

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE REDEEMED?

Redeemed—Is that just one of those Bible words like Nebuchadnezzar or superfluity? What does it mean to be redeemed?

According to Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Greek Words, there are two Greek words that are used for “redeem.” “(1) *exagorazo*—denotes to buy out especially of purchasing a slave with a view of his freedom, and (2) *lutroo*—to release on receipt of ransom” (263). Vines goes on to add a note concerning both words, “While both No. 1 and No. 2 are translated to redeem, *exagorazo* does not signify the actual redemption, but the price paid with a view to it, *lutroo* signifies the actual deliverance, the setting at liberty.” (263). So, when we are looking at the term “redeemed” it is dealing with the price paid and freedom provided.

How does this help me as a student of God’s word even if I know nothing about the Koine Greek language? It appears to this writer that the New Testament will bear out the emphasis of the Greek in the context of your translation. The term *lutroo* is used ten times in the New Testament. Seven out of the ten times are in Paul’s writings (cf. Romans 3:24; 8:23; I Corinthians 1:20; Ephesians 1:7,14; 4:30; Colossians 1:14). Strong emphasis seems to be placed in these passages on the deliverance or setting at liberty. Paul puts it this way, “being then made **free from sin**, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Romans 6:18). David J. Williams in his book *Paul’s Metaphors: Their Context and Character*, writes:

“When Paul speaks of ‘redemption through the blood’ in Ephesians 1:7 he means that the blood of Christ was the cost at which the freedom of Christians was bought. In Romans 3:24-25, he declares that believers ‘are justified by [God’s] grace... through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God intended...as a propitiation by his blood’ (123).

He then goes on to say:

“The price of redemption is not always mentioned. In I Corinthians 1:30 Paul simply says that Christ is our wisdom (all that we need to know as far as God is concerned), for Christ is our ‘righteousness from God, our holiness and our redemption.’ In Colossians 1:14 he asserts that in Christ ‘we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.’ These verses say nothing of what it cost Christ to redeem us...Still, Paul never entirely loses sight of the cost in his use of the term ‘redemption’” (123,124).

What can we learn from a study of the term “redeemed?” First, we can get a better understanding of the word. “To redeem is to rescue or deliver from enthrallment from which one cannot deliver himself” (David Lipscomb, *New Testament Commentaries on Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians*, p. 258).

Secondly, we can realize the great need to be redeemed. It is difficult to get individuals to do anything unless they see a need. How many of us are good about having those “annual check-ups” with our doctors? What most folks do is wait until they get completely down and then they go to the doctor. I admit it. I’m one of those who just dread going to the doctor, but I will go when I get in enough pain. The same is true in the spiritual realm. Many don’t see the need to “Go To Church” or “Live Godly.” Many feel like they don’t need a redeemer. Why? Because they don’t see where they are and that is in sin, separated from God (cf. Isaiah 59:1-2)! Paul reminded the brethren at Rome, “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

“...then said the Lord, Behold, I will set a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel...” (Amos 7:8)

SATAN’S SCHEME OF DAMNATION

Text: _____

I. Hear _____

Notes:

II. Believe _____

Notes:

III. Repent _____

Notes:

IV. Confess _____

Notes:

**LIVING LESSONS FROM
THE BOOK OF BOOKS**

Text: _____

I. Sin _____

Notes:

II. God is _____

Notes:

III. Life is _____

Notes:

Some will try to deny they are in sin but they are simply deceiving themselves. “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (I John 1:8). Others will try to redeem themselves to no avail! “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” (Proverbs 20:9). We can’t pay the price. This is why we need a redeemer.

Lastly, we can give thanks to God for the redeemer, who willingly paid the ultimate price to set us free! “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). “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). And because of that price paid we can be liberated from sin. “Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Romans 6:18).

The question for each of us to answer is, “Have we been made free from sin by the blood of the Savior?” Have we been “REDEEMED?”

-Ronnie Hayes

THE OPTIMISTIC FROG

Two frogs fell into a deep cream bowl,
One was an optimistic soul;
But the other took the gloomy view,
“We shall drown,” he cried, without more ado.
So with a last despairing cry,
He flung up his legs and he said, “Good-bye.”

Quote the other frog with a merry grin,
“I can’t get out, but I won’t give in.
I’ll just swim ‘round till my strength is spent,
Then will I die the more content.”

Bravely he swam till it would seem
His struggles began to churn the cream;
On the top of the butter at last he stopped,
And out of the bowl he gaily hopped.
What of the moral? ‘Tis easily found:
If you can’t hop out, keep swimming ‘round.

“With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible” (Mark 10:27).

VOICES OF DISSENSION

It is never good and it can never be justified. Excuses can be made, but reasons can never be given. And if you were to combine the most intense physical pains possible it would not equal the hurt inflicted by them. Yes, voices of dissension are that serious. They are troubling to the humble, spiteful to the innocent, and disastrous to the unity of any people. Yet more and more people far and wide are unashamedly using their free speech to tear down rather than to build up, words of criticism are spoken rather than words of encouragement, and hatred is advanced rather than love. You might think that all of this is all too obvious and that we live in a sophisticated society where no one would consider acting in such a brash and unapologetic way. Not only, though, is it ever present in the world, but it is even more sadly ever present in the church of Jesus Christ. What might make brethren act in such a way as to speak words of dissent toward even their own family in Christ?

Perhaps one root of dissension among brethren is jealousy. There is at least one prime example of such a jealousy found in the Old Testament scriptures. In Numbers 12, a situation arose that was fueled by the jealousy of Miriam and Aaron toward their own brother Moses. Thinking that Moses was receiving more credit and opportunity than did they, together *“they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? Hath he not spoken also by us?”* (vs. 2). They just could not stand the thought that Moses had become a much more influential and recognized person for his work’s sake than did they. There were two roads they could have taken. One, that was more honorable was that they could have humbled themselves to the point that they did not need nor desire such praise as they were seeking and encourage Moses in his work. Or a second road they could have sought, which would have been less honorable, was to increase their own labor to satisfy their urge for recognition. However, neither of these options were utilized, but they lowered themselves to speak dissension against their brother. That method, though, did not work too well for them because God’s anger was kindled hotly against them and they suffered for their sins. Many Christians still become jealous of one another for essentially the same reasons. However, rather than taking the honorable options, they lower themselves to speak words of dissent against their brethren. It ought not to be.

A second root of dissension among brethren can be attributed to arrogance. Some people have lofted themselves to such a self-exalted position in life, that they simply feel they can treat anybody how they want and they are perfectly justified in such. In fact, just a few chapters later, in Numbers 16, three men of the nation of Israel showed such an arrogance toward Moses and Aaron. However, the prime example of this arrogance is seen in III John, where the apostle wrote,

“I wrote unto the church: but Diotrophes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church” (vs. 9-10).

Diotrophes remains the standard of arrogance, but many brethren are trying to beat him out of the title. Regardless, though, of how much some brethren think about themselves and want others to think about them, the New Testament still says, *“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up”* (James 4:10). Arrogance, though, does abide; but brethren, it ought not to be.

Then a third root of dissension among brethren is hyper-criticism. Some people simply are not happy unless they have something to complain about and criticize. If everything does not measure up to their standard of if they were not personally consulted regarding something being done then they simply feel it is their job to speak out against it either publicly or even behind people’s backs. God, though, hates the sowing of discord among brethren (Proverbs 6:19) and hyper-criticism sows seeds of discord in abundance. What is interesting about the hyper-critical brethren around us is that they are quick to criticize how something is done, but are usually completely unwilling to do such themselves. To such our response should be as the one who said, *“I like the way I am doing it better than the way you are not.”* Constructive criticism can be helpful, but hyper-criticism is a wily work of Satan, and it simply ought not to be.

Christians should have not only a respectful but downright loving relationship with each other. If that is not part of Christ’s prayer in John 17, then surely nothing was. But if ever brethren will live and love as expected by God, we must check our egos at the door and humbly submit to the will of God, once and for all silencing the voices of dissension.

-Andy Brewer