

Scriptural Understanding of Redemption

Old Testament

Redemption - a person or thing being restored to its rightful place.

Redeemer - the closest blood relative who restores what was lost or taken away.

The story of Ruth shows how redemption works in the Old Testament.

Redemption does not make a distinction between the fault of the person or the person who encounters misfortune. Either way, redemption is necessary.

Job sees God as his Redeemer. (Job 19:13-19 & 23-27)

Job is seen as innocent.

Isaiah sees God as the Redeemer of Israel. (Isaiah 40-50)

Isaiah sees Israel as guilty of infidelity.

New Testament

Jesus is seen as our brother

He teaches us how to pray; God is our Father. (Mt 6:9-13)

He says that anyone who does the will of my heavenly Father is brother, sister or mother to him. Mt. (12:47-50)

He gives Mary his mother to his beloved disciple at the cross. (John 19:25-27)

Paul sees Jesus as our brother, the first one who has risen from the dead. (Rom 8:29)

This is not only for the Jews who believe but the gentiles as well. Their redemption by Jesus is a gift for all who believe. (Rom 3:21-24)

3 major theories

There have been 3 major theories of atonement: the ransom theory, the Anselmian theory, and the Abelardian theory.

The ransom theory, first propounded by Origen (c. 185 - 254), was developed from Mark 10:45 and explained the atonement as a price paid by God in Christ to the devil.

St. Anselm (c. 1033 - 1109) explained the atonement as an act of satisfaction paid by Christ as man to God, who demanded from man perfect obedience to the law, which he could not fulfill because of his sinfulness.

The exemplarist theory of Peter Abelard (1079 - 1142) viewed Christ's death as an inspiring appeal of love evoking in the sinner a response of love, thus removing his sin.

Martin Luther, John Calvin, and other Reformers developed the Anselmian theory in the direction of penal substitution.

Liberal theologians have reverted to an Abelardian type of explanation.

Gustav Aulen and other Swedish theologians have recently advocated a return to the ransom theory conceived in terms of victory over the powers of evil.

Since the doctrine of the atonement has never been defined officially, Christian theologians consider themselves free to work out their own theory along lines consonant with the witness of Scripture.

Padha is the act of restoring/redeeming something to its original state.

The **go'el** - redeemer - was that relative, bound to the person in difficulty through blood, who was obliged to come to the aid of the one in trouble.

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