

GD19 - The Plan of Salvation
Goose Creek Ward, Ashburn, VA Stake
S. Kurt Neumiller
June 3, 2001

For this lesson I am going to focus specifically on the Doctrine of Redemption. Most members of the LDS Church have had considerable exposure to the Plan of Salvation charts, graphs, flow lines and so forth and are sufficiently familiar with that material. To review it once again would be boring and pedantic.

Instead, I am going to focus on a point of doctrine that is commonly overlooked because it is a very OT doctrine that gets obscured in the NT by Grace and Works.

In the OT, the doctrine of Redemption is discussed in both physical and spiritual terms. To establish the spiritual context we must first discuss the physical context.

Ancient Physical

Legalities Lev. 25 covers laws of redemption of land (v. 23-34) and of kinsmen (v. 47-55):

Lev. 25:23 The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land [is] mine; for ye [are] strangers and sojourners with me. 24 And in all the land of your possession ye shall grant a redemption for the land. 25 If thy brother be waxen poor, and hath sold away [some] of his possession, and if any of his kin come to redeem it, then shall he redeem that which his brother sold.

The Israelites are to practice redemption of the land the Lord has given them. The Lord is teaching them the principle of redemption. Here, the land can always be redeemed by a relative. The Law concerning redemption requires family connections be observed. And it is the same with an Israelite being indentured:

Lev. 25:47 And if a sojourner or stranger wax rich by thee, and thy brother [that dwelleth] by him wax poor, and sell himself unto the stranger [or] sojourner by thee, or to the stock of the stranger's family: 48 After that he is sold he may be redeemed again; one of his brethren may redeem him: 49 Either his uncle, or his uncle's son, may redeem him, or [any] that is nigh of kin unto him of his family may redeem him; or if he be able, he may redeem himself.

Here, your relative has indentured himself to someone who is not a relative, and you have therefore effectively lost him as a relative. But, you can get your relative back by redeeming him. You redeem your family from someone who isn't your family. There is still that family connection but you have lost your brother or nephew, but you redeem him.

The Law of Redemption is explained in a discussion of the ancient Passover:

Exod. 13:11 And it shall be when the LORD shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as he sware unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee, 12 That thou shalt set apart unto the LORD all that openeth the [womb], and every firstling that cometh of a beast which thou hast; the males [shall be] the LORD'S. 13 And every firstling of an ass **thou shalt redeem with a lamb**; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among **thy children shalt thou redeem**.

But why do they have to do this?

14 And it shall be when thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What [is] this? that thou shalt say unto him, By strength of hand the LORD brought us out from Egypt, from the house of bondage: 15 And it came to pass, when Pharaoh would hardly let us go, that the LORD slew all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of beast: therefore I sacrifice to the LORD all that openeth the [womb], being males; but all **the firstborn of my children I redeem**.

The firstborn male of every womb is the Lord's, that is the price the Lord requires of Israel for their redemption. But, the firstborn can be redeemed from the Lord for a price.

In the Passover, the firstborn of Israel were spared because the lamb's blood on the door posts when the Egyptians were not spared. The sacrifice of the lamb spared the firstborn of Israel then, and that tradition is to continue. The sacrifice of the lamb continues to redeem the firstborn of Israel. The spiritual implications are obvious.

Application Continuing with the Passover theme, the Law of Redemption when applied to Israel makes its first major appearance in the Exodus from Egypt:

Exod. 6:6 Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and **I will redeem you** with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: 7 And **I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God**: and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

The Lord says He will redeem Israel from the Egyptians. But, why? For the answer, look at the text surrounding verses 6-7.

Exod. 6:2 And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am the

LORD: 3 And **I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob**, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. 4 And I have also established my covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers. 5 And I have also heard the groaning of **the children of Israel**, whom the Egyptians keep in bondage; and **I have remembered my covenant**. ... 8 And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which **I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob**; and I will give it you for an heritage: I am the LORD.

The Lord indicates the Redemption is because of Israel's lineal connection to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. The legalities of redemption follow along family lines.

This is why it is absolutely essential for people to be of Israelite lineage, either natural or adopted, and why the Lord is so interested in the remnants of Natural Israel.

Recall in Exod. 6:7 the Lord speaks in a manner of possessions, He says He will take Israel to be His. Note how the Lord speaks about Israel in Isaiah:

Isa 43:1 BUT now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for **I have redeemed thee**, I have called [thee] by thy name; **thou [art] mine**.

In very physical terms the Lord states Israel is His.

Ancient Spiritual

Still in Isaiah, but turning the subject more towards spiritual redemption, the Lord indicates Israel's debt is not a monetary one so the Lord will not be able to redeem them with money.

Isa 52:1 AWAKE, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. 2 Shake thyself from the dust; arise, [and] sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. 3 For thus saith the LORD, **Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money**.

This is the real servitude the Lord must redeem His people from, the servitude of sin. Sin is that one thing that make people servants to the devil. So the Lord must redeem us, but not with money as that is not the kind of debt we have incurred.

Peter echoes this in the NT but makes the symbolism explicit.

1 Pet. 1:18 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, [as] silver and gold, from your vain conversation [received] by tradition from your fathers; 19 But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

It is Jesus' sacrifice that redeems us from sin, and if he redeems us from sin then he lays claim to us. Note Peter uses the lamb symbolically from the Exod. 6 account of the redemption of the firstborn.

Paul gives a very succinct distillation of the Law of Redemption in Galations:

Gal. 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

If Jesus Christ is the Son of God and an heir of God, then if Jesus redeems you he owns you. If he owns you, then you are a fellow heir as a Son of God. This is how the Law of Redemption figures into the Plan of Salvation. Jesus owns us because he redeems us.

But, what does that say about us in the first place? What is the implication here? Recall the laws of redemption laid out in Lev. 25. You redeem kinsmen. If we are being redeemed by the Son of God, then what are we? Sons and daughters of God, being redeemed by a brother. He is bringing us back into the family.

Now reread Paul's comments in Galations again, and it suddenly makes sense.

Contemporary Spiritual

In the Doctrine & Covenants the Plan of Redemption is discussed:

D&C 29:42 But, behold, I say unto you that I, the Lord God, gave unto Adam and unto his seed, that they should not die as to the temporal death, until I, the Lord God, should send forth angels to declare unto them repentance and **redemption, through faith on the name of mine Only Begotten Son.** 43 And thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation--that by his natural death he might be raised in immortality unto eternal life, even as many as would believe; 44 And **they that believe not unto eternal damnation; for they cannot be redeemed** from their spiritual fall, because they repent not;

In order for Jesus to redeem us we must repent. Those who do not live up to his requirement will not have him to redeem them from their debt of sin. If he does not redeem them then he has no claim of ownership and cannot do anything for them before the Father.

As long as we continue to incur the debt of sin then we cannot be redeemed.

D&C 88:14 Now, verily I say unto you, that through the redemption which is made for you is brought to pass the resurrection from the dead. 15 And the spirit and the body are the soul of man. 16 And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul. 17 And the redemption of the soul is through him that quickeneth all things, in whose bosom it is decreed that the poor and the meek of the earth shall inherit it.

18 Therefore, it must needs be sanctified from all unrighteousness, that it may be prepared for the celestial glory; 19 For after it hath filled the measure of its creation, it shall be crowned with glory, even with the presence of God the Father; 20 That bodies who are of the celestial kingdom may possess it forever and ever; for, **for this intent was it made and created, and for this intent are they sanctified.**

The redemption brings about the resurrection, which results in the redemption of the soul, meaning both the spirit body and the physical body. This resurrected body must be sanctified, or redeemed from sin as well, in order to fulfil the purpose for which it was created.

The entire purpose of the Law of Redemption is to get Heavenly Father's children back. It is the driving force in the Plan of Salvation.

Summary

The Fall resulted in us being estranged from our Father in Heaven because of our debts of sin. There is still that familial connection to Him, but the devil has us by the sin we have done.

Jesus Christ must redeem us from the devil in order to obtain us and make us his again. In order for Jesus to redeem us, we must repent and stop sinning, otherwise the debt to the devil just keeps accruing and Jesus can never cover the debt and own us. We just keep selling ourselves as indentured servants of sin. So, until we stop wallowing in sin, i.e., repent, we cannot be redeemed from our debt of sin by Jesus.

Once we repent we can be redeemed and sanctified, and then we can return to be with our family, which is our Father in Heaven and His Sons and Daughters.