

## What is the Principle of Redemption?

The most prominent feature of God's love is His desire to redeem that which was lost. Perhaps the greatest example of this principle is God's creation of man. God knew that mankind would sin but His desire to redeem superseded the pain of rejection caused by mankind. God saw that the end result of the redemption was greater than the pain.

We need to go back to the beginning to fully understand redemption. Earth was originally a place of judgment for the fallen angels. God had to expel Satan and the fallen angels from the domain of Heaven so God created a place that was dark and void of His presence. We see a depiction of this place in Genesis 1:2 NLT: *The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.* The Hebrew words used for portraying the darkness carry the meaning of judgment. It was upon this place of divine judgment that God was preparing for the great creative acts, thus the Holy Spirit was hovering over the waters (water is a symbol of judgment) in anticipation of the coming of the light. The light of God was His presence coming into the world to start the process of redemption.

It is important to understand that the redemptive process always starts with the light of His presence invading the darkness of our sin, John 1:4:5 NLT: *The Word gave life to everything that was created, and His life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.* Perhaps the greatest example of the light coming into darkness was the redemptive act of taking the people of Israel from their place of bondage in Egypt (a symbol of worldliness). The light came in the form of Moses, who was a foreshadowing of the ministry of Jesus, as he brought the knowledge of God to the people. The mighty acts of God were evidence of the light at work, and especially when God gave His people the Torah instructions at Mount Sinai. These instructions were intended to transform the people into obedient, loving servants of God to the lost world, absent of the presence of God.

Later this process was carried on by Jesus, who John the Baptist identified in John 1:6-9 NLT: *God sent a man, John the Baptist, to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light. The One who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.* It was Jesus who brought us the redemption from the penalty of our sins. The penalty for sin under the holy instructions of God was death. Each of us deserved death for our acts of sin against the most holy God. But the substitutionary death of Jesus as the Lamb of God, provided a redemption for us from the death sentence of our sins. It was just like the lamb that was sacrificed to provide safety from the angel of death in the final plague against Egypt in the time of the exodus led by Moses. In fact, the whole Passover service was and is a celebration of the act of redemption of Jesus for the people of the whole world.

The process of redemption does not just stop with the escaping of our penalty of death but it goes on to provide a complete restoration of standing before God that mankind had in the Garden of Eden, as mentioned in Revelation 21:1-4 NLT: *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among His people! He will live with them, and they will be His people. God Himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."*