

The Wonder of Our Redemption, Part 2

1 Peter 1:18b-19

60-12

Let's open our Bibles to 1 Peter chapter 1 and we're looking at verses 18 through 21, this great section on the believer's response to redemption. Let me read you verses 18 to 21 as a setting for our message. Verse 18 says, "Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood as of a Lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ for He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you, who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory so that your faith and hope are in God."

The word that really keys this whole text, of course, is found in verse 18, the word "redeemed." And as you know, "to redeem" means to buy back from bondage, to buy back by paying a price. And sometimes the price is very high. Have you ever heard of the phrase "a king's ransom"? You might say something is worth a king's ransom or someone is worth a king's ransom. That really goes back to the time of the Crusades when there was a king in England by the name of Richard Coeur de Lion and he was captured by his enemies during the Crusades, thrown into prison and a colossal ransom was basically asked of the people of England. They wanted him back so badly that they submitted to heavy taxation, over a process of time they amassed a fortune, and many rich nobles added to the common peoples giving, and they filled up the coffers with large sums of money in order to free their king. And that's what gave birth to the phrase "a king's ransom." And it's used to connote a huge amount of money required to redeem someone back from bondage.

Another interesting story that came out of the Crusades is the story of Sir Grimwald who was captured by the Saracens during the Crusades and was held for ransom. And in a very novel way they asked that in order to emancipate him and redeem him from death they would require the right hand of his lovely wife. As the historians tell us, she eagerly granted her own right hand to buy back her beloved husband.

High prices for redemption. But Peter speaks of an even higher price, an infinitely higher price. Peter tells us that we were redeemed with precious blood, the blood of Christ. And that's the focus of our study of these great verses.

Now as we noted last time his words were written really under the shadow of thought expressed in Exodus chapter 12. And we went into that last Lord's Day, how that Peter, no doubt, had in mind the Jewish Passover where a lamb was slain. And that lamb was an unblemished and spotless lamb, slain to redeem the firstborn from death. And, of course, at that very time was the redemption of the whole nation of Israel out of bondage. So as Peter reflects on redemption and as he reflects upon a spotless and unblemished lamb, he no doubt has in mind the wonderful reality of God's redeeming Israel from Egypt in the great Passover event.

But as great as that redemption was it pales when placed alongside the redemption of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. And though we note that the Passover shadows this passage, the substance of it is to look at the redemption provided in Jesus Christ. Now I suggested last time that there are four questions to which we need to give our attention in studying redemption. Question number one, what were we redeemed from? Question number two, what were we redeemed with? Question number three, who were we redeemed by? And question number four, what were we redeemed for?

Now we'll go back to question one because we only got started in that. The first question that is answered in this text is the question, what were we redeemed from? Now it is obvious that we were redeemed from some bondage because that's the very implication of redemption. And if we look closely at the text, that bondage is rather clearly identified for us as a bondage to sin, as a slavery to iniquity. We know from other parts of Scripture that men are born in sin, that they are slaves to sin. That is very clear, Romans 6, Ephesians 2 and many other places. But Peter here delineates four characteristics of man's bondage to sin. And I can point you to four key ideas.

You'll notice back in verse 14, moving out of our particular text but in the related text, Peter says, "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts." And he indicates there that an element of our life prior to redemption is lust. Part of the bondage to sin is expressed in strong desire in the heart to do what is evil, and that is what intended by that familiar New Testament word *epithumia*. And we discussed the matter of lust and how the mind is given to those strong and illicit desires which reflect the bondage of sin. In fact, the heart of man cannot deliver himself from the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes. They literally dominate his being in his fallen state.

Now let me take you to a second word in this very same verse, verse 14, that also expresses something of the nature of our bondage. In verse 14 it says, not only do not be conformed to the former lust, but then this, "Which were yours in your ignorance." There's a second word which defines the bondage of men and women who are not saved, they are not only bound by lust but they are bound in ignorance. It is characteristic of the unregenerate that they are ignorant.

Now what kind of ignorance do we have in mind here? Let me take you back and give you just a few scriptures on which to build an answer to that question. In John 17 verse 25 Jesus said this, this in His high priestly prayer, "O righteous Father," this is the key statement, "Although the world has not known Thee." Now therein lies the bondage of the unredeemed, they do not know God. That is the clearest, most pervasive expression of their ignorance, they are ignorant of God. That's why in John 8 Jesus says, "You don't know Me, you don't understand what I'm saying because you're of your father, the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. You do not believe Me because you are not of God. He who is of God hears the words of God, for this reason you do not hear them because you are not of God, you do not know God and therefore you do not comprehend the Word of God. You don't recognize His voice." Ignorance of God is the issue, ignorance of God's revelation.

In Romans 1 in verse 28 Paul said, speaking of the unregenerate, the unredeemed, that they do not see fit to acknowledge God. They do not acknowledge God. They do not know God. They do not know His Word. They do not even acknowledge that He exists. They live as if not philosophical or theological, if there's such a thing, atheists, they live as practical atheists, not acknowledging God at all and therefore God gives them over to a depraved mind. The mind that does not know God, that will not know God, is a depraved mind.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 2 and verse 14 Paul says in a very good summary verse, "But a natural man," that's an unredeemed man or woman, "does not accept the things of the Spirit of God for they are foolishness to him and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually appraised." He cannot understand them. He cannot know them because he cannot comprehend the spiritual dimension, ignorant of God, ignorant of God's Word, ignorant of spiritual truth.

In Galatians chapter 4 Paul says again, speaking of the time before you were saved, he says, "However at that time," Galatians 4:8, "when you did not know God you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods." And then he says, "Now that you are saved you have come to know God." So we're talking here about ignorance of God, ignorance of God's truth, ignorance of God's revelation, ignorance of God's Word.

Look at Ephesians for a moment, chapter 2. We must note this very important section of Scripture. And he says here in Ephesians 2 verse 12, "Remember that you were at that time," that is at the time before you were redeemed, "separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers to the covenants of promise having no hope," and here's the key, "without God in the world." You were in the world, bound to sin with no relationship to God, no perception of the spiritual dimension, no knowledge of God whatsoever.

In the fourth chapter of Ephesians verse 18 he even goes further than he did in chapter 2 verse 12 in defining that state of not knowing God. He says, "Being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them," and where did that ignorance come from, "because of the hardness of their heart." Hard-hearted unbelief produces ignorance, means that you don't know God, darkened in the understanding, unable to understand the spiritual dimension. In chapter 2 Paul sums it up by saying you were dead in your trespasses and sins. In other words, you were in a state of spiritual death and a dead man cannot respond because he cannot perceive, he cannot know, he cannot experience the spiritual dimension.

In Paul's wonderful testimony in 1 Timothy 1:13 he says, "That I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor," and then he says, "and yet I was shown mercy" by God, implied, "because I acted," Do you know the next word? "ignorantly in unbelief." He confesses his own state of ignorance.

Now that's how it is for unredeemed people. They are ignorant of God and they are driven by lust. They are driven by their desires and their passions unmitigated. They are darkened in their understanding so that the spiritual dimension is shut off to them completely. As natural man they cannot discern the things of God, they cannot know God, their mind is depraved and reprobate and that is the nature of their bondage, no way out, no escape. Even though the truth passes by they cannot perceive it, they are dead, they are blind, they are depraved, they are ignorant and driven by lust.

Two other things are given here by Peter — go back to that passage in chapter 1 — to define the four-fold state of the unredeemed man. If you'll notice down in our text verse 18, "Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life." Now let me talk about that for a minute. A third word in our little list: Lust, ignorance, a third word, futility, futility. Your futile way of life, it means your vain, empty, powerless pointless, valueless, useless way of life.

Now you say, "Is it true that every unsaved person can be said to be living an absolutely futile life?" Absolutely correct because there's only one real reason to live and that is to the glory of God and apart from being redeemed and knowing Christ you cannot do any good thing, that is, anything that will give glory to God. And so your life is useless. That's why it is no loss to the eternal purpose of God for you to spend forever in hell because your life is pointless. Heaven is a place where glory is given to God throughout eternity. And if your life does not do that, has no capacity to offer that, then it is pointless. And spending an eternity in hell diminishes not at all from those who will give glory to God. A pointless, vain, empty, powerless, useless, valueless life is simply put in a place where its worthlessness is not exposed to any other than those of the same kind. The futility of life without Christ, it is useless.

You say, "Well what about all the things you accomplish in this life?" What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own what? Soul. It's profitless, pointless, useless. In Acts 14 Paul speaks, he says, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you and preach the gospel to you in order that you should turn from these useless things to a living God." They wanted to make some kind of gods out of Paul and Barnabas. He says stop, we want to turn you from vain empty religion, from idolatry, from your uselessness. And by the way, what he meant by these vain things was their religion, the best we would think of what man expresses. They wanted to make deities out of Paul and Barnabas. He says these are useless. They're as useless as everything else the unredeemed get involved in.

Look at Romans 1 again, verse 21, speaking here of unredeemed mankind, "Even though they knew God they did not honor Him as God." That is they knew God in the sense that God is revealed in creation and conscience and there's enough there for a man to be responsible for that information. "But they didn't honor Him as God, they didn't give thanks. And so they became futile" same thought, same term "in their speculations." In other words, the rest of their philosophy and thinking was useless. Their religion is useless. Their speculation, their philosophy is useless. Chapter 6 of Romans and verse 21...verse 20 he says to these believers, "When you were slaves of sin" looking in the past "when you were slaves of sin you were free in regard to righteousness." You had no righteousness. Verse 21, "Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed, for the outcome of those things is death." So what good was all of that? What good was all the futility of your life as a slave to sin? It was absolutely no good at all. It was useless, pointless, valueless. And that's the way it is with the whole fallen world. Look at chapter 8 verse 20, he says, "For the creation was subjected to futility." In the Fall the whole creation became vain, useless, non-productive in terms of any spiritual accomplishments.

Look at 1 Corinthians 3:20. First Corinthians 3:20 is a very direct statement, right out of Psalm 94, by the way. And 1 Corinthians 3:20 says, "The Lord knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are" what? "useless," useless, pointless. They have no redeeming value.

Now the key passage, go back to Ephesians and let me read you a few verses here that will be helpful. Ephesians 4:17, "This I say, therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer as the pagans also walk," And how do they walk? "in the futility of their minds." Again, that same idea of the uselessness of the life of the unredeemed in terms of any real value. Verse 18, back to the verse we read, "Because they are darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God due to the ignorance in them because of the hardness of their hearts, and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality" that's the expression of their lust "for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness." This is a close kindred passage to Romans 1.

"But you didn't learn Christ in this way." This is the old way, useless, futile, empty. It lacks reference for God. It has no capacity to glorify God therefore it is useless and consigning it to an eternal hell does not diminish in any sense the glory of God because they only pollute the universe. And once it is turned totally to the glory of God, they must be put aside from that.

How do we characterize then the lost condition of the unredeemed? Lust, ignorance, futility. Back to 1 Peter 1, there's one more term and it really ties in with what we've said. In verse 18 he says, "You were redeemed" there "not by silver and gold from your futile way of life" and then this statement "inherited from your forefathers." There's another piece of bondage you need to understand. Let's call it tradition, tradition. People are victims of tradition, something that you inherit from your forefathers.

Any of us, any of you who have ever traveled in parts of the world where there is a dominant religious power know what it is to be caught in the tradition of religion. I suppose there is even a tradition of atheism, to some extent, at least in some people's experience. I think what Peter is directing his attention to, however, would be something perhaps consistent with his own culture and so he probably regarded this idea of tradition both in its Jewish and its Gentile sense. And if he has in mind a Jew here, he has in mind the futile way of life inherited from your forefathers as reference to apostate Judaism, that kind of Judaism that knew not God, that was characteristic of the apostate Pharisees and of many of the people who followed their direction, that kind of Judaism defined in Matthew chapter 15 verse 9 as substituting the tradition of men for the commandments of God, that kind of Judaism that we would call degenerate Jewish tradition. How many times does Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount say, "You have heard it said but I say unto you." And every time He says you have heard it said he is saying that's the tradition of your rabbinical teaching but I'm telling you this is the Word of God. They were trapped in the tradition.

In Matthew 23 He says, "These people, these traditionalists bind heavy burdens on you which no man can bear and don't so much as lift a finger to help you carry the impossible load." One of the sad legacies of many of the Jews of Peter's time and even today is a legacy of tradition and wanting to hold onto tradition. I mean, it was clear as it could be, wasn't it, in "Fiddler on the Roof" in the singing how important tradition was? And today if you look at contemporary Judaism all that is left is tradition, holding onto tradition, not wanting to violate tradition.

When we were in Hong Kong, to turn from Judaism to the Gentile world, I was talking to a young man. He was a very gracious young man. And I said to him one day, I said, "Let me ask you a question."

He said, "Yes, sir." He was working in the hotel we were staying in.

I said, "Are you a Christian?"

He said, "Oh no, sir. No, sir, I'm not a Christian."

I said, "Do you understand what it means to be a Christian?"

"Oh sir," he said, "I have seen the Bible but I cannot read the Bible."

I said why? He said, "O sir, my father is still alive."

I said, "Your father is still alive?"

He said, "Yes, my father is still alive. I cannot be a Christian."

And you realize the bondage of tradition. I said, "Let me ask you a question. If I gave you a Bible would you read it?" And he dropped his head for a while and he thought about it. I said, "Would you just read it?"

And he said, "Sir, if you give me that Bible, I will read it."

I said, "I wrote some books."

He said, "You did?" And we had gotten to know each other over about three days.

I said, "Yes," I said, "if I gave you one of my books would you read it?"

He said, "Yes, sir, I would read it. You have a very nice family, sir, and I commend you on your family and I would read your book." He said, "Besides, I'm trying to learn English and it will help me learn English." But he couldn't possibly become a Christian. And we talked further about the fact that he was literally bound by the tradition of his father.

It's so in the pagan world in many, many ways, in many, many forms. You go into these pagan countries and you see generation of generation of generation, sons upon sons upon sons who can't extricate themselves from the tradition, from the tradition. I've talked to Korean people who are so intimately tied into their mothers and their grandmothers and their fathers and their forefathers that they can't make a break to embrace the gospel, caught in tradition. Traditional religion, whether it's Judaism degenerated to an apostate level or whether it's paganism in all of its multiplicity of forms, is a captive element of the bondage from which men must be redeemed. So you have the pressure of external religion, that's an element of bondage. The wasted useful futility of life, that's an element of bondage. The blinded darkened understanding, the ignorance of God, that's an element. And then a life dominated by evil desire, that's what we must be redeemed from because that's the state of sin, that's the condition of the unredeemed.

Paul Reese wrote, "In Peter's thinking all men being sinners are fettered, needing to be set free. What is their slavery? Drink, you may say, or tobacco, or gambling? All that is superficial. The real bondage lies deeper. Scripture makes it plain that we are in a prison cell of alienation from God. It is our estrangement and rootlessness that are echoed in Augustine's famous cry, 'Thou hast made us for Thyself and our souls are restless till they rest in Thee.'" And he says, "There is no jail break for any of us by the naked stroke of our own strengthless hands." That's a good statement. There is no jail break for any of us by the naked stroke of our strengthless hands.

Then he goes on to write, "Now compound this bondage of a separation from God with the coils of a twisted self, a self tortured into the ugly shapes of conceit and fear and contentment with false values and you have a slavery which is too terrible and too tyrannical for any but God to break."

The condition of unredeemed man is pervasive. It totally engulfs him. When you look at someone and you want to recognize their bondage, their bondage is not to a sin, their bondage is way deeper than that. They're driven by lust, ignorant of God, useless, carrying out some kind of a sham of existence and bound to some religious or irreligious tradition, a bondage that only God can break. Man is degraded, defiled. Once a companion for God, after the Fall he is fit only as a companion to demons. And if he is not redeemed, he will spend forever in their company. His flesh is filthy, his body is stained and in desperate need of cleansing. Its members and faculties are given over to unclean thoughts, unclean words, and unclean deeds. There is no part of him that is fit for any communion or union with God. His tongue is deceitful, his lips are poisonous. His throat is an open grave. His eyes are full of adultery. His ears are deaf to God's voice and truth. His hands do evil. His feet run to shed blood. His mind is depraved and reprobate. His heart is desperately wicked. His will is hard and unrepentant. He resists God. He refuses life. His conscience is evil. In and out he is polluted.

Ralph Venning wrote a classic in 1669, a classic on sin in which he said, "It is not any one faculty only that sin has defiled but like a strong poison, it soaks and eats through them all," end quote. So man in his unredeemed condition is in utter darkness. A darkened mind leaves him to grope in the blackness, unable to comprehend light. He walks in all kinds of wickedness, does not know where he is going, stumbles and doesn't know how to get up and doesn't know why he cannot control his thoughts or words or actions. And sad to say, on the surface he seems content to be led blindly to destruction by the guide dogs of false religion. And, beloved, it is from that that we are redeemed.

Does that make you thankful? That's the bondage of sin. And in context here Peter is saying that should inspire your hope, that should inspire your holiness, that should inspire your fear of God.

Let's look at the second question, what were we redeemed with? This is absolutely thrilling. What were we redeemed with? Verse 18 again, "Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold." And so he starts with a negative statement. This is what you were not redeemed with. The word "knowing" is very important. It is an appeal to elementary knowledge. This is not a mystery to you believers, Peter is saying. We assume you know this. It's as if he says in verse 17, "Conduct yourselves in fear because you know the price of your redemption." In other words, honor God because you know the price He had to pay.

Now, he says, the price that you know He paid was not perishable. In other words, it wasn't some earthly commodity, like silver or gold. You say, "Why does he bring that up?" Let me show you why. Turn back to Exodus chapter 30. I think Peter lived and breathed and thought in an Old Testament context. And so, as I was trying to figure out why he said this I, chasing around the Scripture, found my way to the 13th chapter of Exodus. And here I came across a redemption by metal commodity. And I think this must have been in the mind of Peter. Look at verse 11, and, of course, God is giving instruction to Moses here and He says to him in verse 12, "When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the Lord when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when you number them." Now that's a very interesting thing, isn't it? He says, now... He doesn't command him to take a census. He says it's going to happen and when it happens, when you take a census, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the Lord or else there's going to be a plague on him.

Verse 13, "This is what everyone who is numbered shall give." By the way, at this particular time

there were no coins. They didn't come along till about 700 B.C. so these would be actual pieces of gold or silver. So He says, "Half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary." The shekel is twenty gerahs, half a shekel as a contribution to the Lord, that's the redemption price, that's the ransom. "Everyone who is numbered from 20 years old and over shall give the contribution to the Lord. The rich shall not pay more, the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel; when you give the contribution to the Lord to make" watch this "atonement for yourselves and you shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel and give it to the service of the tent of meeting that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the Lord to make atonement for yourselves." That's a most interesting passage.

He says, "Now when you take a census and you number the people, you're counting up the people, every person over 20 has to redeem himself with a half a shekel." Why? To avoid a plague. Well why would God send a plague for taking a census? Listen carefully. I think it is fair to say in understanding the Word of God that taking a census on the part of Israel was an act of distrust in the power of God. Do you remember when David was in deep trouble for numbering the people in order that he might think himself strong enough to deal with his enemies, rather than trusting in the strength of God? And I believe that what you have here is the reality that a census, which was a numbering of the people in order to perhaps know military strength or the strength of the nation or to boast about the largeness of it, or whatever, but the implication is that that's wrong and therefore the people who are involved in that must be redeemed from that sin by a price.

Cassuto, the Hebrew commentator, has a very interesting section on this. And he writes, "The taking of a census was bound up with the religious ritual of purification due to the fact that the census itself was considered a sin. It was considered," he writes, "a lack of faith in God, so it had to have a cleansing feature. By doing this the Israelites would be delivered from the punishment that was liable to be inflicted on them on account of the sin implicit in the census," end quote.

So Peter, probably thinking about that says, "You were not redeemed with perishable things like half a shekel of silver or gold, no such silver and no such gold could ever deliver the eternal souls of people from the bondage of sin." Perhaps also he remembered Psalm 49. In Psalm 49 verse 7 says, "No man can by any means redeem his brother or give" to God, implied "some price as a ransom for him," I love this verse 8 "for the redemption of a soul is costly." No man can pay that price. There is no human commodity that can pay this price. It may have been that a half shekel could redeem the sinner from the census but cannot redeem the soul of the sinner from the bondage of sin.

Listen to the words of Isaiah chapter 52 verse 3, "For thus says the Lord," this is marvelous "you were sold for nothing and you will be redeemed without money." What a great prophecy. You will be redeemed without money.

Perishable things can't redeem you. Things that decay, corrupt and perish cannot pay the price of eternal redemption. You don't buy your salvation by your money. The Talmud says, in the giving of alms one purchases his redemption. That's a lie. That is not true. You cannot buy yourself back from sin by the payment of any price of any perishable commodity.

Well with what then were we redeemed? Not with perishable things like silver and gold, but look at verse 19, "But with" what? "precious" what? "blood." "But with precious blood." What does that mean? Well blood means death. The implication here of blood is death. Blood is a vivid way to describe death. A sacrificial death was the price, the pouring out of blood. That's obvious from the

Passover. The shedding of the blood of the lamb was a shedding of blood in death. And not just blood, but what kind of blood? Precious blood. What does he mean by that? What does he mean by that? Well he says, "With precious blood like that of a lamb unblemished and spotless."

You say, "Well wasn't the blood of any lamb precious?" No, no, not particularly. It was precious because the lamb was unique. It was a lamb unblemished and spotless. Do you know what that means? Do you know what that means to a shepherd in the breeding process to have a spotless, unblemished lamb, the finest, purest lamb he has? That lamb had to be the sacrifice. And that was a great sacrifice, not only a sacrifice on the part of the lamb but a sacrifice on the part of the shepherd. He had to offer the purest, most unblemished, the thoroughbred lamb, if you will. That's why it's precious, not just because it's an animal but because it's precious.

If you are among those who shepherd sheep and we have had that wonderful privilege in New Zealand and Australia, visiting shepherds, being with them in the process of caring for the sheep, the whole thing is built upon the ability to breed that purest lamb. And that purest lamb, that spotless lamb becomes the source for the next generation. That's why the lamb is precious, because it's unblemished, unspotted.

And so, Peter says, "Look, the price is death and it is a precious blood that is shed because it is that blood like the blood of a lamb unblemished and spotless." It was a very great sacrifice for the shepherd to kill his purest lamb, precious. Now notice what he says, please. He says, "We were redeemed with precious blood," not the blood of a lamb, but "like the blood of an unblemished spotless lamb." That's simply to define precious. With what have we been redeemed? With blood. What does that mean? With death. What kind of death? Sacrificial death in which blood is poured out; not the blood of a lamb but precious blood like the precious lamb of a spotless lamb. That's just the analogy, just the picture.

This was the way it was throughout the whole of God's economy. You can go all the way back to Genesis chapter 22, verse 7, "Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said." You remember Isaac being on the Mount Moriah, Abraham going to offer him as a sacrifice. And Isaac is there, he so dutifully follows his father and he gets up there and helps his father make the place ready to offer the sacrifice, not thinking that it would be him. "Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, 'My father,' and he said, 'Here I am, my son'. And he said, 'Behold the fire and the wood but where is the lamb?'" Clear back in Genesis God began to paint the picture of a perfect lamb. "And Abraham said in verse 8, "God will provide for Himself the lamb." And you remember what happened. They found the perfect animal in the thicket who substituted for Isaac.

Do you remember the 12th chapter of Exodus which we read last time, verse 5? It says, "The lamb that you offer shall be an unblemished male, an unblemished lamb." In Leviticus, isn't it chapter 22 verses 17 on down through verse 25, again talking about the sacrificial animal that God requires. You can see it in Deuteronomy 15:21. I won't take more time because our time is gone.

What were we redeemed from? Sin. What were we redeemed with? What? Precious blood. Precious blood. Not the precious blood of a lamb but precious blood as that which is shed by a spotless, unblemished lamb. Now that leads us to the third question. The third question is: Who were we redeemed by? Who offered the most precious blood? Who was it? Christ, the blood of Christ, the blood being added, it literally says, "But with precious blood as of a lamb unblemished and spotless of Christ." Was His blood precious? Sure, because He was the most unblemished and spotless

person that ever lived, perfect, perfect; therefore most costly, most valuable, most precious. And He is the one who purchased our redemption by His death.

Why is He so precious? I'll tell you why, verse 20, "He was foreknown before the foundation of the world. He appeared in these last times for the sake of you, who through Him are believers in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory." Those are great statements about the precious character of Jesus Christ and we have to keep them for next time. And next Sunday night we're going to talk about why Christ is so precious. Let's bow together in prayer.

Father, it has been so good to focus on our redemption. We recognize what we have been redeemed from and we thank You and we praise You and we bless Your name. Oh God, how could we ever take for granted such redemption? Oh we praise You for what You have redeemed us from, all of grace, a gift to us unworthy sinners. And, Lord, we thank You for what we have been redeemed with, not perishable things like half a shekel. No, there is no price that men could pay with any perishable item that could redeem their souls. We have been redeemed with precious blood, not the blood of an animal but one more precious than any because more spotless than any, perfectly pure, unblemished, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. Oh God, we thank You for the price You paid and the redemption You provided. And may that gratitude translate into praise and obedience in our lives.

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