

## The Price

It should be emphasized, as the Bible does repeatedly, that there is no monetary price that could have been paid for the world's redemption. All the gold in the world would never suffice, as is made clear by the disciple Peter in his first epistle:

*You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. ( 1 Peter 1:18-19)*

As said, this is the theme that runs throughout the Bible. It binds every page of Holy Scripture together from the opening chapters of Genesis to the closing page of Revelation. It is seen in the promises of God to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the sacrifices commanded by the Mosaic Law, in the psalms of David, Moses, and others, in the prophesies of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, in the words of Gabriel to Mary, Jesus' mother, and in every word given by inspiration of God to the Evangelists and Apostles. It is this message of redemption through the blood of God's Son that occupies the entirety of Holy Scripture.

In fact, one might well and correctly conclude, after reading the entire Bible, that all God really wants us to know is that Jesus has redeemed us through the blood He shed on the cross. That's precisely what the Apostle Paul comes to when he wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:2:

**For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.**



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## #10 – REDEMPTION



**Out of Zion,**  
*the perfection*  
*of beauty,*  
**God shines forth.**



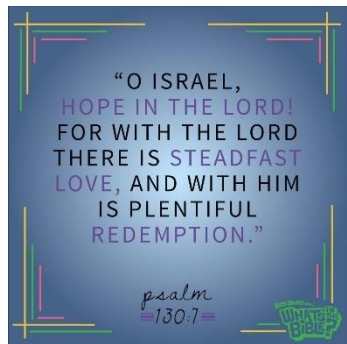
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## What is Redemption?

The word *redemption* is the noun version of the verb “redeem.” In both the Hebrew Old Testament and in the Greek New Testament, both words that are translated as *redeem* in the English simply mean “to set free by making a payment.” So, it would be correct to summarize the concept of the word by saying “to buy back.”

In modern English, we predominantly use the word *redeem* when it comes to making use of coupons or gift certificates. Now days, most such certificates and coupons are in digital form, but even today you might receive some coupons in the mail, little pieces of paper that you cut out and take in to get food, cosmetics, oil changes, etc. for a discounted price. That’s because when you bring in those coupons, the business who authorized them literally “buy back” the coupons by giving you a certain amount off the price of the thing you are purchasing. It is important to note, then, that it is the business that is bearing the cost by redeeming the coupon.

When the Bible speaks about redemption, it carries effectively the same idea. The person who does the redeeming is the one who bears the cost, either through direct payment or by trading something else of value for it. For example, God commanded the people



of Israel to redeem every firstborn donkey with a lamb (Exodus 13:13). He also commanded that a nearest relative should redeem the property of one who sold it because of economic need (Leviticus 25:25). Even

a person could be redeemed if he had to sell himself into bondage to pay his debts (cf. Leviticus 25:47f.).

There were many other such commands about other aspects of life for the nation of Israel. All of these commands to redeem were to be echoes of this promise of God in Psalm 130:7:

For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with Him is plentiful redemption.

## The Poverty Which Possessed Us

Isn’t it wonderful how the Lord took into account how poverty would affect the people of Israel in the Old Testament? Understand, though, that the concept of redemption was primarily a picture of the spiritual poverty that enveloped all people.

So, what is the poverty which has possessed us? In order to answer that question, we first need to understand what, precisely, poverty is. We think we know about poverty, but we only know it on a very shallow level. To us, poverty is primarily about not having enough food, clothing, or shelter. In other words, we think of poverty in terms of material possessions. That’s not unimportant, but it certainly isn’t of primary importance. Of primary importance is whether or not we have what we need to be in a good relationship with our God. The Bible assures us that we do not! Sin has robbed us of any spiritual wealth so that we can only stand before God as beggars.

Well, it’s actually worse than that. We aren’t just beggars; we are slaves – sold to sin and death and hell. Through Adam’s Fall, we all became indebted to our greatest enemies. Since we are born as slaves to sin, we have no way to free ourselves. Our only hope is that someone might REDEEM us. But who of the human race could, since we are all possessed by the poverty brought on by sin?

God’s only-begotten Son entered into the human race to do just this. Since He was not impoverished by sin, He was able to redeem us. This He did by offering His own perfect, innocent life for us all – “*the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God*” (1 Peter 3:18).

## The Payment

What payment can possibly be offered to redeem even a single human being, let alone every single human being? While the Old Testament required that the Israelites redeem their brothers from poverty, how can anyone possibly redeem one who is enslaved to sin and death? It is this question that is at the heart of the following passage from Psalm 49:7-8:

Truly no man can ransom another, or give to God the price of his life, for the ransom of their life is costly and can never suffice.

While one might, theoretically, put a value on a human life, such as insurance companies do, it is impossible to place a value on the eternal soul of any individual so that we might purchase our freedom from sin and death. The price is too steep, and we simply have nothing of value, because of our fallen nature, to offer for it.

This helpless and hopeless situation God foresaw from eternity. In love, He was determined to provide the cost necessary, not just to redeem one human being but every human being. The only price that would be sufficient for such a universal redemption would be the life of His only-begotten Son. This is the central message of Holy Scripture, that through Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God, we have been redeemed from the sin and death that has infected the entire human race through Adam’s Fall. Here’s how the Apostle Paul states this simple message:

Colossians 1:13-14: He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Because of Jesus’ death on a cross, we have been redeemed for God through the forgiveness of our sins.