

# Gospel Gleanings, "...especially the parchments"

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## Redemption Completed in the Resurrection

I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. Hosea 13:14 (KJV 1900)

Often we read spiritual gems of invaluable price throughout the Old Testament. In some cases, we might wonder; did the writer intend what I think he intended in these words? In other cases, we find the passage cited by New Testament writers, so we know the Holy Spirit's intent in the Old Testament passage. In our study of the verse before us, we have Paul's New Testament witness as our guide.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (1 Corinthians 15:54-55)

Ver. 54. That is, in an eternal and continuing victory; the saints shall die no more. The quotation which the apostle bringeth, is out of those two texts, Isa 25:8; Ho 13:14; which two texts, the apostle saith, at that day will have a more full, perfect, and eminent accomplishment, than ever they before had.<sup>1</sup>

The words of Hosea are simple and clear. God in prophecy comforts His beleaguered and discouraged people with the assurance of ultimate victory over their final adversary, death itself. God even tells us that He shall not change His purpose or course in this matter, "Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." His claiming of His ransomed, redeemed possession is certain, albeit yet future.

The prophet uses the analogy of money to teach this lesson by the two terms, "ransom" and "redeem." We read much in the New Testament about Jesus' life and death as the price for our being changed from God's adversary to His beloved child. We were born with a price on our heads, the price of inherited sin, but, as we enter into life, our thoughts and actions serve only to increase the debt, never to reduce it.

The Hebrew word translated "ransom" suggests something done or paid to secure the rescue or the release of someone held captive. The Hebrew word translated "redeem" links this passage to the

rich lessons from Moses' Law that provided for the payment of a debt by a "Near relative." If an Israelite borrowed too heavily and put himself in debt above his ability to pay, Moses' Law provided that he, and, in some cases, his whole family might be taken into servitude by his creditor. He/they would work for the creditor until the debt was paid. However, Moses' Law did not provide for perpetual slavery. It only provided that a man serve his creditor to pay off his legal debt. Even with this limitation, God also imposed a fifty year limit on all debts by the year of Jubilee.

A rather bizarre view of redemption holds that Jesus paid the price of redemption to Satan who held the elect captive and required a price for their release. This errant idea puts Satan in the position of power, something that Scripture will not permit. As indicated above, the Hebrew word translated "ransom" in our study verse does not suggest our idea of kidnapping and ransom. Rather it teaches the idea of rescue and release. Nothing in the typical Old Testament priesthood remotely implies or allows the idea that the price of our redemption was to be paid to Satan, nothing whatever. The work of the Levitical priest focused on the people and God, not Satan. God and His holy, righteous Law were violated by our sins, and righteous justice must be satisfied. Based on all the Scriptures dealing with our redemption, Jesus came to satisfy divine justice for our sins and thereby to rescue us from righteous justice.

When we add Hosea's second word in the prophetic verse, redeem, we link this rescue to the kinsman redeemer depicted in Mosaic Law, a rich type of Jesus and His work on our behalf. Do not miss or diminish the point of the Mosaic procedure. The kinsman redeemer must be a near relative. He cannot be a stranger or a non-relative. Before our redemption, Jesus put Himself in the place of our family, our near relative. A family relationship must exist in Mosaic Law prior to the act of redemption. Only a near relative could legally intervene and pay the debt that held us captive.

Few doctrines find as much "Ink" in Scripture as the doctrine of redemption. Our redemption from our debt of sin is a legal debt, not the result of fraud. We legitimately owed our death, permanent and final, to God and to His broken and blasphemed Law. In the Garden of Eden, God

<sup>1</sup> *Matthew Poole's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, copied from SwordSearcher electronic Bible software.

clearly warned Adam and Eve of the consequences of breaking the one simple law that He gave them to keep. Rather than keep that law, they listened to the twisted words of the serpent, "Yea, hath God said?" (Genesis 3:1) Every human enters the world with that debt resting squarely on his head. As every human enters into life, they add to their debt. They never "Pay it down." The solution to our debt problem must be found outside of ourselves. Scripture consistently associates Jesus and His life, death, resurrection, and ascension with our redemption. Nothing less could satisfy the debt. Folks who believe in salvation by works often define grace as God's merely reducing the unpayable debt to a lower value, something that the unregenerate sinner is capable of paying, but Scripture does not so define either grace or redemption. In Scripture, Jesus paid the full price of our redemption, not just part of it. And, in Scripture, grace is the divine state of mind by which God satisfies our full obligation, not merely reduces it to something that we are able to satisfy on our own.

Sometimes believers try to equate Jesus' sufferings and death with a variable value of money. If He had chosen to die for one more person, would He have suffered more than He did? If He had chosen to die for one fewer persons, would He have suffered less? While Scripture associates Jesus' death with ransom and redemption, it never implies any kind of variable valuation on Jesus' life, sufferings, and death. And, since Scripture doesn't deal with hypotheticals, it never addresses the imaginary idea of His dying for more or fewer people. Scripture always teaches that Jesus died for a fixed number of people, and that His life, sufferings, and death were wholly sufficient to secure their "rescue" to safety. Scripture deals with reality, not with imaginary or philosophical hypotheticals.

For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money. (Isaiah 52:3)

This passage elevates the topic from any idea of variable monetary valuations to a price that cannot be valued by money. It also reminds us of the folly of sin. We sold ourselves, our whole person, our whole existence, for something that had absolutely no value, "...for nought." But God in mercy promised to redeem us by a price that cannot be measured or valued by money. We cannot place a material value on the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can we value God's merciful grace that moved Him to secure our redemption.

Most teaching on the doctrine of redemption stops at this point, with Jesus paying our sin debt and securing our eternal and loving security with God. Our study passage, and Paul's use of it in 1 Corinthians 15, takes this doctrine beyond the removal of our debt and our new birth. It specifically and categorically holds that God's

redemptive purpose and work is not complete until the Second Coming and the resurrection and glorification of our physical bodies. Jesus' redemption not only secures our soul from sin's debt, but He also paid the price that shall secure our resurrected, literal, physical bodies from death. Nothing short of a resurrected physical body, raised, freed from sin's impact and influences, and glorified in the image of Jesus' resurrected and ascended body can satisfy the verses that we here study. The teaching of no resurrected body mocks these verses, as it also mocks every passage that teaches our resurrection, such as 1 Corinthians 15 and the many other passages that teach this truth. A common teaching in contemporary Christianity today holds that, at death, God fabricates a new body and gives it to His child who dies, never raising the body that died, never. This idea mocks the Bible doctrine as fully as the outright denial of the resurrection. Look up the word "Resurrection" in a historical dictionary of the English language. Look up the word translated by this and related words in first century Greek. To hold to any idea that ignores or denies the raising of the same body in which we lived contradicts the meaning of the word. If God didn't intend to raise the same body in which we lived and died, He would have directed His human authors of Scripture to use a different word. We have already studied Job's writings on the resurrection. How can anyone credibly interpret Job 19:25-27 so as to ignore the same body in which Job lived? Any effort to impose any other meaning on such clear Bible passages is cheap sophistry, not responsible Bible interpretation.

Respectful Bible reading and interpretation accepts the simple and obvious meaning of Scripture regarding the resurrection. Jesus came, lived, suffered, died, arose, and ascended to glory in the human body that was born of Mary. Scripture consistently teaches us that our resurrection is irrevocably linked to His. In the same way that He arose and ascended, at the Second Coming, He shall raise us with a glorified, sinless body, the same body in which we lived, just as He arose with the same body that was crucified. And, as He ascended with that same body that revealed the scars of crucifixion to Thomas, so also we shall ascend with the same body in which we lived. While His body was changed in terms of glory, His body did not carry a price on it for sins that He committed; His only debt was ours. So our bodies shall be raised, freed from sin's debt and its impact, fully glorified and equipped to see, praise, and glorify our Savior for complete redemption for eternity. Hallelujah! What a Savior!

Little Zion Primitive Baptist Church  
16434 Woodruff  
Bellflower, California

Worship service each Sunday  
Joseph R. Holder

10:30 A. M.  
Pastor