**1 Peter: The Glories of our Redemption**

1 Peter 1:18

**Context**

**1 Peter 1:17-21**—If you address as Father the One who impartially judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth; **18**knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers,  **19**but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ. **20**For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you **21**who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

One could rightly argue that redemption is one of God’s most glorious works. His creation is great to be sure, but the work of purchasing back what was His cost Him much more.

# “Great was the work of creation, but greater was the work of redemption. Great wisdom was seen in making us—but more miraculous wisdom in saving us. Great power was seen in bringing us out of nothing—but greater power in helping us when we were worse than nothing. (...) In the creation, God gave us ourselves; in the redemption, He gave us Himself.”[[1]](#footnote-2) –Thomas Watson

As such, the meaning and significance of the word ought to be one that the believer cherishes. Redemption is a primary feature of the salvation that God grants to His own. Redemption by definition is to release on receipt of ransom; to liberate by payment of ransom; to ransom.[[2]](#footnote-3)

The introduction to this idea comes in large part from the first Passover in Egypt.

**Exodus 12:1-13**—Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, **2**“This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. **3**Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, ‘On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a lamb for each household. **4**Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. **5**Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. **6**You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight. **7**Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. **8**They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. **9**Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails. **10**And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire. **11**Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste—it is the Lord’s Passover. **12**For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments—I am the Lord. **13**The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

God required that the life of the lamb would be the price necessary to save the life of the firstborn Israelite child. Without such a sacrifice and the faithful demonstration in applying the blood to the doorposts, there would be no pass over. This sacrifice then became the sacrificial death of an innocent substitute that redeemed those in bondage.[[3]](#footnote-4)

Theologically, we refer to this as the Substitutionary Atonement. And the Passover meal celebrated by the Israelites was the annual reminder of God’s redemption of the nation of Israel from slavery and His covenantal promise.

**1 Corinthians 5:7-8**—Clean out the old leaven so that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed. **8**Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

This was a foreshadowing of ultimately what would come in the perfect unblemished sacrificial lamb that would take away the sins of the world.

**Matthew 26:28**—for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

**John 1:29**—The next day he [JTB] \*saw Jesus coming to him and \*said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

**I Corinthians 11:25-26**—In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” **26**For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

**Hebrews 9:11-12, 28**—But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; **12**and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. … **28**so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

By the lovingkindness of the Lord, He redeemed them and saved them.

**Exodus 15:13**—In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; In Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation.

This passage provides a good understanding of biblical redemption.

**A Biblical Understanding of Redemption**

1. **He saved us: from our futile way of life**

**1 Peter 1:18b**—….from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers

1. Our former unregenerate condition
   1. Bondage to sin
   2. Alienated from God
   3. Object of God’s wrath

**Romans 6:17-18**—But thanks be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, **18**and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

**Ephesians 1:7**—In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

**Ephesians 2:1-3**—And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, **2**in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. **3**Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.

**Galatians 3:13**—Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”

**Colossians 1:13-14**—For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **14**in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

**Titus 2:14**—who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

* 1. Former lusts (epithumiais)—desire, craving, longing, desire for what is forbidden, lust[[4]](#footnote-5)

**14**As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance,

**1 Peter 4:2-3**—…so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. **3**For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries.

**James 1:14-15**—But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. **15**Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

**2 Peter 1:4**—For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

**Jude 1:16-18**—These are grumblers, finding fault, following after their own lusts; they speak arrogantly, flattering people for the sake of gaining an advantage. **17**But you, beloved, ought to remember the words that were spoken beforehand by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, **18**that they were saying to you, “In the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts.”

* 1. Under judgment: God brought judgment on the earth for the wickedness of man

**Genesis 6:5**—Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

* 1. Ignorant in their understanding

**14**As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance,

* 1. Without God giving them understanding, they have no capacity to understand

**1 Corinthians 2:14**—But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

* 1. They are of their father, the devil

**John 8:43-44**—Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. **44**You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks [[n](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=jn%25208&version=NASB1995#fen-NASB1995-26426n)]a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

* 1. They are darkened in their understanding

**Ephesians 4:18-19**—being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; **19**and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

1. Futile in their way of life
   1. Futile—vain; empty; (literally) profitless[[5]](#footnote-6); useless, of no purpose
   2. Every unregenerate person is living a futile life
      1. The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever
      2. That is why God made us
      3. Because sin separates us from God, the only hope we have is His redeeming work through Christ
      4. Outside of that, there is no purpose for man
   3. Regardless of how much “good” they may do on the earth, their lives are futile

**Matthew 16:26**—For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

* 1. Paul identifies the same futility

**Acts 14:15**—and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them.

**Romans 1:21-23**—For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. **22**Professing to be wise, they became fools, **23**and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures.

* 1. Their way of thinking is completely corrupt (broken operating system)

**Ephesians 4:17**—So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind,

1. Inherited from your forefathers
   1. Our sin nature is inherited from Adam
   2. The apostate Jewish faith (esp. demonstrated by the Jewish leaders) advocated a strong tradition through generations

**Matthew 15:7-9**—You hypocrites, rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you: **8**‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. **9**‘But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’”

**Colossians 2:8**—See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ

1. Which only helps us understand the extraordinary need of the human condition and the glorious work of our Savior

**Titus 3:3-7**—For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. **4**But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, **5**He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, **6**whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7**so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

**Psalm 107:10-16**—There were those who dwelt in darkness and in the shadow of death, Prisoners in [[i](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps%2520107&version=NASB1995#fen-NASB1995-15710i)]misery and [[j](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ps%2520107&version=NASB1995#fen-NASB1995-15710j)]chains, **11**Because they had rebelled against the words of God And spurned the counsel of the Most High. **12**Therefore He humbled their heart with labor; They stumbled and there was none to help. **13**Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble; He saved them out of their distresses. **14**He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death And broke their bands apart. **15**Let them give thanks to the Lord for His lovingkindness, And for His wonders to the sons of men! **16**For He has shattered gates of bronze And cut bars of iron asunder.

1. **He saved us: with precious blood**

**1 Peter 1:18a, 19**—…knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold…**19**but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

1. The price to buy back a human soul is costly
   1. Knowing—this is a fundamental understanding that they would have been taught
   2. Redemption comes not with temporal things—perishable nor what we might consider “valuable”
      1. Silver or gold
      2. In the OT, God did require a ransom to be paid for the sin of number the people (not trusting in the Lord) for military purposes

**Exodus 30:1-16**—The Lord also spoke to Moses, saying, **12**“When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the Lord, when you number them, so that there will be no plague among them when you number them. **13**This is what everyone who is numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to the Lord. **14**Everyone who is numbered, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to the Lord. **15**The rich shall not pay more and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to the Lord to make atonement for yourselves. **16**You shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the Lord, to make atonement for yourselves.”

* + 1. No amount of money could redeem a sinner from the bondage of sin

**Psalm 49:7-9**—No man can by any means redeem his brother Or give to God a ransom for him— **8**For the redemption of his soul is costly, and he should cease trying forever

**Isaiah 52:3**—For thus says the Lord, “You were sold for nothing and you will be redeemed without money.”

1. The only acceptable means of redemption is an eternal price
   1. Precious blood
      1. It is the shed blood of Christ through the agony of Calvary
      2. It was a sacrificial death
      3. The significance lies in the One from whom it came
   2. A lamb unblemished and spotless
      1. The OT sacrificial system again comes into view

**Leviticus 22:19**—for you to be accepted—it must be a male without defect from the cattle, the sheep, or the goats.

**Deuteronomy 15:21**—But if it has any defect, such as lameness or blindness, or any serious defect, you shall not sacrifice it to the Lord your God.

* + 1. And ultimately, it was not an animal that could atone for sin

**Hebrews 10:1-10**—For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices which they offer continually year by year, make perfect those who draw near. **2**Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins? **3**But in those sacrifices there is a reminder of sins year by year. **4**For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. **5**Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, “Sacrifice and offering You have not desired, But a body You have prepared for Me; **6**In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have taken no pleasure. **7**“Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come (In the scroll of the book it is written of Me) To do Your will, O God.’” **8**After saying above, “Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin You have not desired, nor have You taken pleasure in them” (which are offered according to the Law), **9**then He said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will.” He takes away the first in order to establish the second. **10**By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

* + 1. Unblemished and spotless is absolutely true of Jesus

**Hebrews 4:15**—For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

**Hebrews 7:26**—For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;

* + 1. The imputed righteousness of Christ becomes ours when we by faith believe

**2 Corinthians 5:21**—He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

* + - 1. God treats Christ as if He were a sinner
      2. God exacted from Him the full required penalty for sin
      3. The only One who did not deserve death took on death
      4. The substitution fully satisfying God’s righteous requirement
      5. Christ takes our sin; the believer gets His righteousness

**Isaiah 61:10**—I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, My soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

1. The blood of Christ speaks of His death and is the chief word used in the NT referring to the atonement. [[6]](#footnote-7)

“What prompts this fear and must ever be its source is the preciousness of the ransom paid for us.…Called of God the Holy One, who is the absolutely impartial Judge, and by that call made holy and obedient children who may approach and call upon God as their Father, the readers certainly know the great cost of their ransom from the old conduct which they inherited from their pagan foregathers. This immense price should keep them in holy fear lest it have been paid in vain for them…”[[7]](#footnote-8) R.C.H. Lenski

1. **He saved us: God raised Christ from the dead**

**1 Peter 1:20a,21a**—….. **20**For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times… **21**…who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory….

1. **He saved us: for the sake of you**

**1 Peter 1:20b,21b**—…for the sake of you… **21**…so that your faith and hope are in God.

**Conclusion**

The glories of the cross and the precious shed blood of our gracious Lord is a constant source of joy and our means of acceptance and peace with God. Without such a sacrifice, we would have no hope. With Him, we have been given all things.

**Romans 8:32**—He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

**Homework:** Memorize **1 Peter 1:1-18**

**Source**

Most of the message and notes come from:

* R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of I and II Epistles of Peter, the three Epistles of John, and the Epistle of Jude
* John MacArthur, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 1 Peter

# John MacArthur, The Wonder of Our Redemption, Part 1, October 16, 1988, 1 Peter 1:18a [www.gty.org](http://www.gty.org)

* Jerome H Smith, The New Treasure of Scripture Knowledge
* [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org)
* Strong’s Concordance

1. Goodreads.com; Thomas Watson, body of Divinity, 146. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Strong’s G3084 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. MacArthur Commentary, 72. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Strong’s G1939 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Strong’s G3152 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. MacArthur Commentary, 80. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. The Interpretations of I Peter, RCH Lenski, 61-62. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)