

WORD STUDY: REDEEM

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REDEEM

11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) 12 he entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of

Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. — Hebrews 9:11–14

Who doesn't love a good redemption story? There's something in all of us that appreciates one. **The ultimate redemption in Christianity is Christ's sacrifice - described really eloquently in Hebrews 9. But even within the Christian faith, the depth and complexity of redemption find their origins far earlier than Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.**

The primary word for "redeem" in the Old Testament is **go'el**. It's used 104 times in the Old Testament. While it's used as early as Genesis (ex: Genesis 48 and Jacob's blessing of Joseph's sons), the concept of redemption is described in incredible specificity in [Leviticus 25 - 27](#). It was baked into law in land ownership, paying off debts, selling of homes and properties, and marriage (for a beautiful story of redemption through marriage, see the book of Ruth). Things, people, decisions...they could all be redeemed.

So when Jesus said (Mark 10:45), "*for even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many,*" heads turned. **That audience knew about ransom for redemption. They knew about sacrifice, atonement, scapegoats, and blood sprinkled on the mercy seat. They also knew the seriousness of a claim like that.**

So as you consider a word like redeem, ask yourself: does it seem played out? Almost banal? If so, ask God to help you rediscover its luster, so that you might marvel at the incredible redemption he offers us all.

Want to explore more of redemption in your own reading or reflection?

- **Check out the passages mentioned above (and below).**
 - [Leviticus 25-27](#) may be a little dry, but read it and consider how God was setting the stage for grace, mercy, and redemption to be realized later through Jesus.
 - The book of [Hebrews](#) provides an incredible linkage between Old

Testament Law and Jesus as the Christ. Read [Leviticus 16](#) to learn about the origins of the scapegoat, then read Hebrews 9 and consider the connection.

- Read the whole book of [Ruth](#) - consider the Leviticus passages for the context of the redemption processes referenced through the story.

- **Reflect on your personal redemption.** What are you redeemed from? What are you redeemed for? What does that mean (really mean) for the way you live your life on a practical level? Within relationships, your occupation, and the paradigm through which you see the world?