

AN EXEGETICAL INTERPRETATION OF ΑΠΟΛΥΤΡΩΣΙΣ IN EPH.1:7 AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR THE CONTEMPORARY CHURCH IN NIGERIA

Dr. M. O. Oyetade.

Department of Religions, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria
08034958631, droyetademich@gmail

Abstract

Redemption is from the word which means literally "to buy back". The term λύτρω and ἀπολύτρωσις, meaning to redeem and redemption respectively, were used by the ancient Greeks and also by the New Testament writers, to signify the act of setting a captive free through the payment of a λύτρον or redemptive price. The term therefore came to be used in a broader sense of a deliverance from every kind of evil, through a price paid by another. The purpose of this paper is to unearth the ἀπολύτρωσις and its implication on the present day church in Nigeria. Therefore, through lexico-semantics analysis which reveals, its root-words and word-stems and the various possible semantic categories created by the human mind. This paper claims that λύτρω; περιποιέω; ἀγοράζω and ἐξαγοράζω, are different terms that emphasized different aspect of redemption

Key words: ἀπολύτρωσις, λύτρω; περιποιέω; ἀγοράζω and ἐξαγοράζω

Introduction

There were many concepts and practices that were mystifying in the Old Testament (OT) period, which are now revealed in the New Testament (NT). One of the most mystifying concepts has been the theme of blood. Redemption has always been one of the significant tenets of Judaism. From biblical times to the present age the idea of *ge'ula*, redemption, had a remarkable influence upon Jewish theology and the texture of Jewish life. Over the centuries, its meaning underwent many changes, but its persistently focal role in Jewish life is attested to by its pervasive dominance in the daily liturgy.

"Redeem/redemption" appears a total of 25 times in the New Testament narratives. These terms have been used to translate seven different Greek words, five of which refer almost exclusively to the ransom of slaves or captives (prisoners of war). There are prayers for redemption and there are benedictions in which God is praised as the redeemer of Israel. There are anxious prayers for deliverance from affliction and stress, and there are expressions of confident hope and even assurance that the redemption will be fulfilled. For Christian religion, redemption is forgiveness or deliverance from sin. But for the Jews, redemption is primarily about God redeeming them from exile and slavery. It is worthy of note that, the sin of Adam and Eve in the garden (Gen 3) had immense consequences not only

for the human race, but also for the whole of creation. Throughout history, the Jews would find themselves exiled, but they believe it was God who redeemed them from oppression and slavery, sending them prophets and leaders like Moses to guide them through their hardships. Through Moses, it is believed God handed down the Ten Commandments, by which the Jews were to live. As Francis A. Schaeffer pointed out, not only was the communion between Man and God broken as a result of sin, but also the communion between Man and his fellow Man, and Man and the creation.

Furthermore, Man has also been separated from himself. This also reveals the status of humanity and the extent of our depravity, as a result, truth is suppressed, our thinking has become warped, we have rejected God in favour of our own idols, and we are spiralling out of control. Without God, humanity is destined for eternal judgement, and we are completely unable to help ourselves. The death of animals is on a lower level than man. The offering of animal deaths and blood was a temporary substitute covering sins only for the moment. God, in His infinite wisdom, skipped the level of man-for-man-sacrifices, for the sacrifice by man for man cannot be enough substitute to take away the sin of man. Ultimately, it takes the sacrifice of a divine presence to take away the sin of man. Jesus lived and died as a man but, at the same time, he was of divine nature. This, of course, made Jesus sinless and, most importantly to us, being divine, His sacrifice could take away our sins. Animal sacrifices served in the OT; Jesus in the NT. The objective of this paper is to unearth what God did by sending His own Son to die for all humanity, so that through the payment of a *λυτρωσις* or redemptive price we may be restored to what God intended us to be.

Background to the Book of Ephesians

Acts 19-20 and Revelation 2:1-7 gives immediate context, which talked about the Church in Ephesus. Ephesus was a big, prosperous harbour city in Asia Minor. The harbour has long been filled up and unusable. The famous Silk Road from Asia ended at this point. The church in Ephesus also lived in a community thronging about its most prized mother idol of Diana. One of the Seven Wonders of the World was right there in Ephesus. It was the huge temple dedicated to this goddess named Diana (Artemis). People from all around flocked to that great temple. The goddess, after all, is noted for having fallen down from the sky. Although, her origin was probably just the remains of a meteorite, there was much ado over her supposed powers. This contrasts with Christ who not only came from God but ascended back to heaven (Ephesians 4:8-10)!

Ephesians then is both a declaration of and an invitation to praise and worship the God who initiated his plan of redemption before the foundation of the world. As Walter Brueggemann noted, praise and adoration produce an alternative reality which subverts all worldly powers with their

claims to ultimacy. Although, Paul and his contemporaries lived in "the present, evil age" (Gal. 1:4) which was subject to a variety of rulers, authorities, and powers (e.g., Eph. 1:21; 2:2; 6:12), through Christ, they were blessed, redeemed, raised, and occupied a realm characterized as "heavenly places" (e.g., Eph. 1:3; 2:6). In Ephesians, Paul summoned his audience to participate in this new reality, this new creation, by which God intended to redeem the world. According to Andrew Lincoln, the author found three ways to cultivate this new identity: "through the language of worship (thanksgiving and prayer), the language of anamnesis (the recall of the past) and the language of paracentesis (ethical exhortation)." These three methods were not new, of course; they emerged from the rich traditions of the Old Testament. The worship, the recollection of God's saving activity, and the ethical exhortations of the Law, the Writings, and the Prophets formed the identity of God's people of the old covenant. In the same way the apostle's praise and prayers, his recollections of God's more recent saving actions in Christ, and his ethical teachings formed the identity of God's people of the new covenant.

The same huge temple dedicated to this goddess named Diana and streets were strewn with immoral goddess as prostitutes. People experienced more of the goddess' power by sexually intimacies with their priests and priestesses. It was a wicked city. Immorality flourished and flooded over in to the society and families. The disciples of Jesus, however, were not set apart to this temple or Diana, but instead set apart for God. There were 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire, and often they were bought and sold like pieces of furniture. But a man could purchase a slave and set him free, and this is what Jesus did for us. The price was His own blood (1 Peter 1:18 ff). The debt against us is not viewed as simply cancelled, but is fully paid. Christ's blood or life, which he surrendered for them, is the "ransom" by which the deliverance of his people from the servitude of sin and from its penal consequences is secured.

One of the blessings Paul described in Ephesians chapter one, is redemption: "In him we have redemption through his blood" (1:7). With this passage, Paul moved from God's pre-creational decision to effect his plan of redemption to the present experience of the believer in Christ. Redemption refers to the release of one held captive. Paul used the metaphor more than any other NT writer. He appropriated the concept from his Scripture where it often referred to God's act to deliver Israel from Egyptian or Babylonian captivity (e.g., Deut. 7:8; 9:26; 13:5; 15:15; 1 Chron. 17:21; Jer. 15:21; Mic. 4:10) or in some cases rescue from enemies or death (Ps. 25:22 LXX 24:22; 69:18 [LXX 68:19]; 119:134 [LXX 118:134]). The implication of such language is that both Jew and Gentile are held captive to powers which enslave them. Though unnamed, these powers would include sin (Rom. 7:7-20), rulers, authorities, and spiritual powers of darkness (Eph. 6:12). Paul asserted that "the blood of

Jesus" provides the means by which redemption becomes reality. In addition to deliverance, redemption means "the forgiveness of our trespasses" (cf Col. 1:14).

General Concept of Redemption

The core of this problem is the Greek word "ἀπολύτρωσις", 'redemption,' found in a number of places in the Apostle's epistles. The texts are: Rom. 3:24 and 8:23; I Cor. 1:30; Eph. I: 7, 1:14 and 4:30; Col. 1:14. In Rom. 8:23 and Eph. 1:14 and 4:30 there is an echo of Luke 12:28, and these texts refer to an eschatological which is yet to come. The remaining four are concerned with that redemption worked on Calvary and in the resurrection by Christ.

Even though this term 'redemption' in St Paul can be generally categorized, the question of its background remains. One prominent explanation considers the sacred manumission found in antiquity to be the real key to St Paul's thought, and this theory, as advanced principally by Adolf Deissmann, has held the field. Many Pauline phrases are compared to the technical formulae of the manumission records in order to bring out the full force of the term 'redemption'.

Manumission of a slave was accomplished in various ways among the ancients, but emphasis is placed here on the peculiar ceremony by which a slave was purchased by a god. Inscriptions at Delphi are the principal sources of knowledge concerning the nature of the rites involved in sacred manumission. At Delphi the ceremony is connected with Apollo, but manumission of a sacred character was not exclusively Delphic. Sacred manumission can be found in records of Hellenistic synagogues shortly before the time of Paul, so that it can be said that the synagogues adopted the temple practice.

The several steps in pagan manumission are clearly defined. The slave to be freed paid beforehand the sum required for ransom from his own savings into the temple treasury. The master took the slave to the temple to declare publicly that he was for sale; whereupon. He received the purchase money from the temple treasury. The slave became the property of the god who immediately declared him a man 'bought' and 'redeemed' by his god. The existence of such a religious practice does not in itself demonstrate anything concerning St Paul's idea of redemption, but when the terminology of these manumission records is correlated with some of St Paul's phrases, rather striking similarities appear. The evidence is so decisive for some that they unreservedly state, ' St Paul illustrates his teaching on the Redemption by frequent references to this form of contract, and a knowledge of the technical terms used is necessary for the full understanding of the texts.'

In I Cor. 6:20 and 7:23, there occurs the colourful phrase 'bought at a price.' This term is considered to be taken from pagan manumission, so that St Paul is using a formula of the manumission records. For the supporters of this theory of manumission, 'redemption' has the value of liberation by ransom, which includes the notion of price. Consequently, 'redemption' involves a price to be paid, and when St Paul writes, 'You have been bought at a price,' he means that the Christian has been redeemed at the cost of Christ's blood (Rom. 3:24-5; Eph.1:7). Gal. 5:1 and 5:13 are considered as two more points of contact between St Paul and sacred manumission because of the reference to 'freedom,' another formula signifying the redemption brought about in the name of a god. Much in the same vein, the notion of 'freedom' in Rom. 6:18-22 and 8:21 is regarded as technical language from the manumission formulae. The word 'ransom' in I Tim. 2:6 should so remind one of the purchase price for slaves that he would immediately connect 'ransom' with 'bought at a price' in I Cor. Such an understanding leads the advocates of this theory to regard the price in St Paul as essentially a ransom. This price is paid by the Redeemer, for the Lord supplies the ransom out of his own blood to free each person from slavery. However, Christian redemption is gratuitous, because this deliverance Jesus did 'freely' (Rom. 3:24).

Sacred manumission as the background to St Paul's thought on redemption is impressive, and in its favour one can readily see two important factors. The general notion of the rites of manumission in the name of a god was quite widespread, and this form of manumission is definitely of a religious character. Indeed, Hellenistic familiarity with this custom would tend to help St Paul's efforts to make Christ's redemptive work universally known. Also, since manumission could have a sacred character, St Paul's hearers could easily receive the message of Christ's work on Calvary with a religious spirit. However, these two factors which may enhance the theory of sacred manumission are only elements of milieu, not proofs in themselves. The points of contact between records of manumission and Pauline literature are incontrovertible, but because both employ some identical terms and formulae, dependence is not guaranteed. However, since Paul's language does bear such resemblance to the official phrases of the manumission forms, the satisfactory method of criticism uses a comparison of ideas. In short, the elements of the rite of sacred manumission ought to present an adequate foundation upon which St Paul's teaching on the redemption can rest.

In order to discuss liberation from slavery, there must be someone enslaved. Granting that before redemption by the Lord the individual is in some state of servitude, then the master of the slave is sought. In the case of Hellenistic manumission, we readily understand that whoever owns the slave is his master, but in the case of the redeemed Christian, who is his master prior to liberation? St Paul clearly speaks of slaves of sin (Rom. 6:6f), of the Law (Gal. 5:1), and of death (Rom. 8:2), but the chief slavery

is to sin. Experience points out that a man works his own sin, if it be actual sin, and in such a state he is really a slave to himself. Because sin does not satisfactorily fit the role of master, some have concluded that Satan is the owner of unredeemed man. The fact that Satan is the great adversary has suggested to these authors that God entered into a transaction with him in order to free man from the bondage of slavery. That St Paul refers to himself as 'a slave of Jesus Christ,' is explained as having been 'derived from the Hellenistic custom of manumission. In view of this custom Paul could call himself the slave of Christ to signify that he had been bought free (redeemed) through Jesus Christ from his former master Sin or Satan.'

Though some of the Fathers took this view, they presented the idea that the devil had a right to payment for his slave in different ways. Origen, St Basil and St Jerome taught it merely in passing. St Ambrose and St Gregory treated the doctrine of ransom to the devil rather fully, but even they treated it along the lines of allegory. As with the modern authors who mention it as a possible solution, it is difficult to know how literally the Fathers believed Satan to be the master of the unredeemed. Certainly any theory of redemption which claims true dominion for Satan is unscriptural. In no way can it be shown that God relinquished His absolute right over the human creature; by doing so, He would be freeing Himself of His Lordship. From such considerations, no true owner of the unredeemed can be found to correspond with that of the slave to be liberated.

In Hellenistic manumission there is no doubt that the slave furnished the means of redemption, the ransom; equally, no doubt is possible on the point that man of himself does not have the means to accomplish his supernatural redemption. The pagan slave redeemed himself, but the Christian depends totally on Christ's work. Within the framework of sacred manumission the ransom paid by the slave was money; in Christian redemption no money is involved, but to continue the analogy with the pagan rite some price must be found. If one thinks that 'redemption' essentially involves a ransom, then the blood of Christ must be literally the price paid.

The main difficulty with the idea of a literal ransom is that if a purchase price be paid, there is again the question of the one to whom it is paid. Actually, the term 'ransom' occurs in the New Testament in a sacrificial context, since everywhere the sacred writers indicate that the redemption was accomplished by Christ's sacrifice. While sacrificial rites are found with sacred manumission, they are not required for completeness of the manumission. With Christ, however, his sacrificial offering brings about objective deliverance.

The total activity in pagan manumission requires a master, a slave with purchasing resources, and a payment of ransom; the redemption 'in the Christian revelation lacks these. The slave of sin, the unredeemed, is not

outside the Lord's dominion, and he has no sufficiency, nor can he ever acquire any, to accomplish his liberation. Christ delivered him by the sacrifice which is not a literal ransom paid to anyone. Such serious dissimilarities argue against the acceptance of the theory which presents sacral manumission as the background for St Paul's preaching of Christ's work on Calvary. Even making due allowance for the divergences of analogy and wideness of metaphor, the theory of sacred manumission is not an adequate explanation of St Paul's thought because of the lack of congruity between the key concepts.

In Biblical redemption the emphasis is on the universal dominion of God by which He decrees deliverance and on His all-conquering power by which He effects the decree of redemption. This idea of redemption, then, is found throughout the history of Israel, and the liberation from Egypt furnished the imagery as well as the basis for future redemption, and in it there is no place for the notion of a ransom received by the power from which God delivers. In the New Testament St Paul builds on this Biblical concept of redemption: redemption from sin does not include any idea of ransom, but rather concentrates on the reality of liberation which produces union with God. Such a background to 'redemption' supplies all the positive aspects of Christian redemption and obviates all the difficulties which the manumission theory presents. In the old Testament God's action had been on the people outside Himself, but in the New Testament, precisely because Jesus Christ is God become man, both lines of activity are caught up in one person. Jesus accomplishes redemption because he is the God who liberates and he also represents the humanity God delivers. With this notion of redemption one looks neither for a ransom nor for a person to receive a ransom; does the Biblical redemption need no literal ransom, since it is done solely by God's power. 'Redemption' in St Paul is a continuance of the Biblical idiom for redemption, and the Apostle writes as an heir of the Old Testament.

Exegetical study of Ephesians 1:7

Passage in English: In whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace (ASV).

Passage in Greek: Ἐν ᾧ ἔχομεν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν διὰ τοῦ αἵματος αὐτοῦ, τὴν ἄφεσιν τῶν παραπτωμάτων, κατὰ τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, Ἀπολύτρωσις, the most common of the words, used 9 x in the New Testament, λυτρον (2 x), λύτρωσις (2 x), and ἀντίλυτρον (1 x), all nouns, and λυτροω (3 x), the verb form from which they are derived, uniformly refer, in classical usage, to either the ransom of a prisoner or slave, or the redemption of a pledge or obligation – either the process or the price of such a transaction. Ἀγοράζω, "to purchase", and its prefixed form, ἐξαγοράζω, both verbs, more frequently refer to ordinary commerce (28 x, more than the sum of all the "redeem" words), although they may also be

used for the purchase of slaves, either for their freedom or simply a change of ownership. Twice, ἐξαγοράζω is used in Paul's admonitions about "redeeming the time" (Eph.5:16 and Col.4:5), or making responsible use of it. In this cultural context, nobody needed an explanation of "captivity", either. Four of the five words translated that way are derived from αἰχμή, "spear", and refer to prisoners of war: the nouns αἰχμαλωσία and αἰχμαλωτός, used once each, and the verbs αἰχμαλωτεύω (2 x) and αἰχμαλωτίζω (3 x). The other, ζωγράφω, used only once, refers to captured animals who were kept in cages.

There are three original Greek terms which relate to the teaching of redemption in the New Testament. The first of these words is "ἀγοράζω" which means *to buy up*, that is ransom, *to buy in a marketplace*, purchase...acquire as property", figuratively, to rescue from loss. It is a verb, first person singular present active indicative. "ἀγοράζω" is found 25 times in the NT with its usual commercial meaning mostly in the Gospels e.g. Matt. 13:44; Lk. 22:36, though 5x it describes the buying (redeeming) of Christians. This term carries the idea of release from a state of slavery. In this case, it is release from sin. Jesus bought our salvation with his blood.

That was the price He paid for our salvation. In 1Cor.6:20; 7:23 (cf. Rev. 14:3) the emphasis is not the freedom of the redeemed but their new status as slaves of God, bought with a price to do his will. Hence, the sheer effrontery of heresies "denying the sovereign Lord who bought them" (2 Pet.2:1). The price Christ paid for his people (his blood) is spelled out in Rev. 5:9 where the word "ἀγοράζω" is used saying Jesus' blood was the price of Him purchasing or redeeming us: "...For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation".

The **second** Greek term for redemption is "ἐξαγοράζω". ἐκ, means "completely out from" which intensifies ἀγοράζω. It is a verb present middle voice participle masculine plural nominative. A stronger term made up of two words: (1) *to buy* and (2) *out*. This word means "buy, buy up something, or to buy up for oneself, for one's use, redeem (literally 'buy back'), deliver someone" or "to buy out, especially of purchasing a slave with a view to his freedom. It means to redeem, that is, by payment of a price to recover from the power of another, to ransom. Metaphorically, of Christ freeing men from the dominion of the Mosaic law at the price of his vicarious death (see ἀγοράζω), τινα, Galatians 4:5; with addition of ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου, Galatians 3:13. The idea is to buy out of the slave market, never to be repurchased in the market again. The idea of escaping from the consequences of breaking God's law is also added. This word "ἐξαγοράζω" also occurs 2 times to express the different idea of (lit) "redeeming the time (καιρός)" (Eph.5:16; Col. 4:5), which

means buy up intensively that is snap up every opportunity that comes. Our redemption is permanent. Satan can never place us under the power of sin again. We can never be sold in the slave market of sin another time. Jesus redeemed us permanently from sin, from its penalty. Once we are removed from the slave market of sin, no one can put us there again. Galatians 3:13 uses a form of the word "ἐξαγοράζω" when saying Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us--for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" The **third** Greek word for redemption is not related to the previous two. This term is "λυτρόω" Cognates such as λυτρον and λυτροω speak of the "price of release" and "to free by paying ransom."

"λυτρόω" means in various contexts, "free by paying a ransom, redeem...set free...rescue". "to release on receipt of ransom", is used in the Middle Voice, signifying "to release by paying a ransom price, to redeem"(a) in the natural sense of delivering, Luke 24:21 of setting Israel free from the Roman yoke; (b) in a spiritual sense, Titus 2:14 of the work of Christ in "redeeming" men "from all iniquity" (anomia, "lawlessness," the bondage of self-will which rejects the will of God); 1Pet. 1:18 (Passive Voice), "ye were redeemed," from a vain manner of life, i.e., from bondage to tradition. In both instances the Death of Christ is stated as the means of "redemption." In the general sense of "deliverance," of the nation of Israel, Luke 1:68 RSV, "wrought redemption;" Luke 2:38(b) of "the redemptive work" of Christ, Heb.9:12, bringing deliverance through His death, from the guilt and power of sin. In the Sept., Lev.25:29,48; Num. 18:16; Judg. 1:15; Psl.49:8;111:9;130:7; Isaiah 63:4.

The verb "λυτρόω" occurs 3 times only in mid and pass. It occurs in Lk. 24:21. It describes the Christian life as renouncing irreligious and worldly passions and living in a godly way, awaiting the appearing of Christ, "who gave himself for us to redeem (λυτρόω) us from all wickedness". Both Matthew (20:28) and Mark (10:45) record Jesus' statement that he intended to give his life as a "ransom (λυτρον) for many" (πολλόν). Luke refers, in the infancy narrative (2:38) and the despairing lament of the disciples enroute to Emmaus (24:21) to the expectation that Jesus would "redeem Israel", but only quotes Jesus himself once (21:28), "Your deliverance [redemption] is coming near" in reference to his final triumph. In fact, **Jesus himself does not use the word "sacrifice"**, so common in modern parlance, even a single time in reference to his own mission, nor do any of the Gospel writers: "redemption / ransom" is their chosen term in every instance.

In 1 Peter.1:18-19 λυτρόω" refers both to that from which the believer is ransomed or redeemed and to the means of the ransom..." not with perishable things such as silver or gold (cf. Isaiah 52:3)... but with the precious blood of Christ (cf. Eph. 1:7; Heb.9:12,22; Rev. 1:5), a lamb

without blemish or defect" (cf. Isaiah 53:7). Forms of the word "λυτρόω" are used in Titus 2:14 and 1 Peter 1:18. Titus 2:14 shows Jesus' death has purchased us from a life of slavery or lawlessness in relation to God's commands: "*Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed...*" Titus 2:14 says Jesus Christ redeemed us so we could be His own special people. In Greek, the expression "His own special" is a form of the word. It worth noting that while both ἐξαγοράζω and λυτρόω are translated "to redeem," ἐξαγοράζω does not signify the actual "redemption," but the price paid with a view to it, λυτρόω signifies the actual "deliverance," the setting at liberty.

"περιούσιος". "Περιούσιος" means "of one's own possession, one's own". "λυτρόω" means *to loose, set free* by the payment of a price. Not only are Christians bought out of the marketplace of sin, never to return, but they can never be sold in slavery again. Slaves of the first century were purchased by a slave owner and then sold again if they remain holy unto the Lord. This can never happen to a Christian. Jesus bought us to set us free permanently. This term is the Greek word used in Eph. 1:7.

Another relevant Greek New Testament word is "περιποιέω" which means "get for oneself, purchase" "περιποιέω" is found 3 times in the NT. In the classical Greek, it means to cause to save up, procure, and keep for oneself. The verb occurs in Lk.17:33 (whoever tries to keep "περιποιέω" his life will lose it"); Acts 20:28 ("Be shepherds of the church of God which he bought "περιποιέω" with his own blood"); and 1Tim. 3:13 ("Those who have served well gain "περιποιέω" an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith.). The relationship between the New Testament teaching on redemption and the associated concept of God buying us as His *exclusive personal possession* can be seen in Ephesians 1:14 where a form of the Greek word "περιποιέω" is used in relation to a form of the associated word "ἀπολύτρωσις" which is translated "redemption" in the same verse. In the context of Ephesians 1:14, the form of the word "περιποιέω" means "possessing, possession, property". Ephesians 1:14 says: "who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory." Here we see God has purchased us so we can be forever His exclusive possession.

Ἀπολύτρωσις, Nominative Adjective Singular Feminine is a strengthened form of λυτρόωσις, literally, it means "a releasing, for (i.e., on payment of) a ransom." It is used of (a) "deliverance" from physical torture, Heb. 11:35; (b) the deliverance of the people of God at the coming of Christ with His glorified saints, "in a cloud with power and great glory," Luke 21:28, a "redemption" to be accomplished at the "outshining of His Parousia," 2 Thess 2:8 i.e., at His second advent; (c) forgiveness and justification, "redemption" as the result of expiation, deliverance from

the guilt of sins, Rom. 3:24 "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;" Eph.1:7 defined as "the forgiveness of our trespasses," RV; so Col. 1:14 "the forgiveness of our sins," indicating both the liberation from the guilt and doom of sin and the introduction into a life of liberty, "newness of life" (Rom.6:4; Heb.9:15 "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant," RV, here "redemption of" is equivalent to "redemption from," the genitive case being used of the object from which the "redemption" is effected, not from the consequence of the transgressions, but from the transgressions themselves; (d) the deliverance of the believer from the presence and power of sin, and of his body from bondage to corruption, at the coming (the Parousia in its inception) of the Lord Jesus, Rom 8:23; 1Cor 1:30; Eph 1:14; 4:30 See also Propitiation.

Ἀπολύτρωσις, Nominative Adjective Singular Feminine is a strengthened form of λυτρόωσις, literally, it means "a releasing, for (i.e., on payment of) a ransom." It was used in secular Greek as a technical term for money paid to buy back and set free prisoners of war or to emancipate that is, to liberate a person from subjection or domination, to free from restraint, control, or the power of another, slaves from their masters. It is used of (a) "deliverance" from physical torture, Heb. 11:35; (b) the deliverance of the people of God at the coming of Christ with His glorified saints, "in a cloud with power and great glory," Luke 21:28, a "redemption" to be accomplished at the "outshining of His Parousia," 2 Thess 2:8 i.e., at His second advent; (c) forgiveness and justification, "redemption" as the result of expiation, deliverance from the guilt of sins, Rom. 3:24 "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;" Eph.1:7 defined as "the forgiveness of our trespasses," RV; so Col. 1:14 "the forgiveness of our sins," indicating both the liberation from the guilt and doom of sin and the introduction into a life of liberty, "newness of life" (Rom.6:4; Heb.9:15 "for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant," RV, here "redemption of" is equivalent to "redemption from," the genitive case being used of the object from which the "redemption" is effected, not from the consequence of the transgressions, but from the transgressions themselves; (d) the deliverance of the believer from the presence and power of sin, and of his body from bondage to corruption, at the coming (the Parousia in its inception) of the Lord Jesus, Rom 8:23; 1Cor 1:30; Eph 1:14; 4:30 See also Propitiation.

In Exodus 21:8, for instance, the term was used "in connection to the gift offered as ransom." But according to Kittel, "the biblical sense of redemption, which became highly significant in the NT," follows after the usage of the word in Daniel 4:34. In this verse, the word clearly refers to redemption. As with the cognates, the range of meaning can also include "a release effected by payment of ransom," "redemption," "deliverance," or "liberation procured by the payment of a ransom." A less common usage, as seen in Philo and the book of Hebrews, implies a "release from a

painful interrogation," which is not too far removed from the more frequent definition.

Historically, ἀπολύτρωσις referred to the "buying back" a slave or captive" or the "sacral manumission of slaves". Without a doubt, in Pauline theology, redemption is an important concept. Paul's usage of ἀπολύτρωσις indicates that redemption is "a present reality" grounded in Christ. Yet at the same time, there is also a "future aspect" of redemption that will find its fulfillment in the second coming of Christ. For this study, it is important to notice the connection that Paul makes between redemption and the work of Christ.

Furthermore, by connecting ἀπολύτρωσις to Christ's death, ἀπολύτρωσις is then tied to the "forgiveness of sins" which immediately follows. The scribes believed that ἀπολύτρωσις was made possible because of Christ's blood. When Paul used ἀπολύτρωσις, it was within a context where slavery was commonplace. Paul's readers would have understood the term as used in social and economic life, so Paul uses that basis for his theological purposes. As it has been properly noted, "Among the Greeks, a ransom was often paid to free slaves." For this reason, it would be unfair to ignore the social-cultural context of the word. It is important to keep this in mind when interpreting ἀπολύτρωσις.

Implications of Ephesians 1:7 for the Contemporary Church in Nigeria

There are two fundamental teachings in regard to the great sacrifice for human transgression paid by Jesus our Lord upon the cross, which appear in this passage: (1) the concept of a ransom paid in order to deliver, and (2) the idea of sins forgiven, remitted, and taken completely away. Jesus Christ himself described his earthly mission in respect of both of these, "giving his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:28), and "shedding his blood for the forgiveness of sins" (Matthew 26:28). "The word Paul used here for "forgiveness" is ἄφεσις, used by him in only two other passages (Romans 4:7; Colossians 1:14). It means 'letting go,' not 'exact payment for.'" As Calvin recognized, "All parts of our salvation are contained in Christ." This is emphasized by the use of ἀπολύτρωσις. Paul writes that we have redemption because of God's beloved Son – through no other means – and in so doing, Paul succinctly summarizes the gospel message. Foulkes also argued that, "Such redemption is found in Christ, not merely through him, but by men coming to live in him." This also means denying oneself and receiving identity with Christ.

Conclusion

The paper reveals that in redemption (expiation), there is a suggestion of "covering" sins by a life for a life that is, a life has to die so that another

might live spiritually. Animal sacrifices was for an atonement for sins under the Old Covenant and was only temporary until Christ's sacrifice which was the glorious ending of a long string of animal sacrifices throughout the Old Testament period. Blood was never really burned on the altar, as was the flesh of the sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice was, and is, the only pure sacrifice. It is then followed that ἀπολύτρωσις includes the idea of payment. In order for men and women to be delivered from darkness, a price had to be paid, and Eph. 1:7 makes clear that Christ was the one who paid the cost. Through His blood, the payment was made, and as a result, we were freed from darkness. The effect which is forgiveness and release from slavery to sin and Satan was necessitated by horrific cost which is the death of God's beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Only after Jesus paid the price could we enter into His kingdom.

Bibliography

- Bauer, Walter and Danker, Frederick William. "Ἀπολύτρωσις" in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- Brown Colin. "Ἀπολύτρωσις" in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975–1985.
- Calvin, John. *Calvin's Commentaries: The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965.
- Coffman, James Burton. "Commentary on Ephesians 1:7" in *Coffman Commentaries on the Old and New Testament*. Abilene: Abilene Christian University Press, 1999.
- Danker, Frederick William. "Ἀπολύτρωσις" in *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Kittel, G. and G. Friedrich. "Ἀπολύτρωσις" in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.
- Pentecost, J. Dwight *Things Which Become Sound Doctrine*. New Jersey: Revell, Westwood, 1965.
- Schaeffer, F. A. *Genesis in Space and Time*, in *The Complete Works of Francis A. Schaeffer*. Wheaton: Crossway, 1985.
- Strong, J. "Ἀπολύτρωσις" *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996.
- Thomas, R. L. "Ἀπολύτρωσις" *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries* Updated edition. Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998.
- Toit, A.B. Du *The New Testament Milieu*. Orion: Halfway House, Electronic Edition.
- Verbrugghe, Verlyn D. "ἄγοράζω" in *New International Dictionary New Testament Theology* Abridged Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.
- Willard H. Taylor. *Beacon Bible Commentary*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 1965.