, "* I Peter 2:24. He died as *"a lamb without blemish and without spot, "* I Peter 1:19.

Yes, Jesus met the requirements for being our kinsman-redeemer. I must conclude this review of the doctrine of the redemption with an appeal to you to enter into the benefits of it. You can be set free from sin. God has paid the purchase price. You can be completely saved, for time and

eternity, your whole spirit and soul and body. And, praise God, *"Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation,"* II Corinthians 6:2. By an act of your will, turn from sin to God. Ask Him to save you on the basis of Jesus' death for you. Trust Him to do so, and it is done. Knowing the truth of it, enter into the good of it, today!