

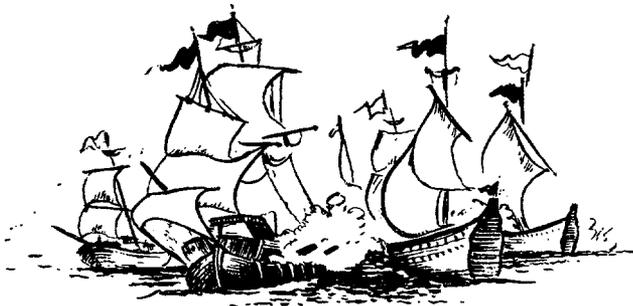
Lesson 2

A Universal Plan

In 1588, Philip II, king of Spain, planned an invasion of England. He had made his plans carefully. He sent forth his famous Spanish Armada, which had 130 ships and 8000 sailors, and he was sure of victory.

But things did not go according to the plans. The infantry that was to give support by land to the navy did not arrive on time. The British fought off the Spanish navy. A strong wind blew, which prevented the Spanish Armada from retreating, and sent their ships into the hands of the enemy. The king's plans had failed and the battle was lost.

In this lesson we will continue our discussion of how God has a plan for the salvation of the world. The redemptive plan shows the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit going out in war against sin. It is exciting to see that God's plan is going on according to His schedule in order to bring man into fellowship with Him. God's plan has not failed.



lesson outline

A Redemptive Plan

A Redemptive Act

A Redemptive Mission

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

- Explain the plan of redemption and why it was necessary.
- Understand and explain the role of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the church in the plan of redemption.

learning activities

1. Study the lesson following the procedure given in Lesson 1. Be sure to read all Scripture texts given in the lesson, and answer each study question before checking your answer.
2. Take the self-test at the end of the lesson and check your answers.

key words

captive

climax

deliverance

eternal

incarnation

origin

penalty

ransom

restoration

resurrection

salvation

lesson development

A REDEMPTIVE PLAN

Objective 1. *Explain the difference between the words redemption and salvation.*

The Meaning of Redemption

The words *salvation* and *redemption* are much alike. It is not easy to understand the difference between these two words. Both are very important words to the believer, but there is a small difference in their meanings.

The word *salvation* is the more popular of the two words and has a more general meaning. It carries the idea of being saved from a possible danger. To Christians this means that, because of sin, man is in danger of eternal punishment and death (Romans 3:23).

The word *redemption* also means “salvation,” but it means something more specific as well. It speaks of the *way* and the *means* by which this salvation is secured. It also refers to the *price* and *payment of ransom* for that salvation. The idea is that of buying something back that is rightfully yours but which was lost for one reason or another (see Leviticus 25:25-27, 47-54). It can refer to deliverance, such as when Israel was delivered from Egypt (Exodus 6:6, 15:13) and from Babylon (Jeremiah 31:11, 50:33-34).

1 In 1 Peter 1:18-19 and Mark 10:45 we find the way and the means by which our salvation or redemption was made possible. Explain in your own words what these Scriptures mean to you.

.....
.....

Man fell into sin by disobedience of God’s law. Man failed to recognize the God who established the laws. The result was that man lost his fellowship with God. So it has been God’s will and eternal purpose to bring man back into fellowship with Him. He has chosen to redeem man through the sacrifice of His own Son.

2 Explain in your own words the difference between the words *salvation* and *redemption*.

.....
.....

3 Which of these reasons explains why man needed to be redeemed?

- a) Man was created in a sinful condition which kept him from fellowship with God.
- b) Man became sinful through disobedience to God, and he lost his fellowship with God because of sin.

The sinner, captive in the bondage of sin, must recognize God’s redemptive plan as being 1) divine in origin, and 2) human in design. In other words, he needs to understand the source and the purpose of God’s plan. We will look at both of these concepts.

Divine in Origin

Objective 2. *Identify statements which correctly explain the origin and purpose of redemption.*

Redemption is of God. Redemption reveals the nature of God in its deepest levels. Redemption is *of* Him because of what He is. He is the eternal God acting in man’s favor. He is the Heavenly Father acting out of pure love for His creation.

God is love. Love is part of His very nature. Love is the force behind redemption. He does not redeem us because He feels it is His duty to do so, but because He loves us. Therefore, it is not surprising that He would pay a high price—His only Son—as our ransom. A gracious Father out of kindness chose to act in favor of man as an undeserving expression of love. Truly He is the God of salvation, “our father who . . . rescued us” (Isaiah 63:16).

Redemption is from God. Salvation comes from the God of action, the Creator. The first line of the first book of the Bible shows a God in action: “In the beginning, when God created the universe” (Genesis 1:1). Redemption has its beginning and end in God.

Redemption is God in action. He is not only a loving and good God, but He is a living and concerned God. God willed redemption for man, and He *provided*, or put into action, His redemptive plan.

How has He done this? He has taken action against man’s enemy, and He plans to rescue man from the bondage of sin.

4 Read the Scriptures given below, and complete each sentence to show the action God has taken in carrying out His redemptive plan.

- a** In Genesis 3:15 He has promised
.....
- b** In John 1:29 He has provided
- c** In John 3:17 He has proposed
- d** In 1 Corinthians 15:22-28 He has planned

Human in Design

Redemption is for man. Man needs to be rescued. He has given himself to sin and has lost his fellowship with his Creator. He is in a state of rebellion, refusing to obey God. His condition is the reason God’s redemptive plan was necessary. His condition is one of separation. This does not mean simply that the sinner is not permitted to come into God’s presence. What a frightful thought! It also means that there is a positive and certain punishment to the sinner who refuses God’s acts of grace. This punishment is eternal damnation, “for sin pays its wage—death” (Romans 6:23).

Redemption is by the Son of Man. At the heart of redemption stands the *incarnation*. By *incarnation* we mean that the Son of God became flesh (man) and lived among men. It is a deep mystery that took place in time and human history. Jesus Christ came to earth in the form of a man to pay man’s penalty. He was truly man’s substitute to satisfy God’s anger and His judgment of death upon the sinner.

Christ became man to rescue man. “Christ was without sin, but for our sake God made him share our sin in order that in union with him we might share the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21).



HE PAID
IT ALL!

The value of Christ taking man’s place lies in the fact that He was also God. Jesus *is* God, and not just a form or likeness of God. Jesus is Himself God, the second Person of the Trinity. God became flesh, that is, one person in two natures—divine and human. He was not born as the result of a union between man and woman, but as the result of a union between Deity and humanity. The human agent in His birth was His mother, Mary, who conceived by a creative act of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:34-35).

Therefore, redemption shows the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit acting in judgment upon sin and in salvation for all mankind.

5 Match the words in the right column with their definitions in the left column.

- | | | |
|---------------|--|----------------|
| a | The price paid to redeem something | 1) Redemption |
| b | To save by buying something back that was once yours | 2) Salvation |
| c | To save from a possible danger | 3) Incarnation |
| d | God taking the form of a man | 4) Ransom |

6 Which of these statements are TRUE concerning the *origin* of redemption?

- a When we say that redemption is *of* God we mean that it is His very nature to want to redeem us.
- b Because God made us, He has a duty to redeem us.
- c Man deserves the love God showed through His redemptive plan.
- d When we say God redeemed man we mean God paid the price to bring man back to fellowship with Him.
- e When we say redemption is *from* God we are speaking of the action of God in providing redemption.

7 Which of these statements are TRUE concerning the *purpose* of redemption?

- a The design or purpose of redemption is to rescue man from his sinful state.
- b A sinful man must be redeemed before he can approach God (come into His presence).
- c Incarnation means that Jesus was not divine.
- d Even though Jesus came to earth as a man living among men, He was at the same time the divine Son of God.
- e The reason Jesus became man was so He could be man's substitute to pay the penalty for sin.
- f God the Father and God the Holy Spirit were not actively involved in the redemptive plan.

8 Man's sinful condition is one of separation from God. What are the two results of this separation?

.....

.....

A REDEMPTIVE ACT

Objective 3. *Explain the concepts that Christ's role in redemption was planned, personal, and completed.*

Christ is central to God's redemptive plan. The salvation of mankind comes not through a good philosophy or way of life. It comes through the person of Jesus Christ.

God's highest purpose for man, and man's highest activity for God, is fellowship (Revelation 4:10-11). The loss of

fellowship with God when he sinned was man’s greatest loss. But God has provided a way to restore His fellowship with man. It is through His own Son, Jesus Christ.

Christ’s role was to restore God’s fellowship with man by dying on the cross. Christ’s sacrifice meant that God could turn toward man, because His demands were met—the sin barrier had been removed. Christ’s death also meant that man could turn toward God, because his ransom was paid.

Christ’s sacrifice on the cross was the main purpose of His birth, His life, and His ministry (Mark 10:45). Christ’s death was that part of God’s redemptive plan that made it possible for man to understand God’s love. For this reason, Christ’s redemptive act on the cross was 1) carefully *planned*, 2) put into effect in a *personal* way, and 3) *completed* in the resurrection.

9 Explain how Christ’s death on the cross makes it possible for man to return to fellowship with God.

.....
.....

A Planned Act

God saw ahead of time the pitiful downfall of the human race. He had a plan for our redemption and restoration to fellowship with Him. The Son of God became “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8 KJV). His role in redemption was:

1. Planned by God (Ephesians 1:4-6, 11)
2. Promised by God (Genesis 3:15)
3. Prophesied by the prophets (Isaiah 53)
4. Partially realized in the Old Testament (Micah 4:1-4)
5. Preached by the apostles (Acts 2:23, 4:28)

As you read these Scriptures you will see that Jesus was always a part of God’s plan of redemption for lost mankind.

A Personal Act

Salvation is centered on a person, Jesus Christ. Christ *is* salvation. To experience redemption is to experience Christ. He gave Himself to redeem us. The redemptive sacrifice was Christ's own life.

Salvation is not a matter of a set of beliefs and practices, or a way of life. It is Christ being given by God, for all of us (John 1:12, 1 John 5:12). He was sent by the Father, but on the other hand He came voluntarily (by His own choice) into the world. He plainly stated:

The Father loves me because I am willing to give up my life, in order that I may receive it back again. No one takes my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will. I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father has commanded me to do (John 10:17-18).

To put into effect God's redemptive plan, the Son of God was made in the likeness of human flesh. "The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us" (John 1:14). Christ, the Word, put into flesh and bone God's thoughts and will for mankind. Christ in person was God's purpose in action. The Word is not merely a message proclaimed, but it is Christ Himself!



The redemptive act was personal because Jesus personally made the sacrifice. It was also personal because it was being made in behalf of persons. Even today Christ's sacrifice can redeem any person from these things:

1. Acts of disobedience of God's laws
2. Acts of rebellion that remove God from the center of life
3. A destroyed divine image
4. A loss of original innocence and holiness

10 Describe in your own words your personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

.....
.....

A Completed Act

The resurrection of Christ deserves special mention at this point. Together with the death of Christ, the resurrection is one of the most important truths of the Christian faith. Rarely did Jesus speak of His death without mentioning His resurrection. It was the theme of the apostles' preaching. It is given more space in the New Testament than any other basic doctrine, with the exception of the death of Christ. Both are acts which have to do with the redemption of man. "For Christ died and rose to life in order to be the Lord of the living and of the dead" (Romans 14:9).

The resurrection of Christ is important for these reasons:

1. It establishes that Christ is God.
2. It reveals that Christ has power over death.
3. It proves the reality of Christ's truths.
4. It confirms Bible prophecies.
5. It destroys the security of false religions, which make no claims that their founders have been resurrected from the dead.

The resurrection of Christ was the climax and conclusion of the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It was the fulfillment of Christ’s mission. “God did what he had purposed, and made known to us the secret plan he had already decided to complete by means of Christ” (Ephesians 1:9).

11 To review this section, complete the following sentences in your own words.

- a** When we say that redemption of lost mankind was a *planned* act we mean that
-
- b** The two ways that redemption is a *personal* act are
-
-
- c** When we speak of Christ’s resurrection we mean that He
-
- d** When we say that redemption was a *completed* act we mean that.....
-

Aren’t you glad that the plan of redemption was a completed act? Because the work has been finished, we have the eternal hope of unbroken fellowship with God!

A REDEMPTIVE MISSION

Objective 4. *Describe the activity of the Holy Spirit as He works through the church to carry out God’s redemptive plan.*

Like a Rushing Mighty Wind

The Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, is also active in God’s redemptive plan. He shares the will and purpose of the Father and Son for the redemption of the world. This was so since the beginning of time.

In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit's activity is emphasized. We know His nature by His actions. He is the agent in creation (Genesis 1:2; 2:7; Job 26:13). He also sustains what has been created (Psalm 104:30). The Spirit is also described as very active in the moral, intellectual, and spiritual lives of man (Exodus 28:3, Psalm 51:1, Joel 2:28).

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is the agent of the new creation (John 3:2). Jesus Christ is conceived by the Spirit (Luke 1:34-35, Matthew 1:18). The Holy Spirit is present and active in Jesus' baptism (Matthew 3:13-17), in His ministry (Matthew 12:28, Luke 4:18-21), and He is also the "Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from death" (Romans 8:11).

The last words of the resurrected Christ were an order and commission to "go throughout the whole world and preach the gospel" (Mark 16:15) and to "make disciples" (Matthew 28:19-20). Although it was addressed to the disciples of Christ, this commission is given through the Holy Spirit. That is why it was not until these disciples waited for the gift and power of the Holy Spirit and received it on the Day of Pentecost that they were capable of fulfilling the Great Commission.

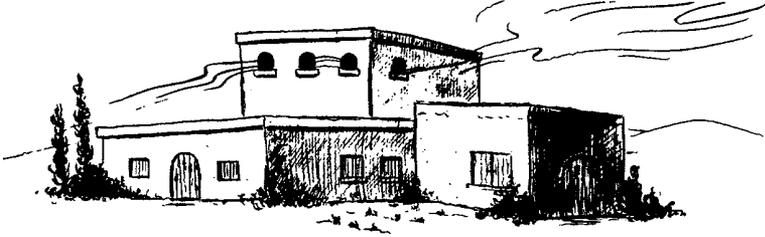
12 To whom was the Great Commission first given? (Read Mark 16:14-15, Matthew 28:16-20.)

.....

13 Read Acts 1:4, 8; 2:1-4. Who else was included in the Great Commission?

.....

The book of Acts says that there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the whole house where the believers were sitting (Acts 2:2). The Holy Spirit had come in the form of the strong wind to indicate the life and energy He was bringing to the church—the strength and power to obey God's commission.



THE SPIRIT GIVES POWER

The coming of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost “sealed” God’s possession. The plan of redemption had been completed by Christ’s resurrection. The Holy Spirit came to declare ownership to the redeemed for service (Ephesians 1:13). He came to verify Christ’s truths and promises (John 3:33).

The Holy Spirit is important in God’s redemptive plan. We are not to “make God’s Holy Spirit sad; for the Spirit is God’s mark of ownership on you, a guarantee that the Day will come when God will set you free” (Ephesians 4:30).

The apostles recognized the coming of the Holy Spirit as proof of the genuineness of God’s redemptive plan. Here are some Scriptures which summarize some of these truths that were made real to the early church by the coming of the Spirit:

1. God’s absolute will was at work (Acts 2:23).
2. The chain of events was a fulfillment of prophecy (Acts 2:16, 25).
3. Redemption was for all mankind (Acts 2:39).
4. God’s way is through repentance and faith (Acts 2:38).

The early church lived and worked with the presence of the Holy Spirit (1 John 3:24; 4:13). The Holy Spirit was the dynamic (powerful) force in their ministry. It was because they were filled with the Spirit that they did an effective and acceptable service for the Lord (Acts 1:8).

14 What else does the Holy Spirit do for the church? (See 1 Corinthians 12:1; Galatians 5:22.)

.....

15 When we say that the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost “sealed” God’s possession, we mean that He

- a) confirmed that Jesus is the Son of God.
- b) claimed the believers for His use in spreading the gospel to all the world.
- c) revealed Himself for the first time as God’s agent in redemption.

Like a Mighty Marching Army

On the Day of Pentecost the church was born. It was the Holy Spirit that gave birth to the church—through the church the Holy Spirit is to carry out the divine purpose of God. His coming indicated that the “day of salvation” had arrived. That is, all aspects of God’s redemptive act had been completed (Ephesians 4:30).

Before Pentecost the Holy Spirit had an active but *general* ministry. He was everywhere as God is able to be everywhere. He was there to help all mankind. But after Pentecost the Holy Spirit came with a more specific mission. One of His purposes in the world is to impress the sinner with his need for the gospel. The Holy Spirit’s ministry is directly related to bringing about man’s salvation through the preaching or sharing of the Word of God. First the Holy Spirit brings conviction of sin to sinful man (John 16:7-11). Then He gives new birth to those dead in sins (John 3:5, Hebrews 2:10).

The church represents all of those who have been redeemed by God’s plan. The church represents the temple as the habitation (dwelling place) of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22). God has fulfilled His eternal purpose of redemption for man.

But the Holy Spirit is now responsible to see that through the church God’s purposes reach all the world. The redemptive plan of God is incomplete unless those who have been redeemed take the message to the world. The Holy Spirit is gathering an army that will do battle against Satan. Have you become a part of that army?

In this lesson we have seen that the Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—are actively involved in a redemptive plan. The plan is complete. There is hope for the world. Sin can be overcome. But those of us who have been redeemed must do our part. God is asking us to be a part of His redemptive plan.

16 Describe two ways the Holy Spirit has acted in each of these times:

- a** In the Old Testament:
.....
- b** In the life of Christ:
.....
- c** In the church since the Day of Pentecost:
.....

self-test

MULTIPLE CHOICE. There is one best answer for each question. Circle the letter in front of the answer you choose.

- 1** The plan of redemption was necessary because
 - a) people did not know how to please God.
 - b) man fell into sin because he was not obedient to God's law.
 - c) God did not choose to have fellowship with all men and women.

- 2** The word *redemption* describes God's way of
 - a) buying back that which was rightfully His and which had been lost to Him.
 - b) punishing men and women who disobey His laws.
 - c) keeping order in every part of His creation.

- 3** God's main reason for wanting to redeem people is that He
 - a) wants us to know how angry He is when we sin.
 - b) feels responsible for us because He created us.
 - c) loves us and wants to have fellowship with us.

- 4** Of equal importance with Christ's death on the cross in God's redemptive plan is the act of
 - a) His resurrection.
 - b) man's repentance.
 - c) the creation of man.

SHORT ANSWER. Briefly explain each of the following statements.

5 Redemption is:

a of God

b from God

c human in design

d a completed act.....

6 Explain how the Holy Spirit works through the church to carry out God's redemptive plan.

.....
.....

answers to study questions

- 9** It removed the sin barrier between man and God.
- 1** Your answer may include these explanations: God paid the price of our redemption with the blood of Christ. Christ's sacrifice was made for all mankind.
- 10** I hope you were able to say that He has forgiven your sins, redeemed you, and that He is Lord of your life.
- 2** (In your words) *Salvation* means to be rescued from danger. *Redemption* includes salvation along with the idea of paying a price to buy back something that has been lost.
- 11** (In your own words)
- a** even before Creation the sacrifice of Christ on the cross was in the plan of God to redeem fallen man.
 - b** that Christ made a personal sacrifice of His own life, and that He did this for all people.
 - c** rose from the dead, became alive again three days after His death.
 - d** Christ not only died to redeem us, He also rose again to confirm (prove) His power over sin and death.
- 3** b) Man became sinful through disobedience to God, and he lost his fellowship with God.
- 12** The eleven disciples.
- 4** Your answer should include these ideas in your own words:
- a** the destruction of the enemy.
 - b** a sacrificial offering.
 - c** a salvation for all people who believe in Him.
 - d** an eternal redemption for all those who follow Him.
- 13** All the believers.
- 5**
- a** 4) Ransom.
 - b** 1) Redemption.
 - c** 2) Salvation.
 - d** 3) Incarnation.

- 14** He gives gifts and produces fruit in believers. (We will explain this in a later lesson.)
- 6 a** True.
 - b** False. (He redeems us because He loves us.)
 - c** False.
 - d** True.
 - e** True.
- 15 b)** claimed the believers for His use in spreading the gospel to all the world.
- 7 a** True.
- b** True.
 - c** False.
 - d** True.
 - e** True.
 - f** False. (God the Father *sent* His Son to become flesh, and the Holy Spirit *performed* the creative act which made this possible.)
- 16** Any of these:
- a** In creation, sustaining (keeping) His creation, in moral, intellectual, and spiritual dealings with man.
 - b** Active in Christ's conception, in His baptism, in His ministry, in His resurrection.
 - c** He gives power for witnessing, He gives special gifts and fruit, He confirms spiritual truths, He brings conviction and gives the new birth.
- 8** They are: 1) sinful man is not permitted into God's presence, and 2) he faces eternal punishment for his sins unless he repents and accepts Christ's redemption.

For Your Notes