

From the Pulpit of the Japanese Baptist Church of North Texas
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The God of Redemption (1)

Exodus 6:6-7

6:6 Say therefore to the people of Israel, 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.

6:7 I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Dr. W. A. Criswell influenced many people not only in South but also around the nation. Pastor Rick Warren wrote in his book that Dr. Criswell prophesied that Pastor Warren would build a bigger church than the Dallas First Baptist Church and it actually came true. Pastor David Jeremiah at the Shadow Mountain Church in San Diego received Dr. Criswell's spiritual heritage and built a solid church based on the Bible.

When I was in San Diego, I visited the Shadow Mountain Church to see Dr. Criswell when he was invited as a guest speaker by the church. After Pastor Jeremiah introduced Dr. Criswell and he stood before the podium, he said as follows "Pastor Jeremiah's introduction was the second best one. The best one is this, everyone, I am W. A. Criswell." Dr. Criswell gave the same introduction and made everyone laugh, but it was not just a joke. Dr. Criswell said "As it is best for the person to introduce him/herself, God reveals himself

through the Bible. Since the Bible is His introduction, it is best to learn about Him in the Bible.” And he started his message.

As Dr. Criswell said, the Bible is a book of introducing God. God shows Himself in the Bible, saying “I Am Who I Am”. Therefore, if you want to know who God is, don’t imagine about Him, but instead, read the Bible and listen to what it says.

We learned from the Bible that God was the “God of Creation” and the “God of Providence”. And because He is a Creator of this world and maintains it, it is quite natural for Him to show miracles, and even through the miracles, He tries to save people. Today, we would like to learn that He is the “God of Redemption”, in addition to the “God of Creation” and the “God of Providence”.

1. Redemption from Sin

The word “redemption” means to buy back what has been sold to other people. We see someone’s assets are taken away by others, but in the old days, humans were sold and transferred to other people and to become slaves. Once they became a slave, its status remained throughout their lives, but if someone paid redemption, they were able to become free. When a criminal kidnaps someone and demands ransom, it is sometimes paid in exchange for the hostage. So, “redemption” means “to buy back a person” or “to rescue a person by paying ransom”.

The Bible teaches that humans are sold to sins and become slaves to sins. The best example is “addiction”. There are numerous “addictions” such as alcoholic and gamble addiction, and they have a

common characteristic. Those who are addicted to something cannot recognize that they are addicts. Even if they realize that they are, they cannot get out of addiction by themselves. These people think they can stop addiction at any time once they decide to, but they are actually trapped by the addiction and they need a lot of energy and power from others to help stop the addiction.

The Bible describes sin in the same way. As Romans 7:15 says “For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate,” when people make sins, they are trapped in them. Everyone knows it is bad to make sins, but we have a conflict in ourselves that we cannot do what we want. Even if you don’t actually commit sins or mortal sins, you are trapped in the inner sins such as keeping stubborn attitudes to God, feeling jealous toward others, or looking down on others. Just same as addiction, you don’t realize that you are making sins. Therefore, we want to hear God’s word and recognize our own sins, and if we do so, we want to quickly repent ourselves and ask God to release us from sins. Only our God, the God of redemption, can redeem those who are trapped in sins.

2. Price of Redemption

“Redemption” means “to buy back”. That means there must be a “price” is needed. What is the “price” for us to be leased from sin. I probably shouldn’t say “What is it?” but rather “Who is it?” and that is, God’s only Son, Jesus Christ. We have to pay the compensation or price for sins that we have committed. “For the wages of sin is death” As it says, the compensation should be our own life. However, even our life cannot be the compensation, because we have sin. No matter

how much you pay, there will be an unpaid amount left.

However, God sent his son as “price” or “ransom” in order to forgive our sins completely. It is the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. God saved us from the slave of sins and the hostage of the power of devil.

Why did God do this for us? We, as human beings, don’t have any reason that God would do this for us. It is because the one direction love. According to 1 John 4:9, “In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” The love of God is that Jesus Christ became “propitiation”

Of course, when you realize that God is “God of creation”, you can feel the love of God. When you see the beautiful word that God created, you can feel the love of God. Also, when you realize that God is “God of providence”, you can be impressed by the perfection of God’s love. However, the love of God is most obvious and bright on the cross of Jesus Christ. God provided His Son Jesus Christ as “price” for our redemption from sin, and Jesus Christ took our sins with his cross and died on the cross. We can see the ultimate love of God in this redemption. When you realize that God is “God of redemption”, you can experience the deepest love of God.

3. Purpose of Redemption

God says to people in today’s verse 6:6, “I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an

outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.” God spoke to these phrases to Moses. God appointed Moses to save the Israelites suffering from slavery in Egypt, yet neither the people of Israel trusted in Moses, nor king of Egypt obeyed Moses. Then, as you may already know, God attacked Egypt through 9 disasters, though the Pharaoh in palace was safe. Pharaoh betrayed Moses more than a few times, and didn’t follow God’s will, He finally gave in tenth disaster; that is, all of the first born in Egypt, from domestic animals to the prince of Egypt, died one night. As a result, Pharaoh freed Israel and they escaped from Egypt. “I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment.” This words described in advance how God was going to work for Israel.

However, what if the first born of the Israelites also died by tenth disaster? It is would only be salvation for the Israelites but only tragedy. So, God ordered the Israelites to kill a lamb as a sacrifice for children in each family, and then apply the blood around their door. So that the tenth disaster would “pass over” the houses whose doors were applied by the blood of lamb. This is called “Passover”. The Bible teaches this passover follows how Jesus saves people. We were once slaves of sin, likewise the people of Israel were slaves of Egypt, and the passover lamb suggests Jesus Christ. This is why He is called “the Lamb of God.” Also, the passover supper became the “Lord’s Supper” by Jesus Christ. Through the Lord’s Supper we give thanks to God that the punishment of our sins has passed over by Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, and we have been redeemed.

God redeemed the Israelites from Egypt and accepted them as the

people of God, in other words “His own people.” In 6:7, it says, “I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.” As it describes, there is a purpose in redemption. People will be going to become God’s own people after Jesus redeemed them; they won’t be lost after salvation from sin’s slavery. They escape from the house of slavery, become a citizen of heaven, and the servants of the One who redeemed us. People of God always remember that they were redeemed by God, and live as God’s own. This is the redemption that was prophesied in the Old Testament, and was accomplished by Jesus Christ. We are the believes of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer.

According to Revelation 14:3, “And they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.” In Heaven’s worship, hymns are sung by the redeemed people, praising Jesus’ redemption. One of the hymns written by a blind hymn writer, Fanny Crosby, sings, “I am redeemed, I am redeemed, I’ll sing it o’er and o’er; I am redeemed, O praise the Lord; Redeemed forevermore.” As she sang we want to be redeemed people, and live as the redeemed, and unite in the Heaven’s praising.

(Prayer)

Dear God, you gave us Jesus Christ as the propitiation for the redemption from sin. Let us know more about your love which is in the mystery of the redemption. Give us more praises unto You, as we realize Your love. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer,

Amen.