

**Letters From A Fisherman**  
**Week 5**  
**1 Peter 1:18-21**  
**“Redeemed”**

**Introduction**

**Therefore tell the Israelites: I AM The LORD, and I will bring you out from the forced labor of the Egyptians and rescue you from slavery to them. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great acts of judgement. I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. You will know that I AM The LORD your God, Who brought you out from the forced labor of the Egyptians.** **Exodus 6:6-7**

Redemption: it is a word that lies at the very heart of our Christian experience. We, the Believers in Christ Jesus, have been *redeemed* by His own blood. To find the first time the word is mentioned in The Scriptures, we need to go all the way back to the sixth chapter of *Genesis*. There we find The LORD speaking with Moses, telling him the message of hope that he is to share with the nation of Israel. The chosen people had endured the bitterness of slavery to their Egyptians tormentors for four hundred years. God had indeed heard their cries for deliverance, and He was about to take action on their behalf. God was sending a deliverer, namely Moses, to lead His people to freedom.

In his first epistle to the church, who had been scattered abroad by Nero's intense persecution, Peter reminded the suffering people that they too had a deliverer that was sent by God. His name is Jesus, and He is the ultimate rescuer, Who has paid our ransom so that we might be set free. Every *Old Testament* Scripture either speaks of this great Deliverer directly through prophetic utterance, or with what is known as “*typology*”, images if you will, woven into every story line. Your entire *Bible* bears witness to the fact that The Christ was coming (*Old Testament*) or that Christ has come (*New Testament*) and is one day coming again to reign in glory (*Old and New Testament*).

I can only imagine how comforting Peter's words were to the suffering church of the first century. They were being hunted down like wanted criminals, simply for believing that Christ is the only way to God. Their only crime was loving Jesus and trying to share His love with the world. And instead of receiving love in return for their efforts, they were despised and criminalized. The prince of this world was doing all that was within his power to destroy the fledgling church so that God's gospel of grace could never be spread. But despite his best efforts, and those of his puppet Nero, the persecution of the church only caused God's message of hope to be spread all the more. Reminding us once again of God's promise:

**For just as rain and snow fall from heaven and do not return there without saturating the earth and making it germinate and sprout, and providing seed to sow and food to eat, so My Word that comes from My mouth will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I please and will prosper in what I send it to do.** **Isaiah 55:10-11**

The plans of God are always fulfilled. Therefore, it is futile to resist His will. And Simon Peter wanted the suffering church to be reminded that no matter the trials we are currently facing, we have a *living hope* in Christ Jesus! And to all who place their faith in Him, there is never a time when we need be ashamed. Peter reminded the church that no matter the circumstance to always conduct themselves in a manner that would bring glory to The One Whom they have called upon as *Father*. For if we belong to Him, then we must always live to bring Him honor and glory. Just as we are commanded in Scripture to “honor our fathers and mothers” here on earth, we are also commanded to honor our heavenly Father in all that we do. As we studied previously, we do this by living lives of separation, meditation, and trepidation. In short, we are separate from the world (holiness), we pray and study The Word so that we may be transformed by it. And Finally, we live in reverent fear of the One to Whom we must stand and give an account.

As Peter builds his case for living holy lives, He reminds the church of just how we were redeemed in the first place, though the precious blood of Christ. So let us investigate this truth together as we see ingredients of our redemption; *The Predicament*, *The Payment*, and *The Passover Lamb*.

## **The Predicament (vs. 18a)**

***For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors...*** ***1 Peter 1:18a***

In order to properly explain The Apostle Peter's thought processes in this narrative, it is important to draw upon the inference and imagery in regards to The Jewish Passover. Some of the clues to this deliberate connection in these verses can be found in Peter's *Old Testament* references to "*Girding the loins of your mind*" (**vs. 13**), along with his quotation of the Scripture regarding clean vs. unclean animals (**Leviticus 11:44-45**). These inferences would be all too familiar with his Jewish audience, as would be his reference to Christ in this passage as "*an unblemished and spotless lamb*" (**vs. 19**). Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to also make this comparison as we attempt to unlock the meaning of the passage.

To fully comprehend the process of redemption, we need to understand fully what the term means. To be redeemed (*lytroo* in the Greek, and *gaal* in the Hebrew) we need to realize that the term literally means to being purchased out of bondage. The first time we see the word "redeem" in The Scriptures is when God tells Moses that He plans to "redeem" Israel with an outstretched arm (**Exodus 6:6**). For you see, God's chosen people were in bitter bondage to the Egyptians, and God had declared that He would purchase their freedom for them. So, in its perfect form, to redeem a person literally meant to purchase someone who is a slave and then set them free.

When my children were small, I wanted them to understand this process. So we as a family had an opportunity to give money to an organization who went into portions of Africa where people were still being bought and sold as property. This organization would take our donations (or at least this is what they claimed) and purchase the freedom of individuals in bondage in order to release them back into their own native homelands. So we decided to purchase the freedom of four individuals, one for each member of our family. I did this not only to show the love of Christ for those languishing in chains around the world, but also so that I could explain to my children, exactly what Christ has done for us!

Peter reminded the suffering church that they had indeed been redeemed from bondage just as God had redeemed the nation of Israel from the Egyptians. But the bondage they had been redeemed from was not the enslavement to other men, but rather, from the bondage their own sin. For you see, apart from Christ, we are enslaved to our own lusts. But our salvation has not only delivered us from the penalty of sin ("**For the wages of sin is death...**" **Romans 6:23**), but Christ our Redeemer has also delivered us from the *power* of sin. We are no longer enslaved to our lustful passions for we, by The Spirit, now have the power over self; for *the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*. And one day, through Christ, we will also be delivered from the very *presence* of sin itself.

Peter refers to our former bondage as "*your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors*", for we were born into our bondage just as surely as those born into Egyptian slavery had inherited their status from a long line of enslaved people (four hundred years to be exact). But Peter is not only referring to sinful behavior when he spoke here of an "empty way of life". For he was also speaking of our own religious efforts in trying to redeem ourselves by obedience to The Law. No matter how hard we try, we can never live according to God's perfect standard by just good *rule keeping*. We don't have the capacity to be perfect. Therefore, to think that we can earn God's favor simply by our own good works is quite literally an "empty way of life". For we do not have the capacity to redeem ourselves. We desperately need a redeemer to come and free us from the bondage of our sin. And apart from this intervention from God, our predicament is hopeless. We can only find our living hope when Christ sets us free.

**...Truly I tell you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin. A slave does not remain in the household forever, but a son does remain forever. So if The Son sets you free, you really will be free.** **John 8:34b-36**

We are free; free from the emptiness of religion and brought into a relationship with our heavenly Father. Free from the bondage of sin and its guilt and shame and reborn into the family of God. We who were once slaves are now set free and adopted as sons and daughters. While our predicament was grave indeed, we have been saved by grace.

### **The Payment (vs. 18-19a)**

**For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ....** **1 Peter 1:18-19a**

And just what was the price paid for our freedom? None other than the precious blood of Jesus Christ. There is not enough gold or silver in the world to pay the penalty for our sins. No, there was only one way for us to be purchased from our captivity. *The Bible* clearly states:

**For the wages of sin is death...**

**Romans 6:23a**

And as such there is no other payment to be made for our transgression. Our debt is payable only in blood. For *The Bible* also says:

**According to The Law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.** **Hebrews 9:22**

In *Old Testament* times, multiple animals were slaughtered in order to cover over the sins of mankind. In fact, the very first animals that were slain were killed by God Himself, when He used their skins to make coverings for Adam and Eve after their fall in the garden (**Genesis 3:20**). But all of these sacrifices were not sufficient to redeem mankind from his bondage. They merely foreshadowed a Redeemer, Who would come to purchase the freedom of men with His own blood; the blood which Peter, the rugged old fisherman, described as “*precious*”. For it was the precious blood of God’s Only Begotten Son that was sufficient to wash away the sins of this world.

So a price to redeem had to be paid. And that price was the body and the blood of Christ Jesus. He is the propitiation for our sin. Now most people today do not fully understand what that word “*propitiation*” really means. It refers to a debt being satisfied or fully paid. The Apostle John described it this way:

**My little children, I am writing your these things so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with The Father — Jesus Christ the Righteous One. He Himself is the atoning sacrifice (propitiation) for our sins, and not only for ours, but also for those of the whole world.** **1 John 2:1-2**

(clarification added)

This is why Christ declared, “It is finished”, when He gave up His spirit on the cross. The word in the Greek that He used was *tetelistaí*. It was a word that was stamped upon bills of sale after they had been paid in full. Jesus’ blood upon Calvary’s cross fully satisfied the debt we owed to God The Father for our sins. As the old hymn has so eloquently stated,

*“Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe.  
Sin had left a crimson stain.  
He washed it white as snow.”*

*Jesus Paid It All* by Elvina m. Hall 1865

So, because Christ has fully satisfied the price of our sin, we can be redeemed from its bondage. This is why the blood of Christ is so very precious to the Believer, for it alone has paid our ransom. We no longer have to fear the wrath of God, for Jesus took that wrath upon Himself at Calvary. He, who knew no sin, became sin for us (**2 Corinthians 5:21**). The punishment that should have been ours was placed upon the One Who had never sinned. He alone was qualified to pay for it. In Him, we are free indeed, for His blood has purchased our pardon from God. It is finished. The debt is paid in full!

### **The Passover Lamb (19b-21)**

**...like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb. He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was revealed in these last times for you. Through Him you believe in God, Who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.**  
**1 Peter 1:19b-21**

So, with this in mind, how do we secure this salvation for ourselves? How do we take the blood of Christ and apply it to our own lives? The answer is simple, by faith. And this is why I believe that Peter is using the imagery of The Passover in order to make his point. For you see, just before The LORD went to the cross to shed His blood for our sins, He shared the passover meal with his disciples. At the time, I am certain that they did not understand all that He was telling them around that table in the upper room. But since that time, Peter had plenty of time for prayer and introspection. And with the help of the Holy Spirit, he was able to fully comprehend all that Christ had shared with them.

The cross of Christ was always God's plan, even before the foundation of the world. As J. Vernon McGee has so eloquently said, *“The cross of Christ was not an ambulance sent to a car wreck. Christ was the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.”* God's intent from the beginning was to send Christ to shed His blood, because He knew all along that we would need a Redeemer. And this is the message revealed in the *entirety* of Scripture, not just in *The New Testament*.

For you see, The Passover is a simply an *Old Testament* foreshadowing of God's saving grace that would ultimately be fulfilled in Christ. The Israelites were in the midst of bitter bondage. Their suffering was intense, but the Pharaoh, who used them mercilessly to build his cities, refused to grant them their freedom. Even after Moses introduced plague after plague upon his kingdom, Pharaoh refused to yield.

Finally God sent the final hammer stroke that would indeed break the spirit of Pharaoh. It was called the plague of the death of the firstborn. Moses warned the the Egyptian king that if he did not allow the people to be set free, then all of the firstborn children and livestock of the Egyptians would die. Pharaoh hardened his heart and would not heed the warning. So the death angel was dispatched from heaven in order to carry out God's wrath.

Before the death angel was given free reign to strike all the firstborn of the land with death, God made a way for His chosen people to be spared. He instructed Moses to have each family slaughter a lamb and to place its blood upon the doorposts of their homes. When the death angel saw the blood, he would literally pass over that house and spare those inside. The blood on the doorposts was a sign to the death angel that the inhabitants of that household had been sealed by God's own protection.

It is interesting to note a few poignant facts about the blood of the passover. First it was only to be applied to the tops and sides of the doorframe and not the threshold. For it would be a cursed thing to trample upon the blood of the lamb of God (**Hebrews 10:29**). Second, the Israelites had to believe in God's promise in order to apply the blood to their doorposts. Good intentions were not sufficient to save them. They had to believe God enough to obey His instructions to them. So they applied the blood to their households in faith. They believed God, and they were spared.

Another important element of The Passover is that the lamb was required to be roasted by fire and all of it consumed by morning, for in the morning the people would begin their long and arduous journey to the promised land. These things pointed to the fiery suffering that the lamb of God would endure, and that we must partake of the gift that He offers before it is too late.

So you see, Jesus is the ultimate Passover Lamb. And just as God commanded that the Passover lamb in Egypt was to be brought into the house and inspected from Nissan 10th to the 14th to find any spot or blemish, Christ came into the city of Jerusalem and was questioned by the priests on those very same days and no sin was found in Him. He is the spotless lamb of God, who was slain during the feast of Passover, and rose again on the third day. And it is through Him that we have been passed over from death into life everlasting.

When the Jewish people partake of their Seder or Passover meal, they consume four cups of wine. Each cup corresponds with one of the four promises that God gave to Moses to share with the Israelites. God promised to "Bring them out of Egypt", which refers to our "separation" from this world. He promised to "deliver them" and to "redeem them" from their bondage, just as we have been redeemed and delivered from the power of sin. And He promised to "take them" or "accept them as His own." Through Christ the spotless lamb of God, we have received each of these promises. Therefore, since we now call on Him as our Father, then we must live as though we are His and no longer influenced by this world's wickedness. He is calling us to holiness. For by His blood, we are redeemed. And there is nothing in all of Egypt that holds persuasion over us. For we have witnessed for ourselves the redemption of The Lamb. And as strangers here, we continue this journey for His glory and place our hope in His return to lead us to the promised land.

TRUTH!!!