

“The Grand Theme of Redemption”

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Review

The Doctrine of Revelation: God has revealed Himself to us in two ways: general revelation (creation, common grace, conscience), special revelation (written Word, Living Word—it all points to Jesus).

I gave you 4 questions to ask when reading a passage of the Bible:

1. What does this reveal about the character of God?
2. What does this reveal about my brokenness and need for a Savior?
3. What does this reveal about the person and work of Jesus?
4. What does this reveal about how I should respond to Christ’s love and work for me?

The Bible has two primary functions: revelation and redemption.

John 2:13-17: The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple He found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the moneychangers sitting there. And making a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And He poured out the coins of the moneychangers and overturned their tables. And He told those who sold the pigeons, “Take these things away; do not make my Father’s house a house of trade.” His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”

Psalm 69:9, “Zeal for your house has consumed me.”

Psalm 69:4, “More in number than the hairs of my head are those who hate me without cause.”

John 15:23-25, “Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled, ‘They hated me without cause.’”

Psalm 69:9b, “...the reproaches of these who reproach you have fallen on me.”

Romans 15:3, For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.”

Psalm 69:21, “They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine.”

John 19:28-29, After this, Jesus knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill Scripture), “I thirst.” A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to His mouth.

Psalm 69:25, “May their camp be a desolation; let no one dwell in their tents.”

Acts 1:15-20, In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, “Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry. For it is written in the Book of Psalms, ‘May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it.’”

Four Truths about the Bible

1. God speaks with authority. This is what we mean when we say the Bible is inspired, that it is “God-breathed.” The words of Scripture are His words, therefore they are authoritative.
2. God speaks truthfully. This is what we mean when we say the Bible is inerrant. It does not err in all that it asserts. In everything that it addresses it speaks the truth—doctrine, morality, history, and life sciences. Its assertions are truthful and trustworthy.
3. God speaks to be heard. This is what we mean when we say that the Bible is clear. The God of the Bible is an effective communicator, and His words are not ambiguous. Ordinary people using ordinary means can accurately understand enough of what must be known, believed, and observed for them to be faithful Christians.
4. God’s speech is enough. This is what we mean when we say that the Bible is sufficient. The Scripture alone is our final authority, and therefore sufficient for faith and practice. All that is necessary for salvation and living the Christian life is given to us in the Scriptures. God expects us to be content with what He has told us in the Bible.

The Grand Theme of Redemption

1. The Need for Redemption: Creation and the Fall (Genesis 1-3)

The Bible begins not with redemption but with goodness. God creates a world that is “very good,” and humanity is made in His image to live in fellowship with Him. That fellowship is shattered when Adam disobeys the command of God and falls into sin. This fall results in guilt, corruption and death—both physical and spiritual. From this point forward, redemption becomes necessary. Importantly, redemption is not humanity’s idea—it is God’s response to human rebellion.

2. The Promise of Redemption (Genesis 3:15)

Genesis 3:15, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

Even in judgment, God promises deliverance. The “seed of the woman” who will crush the serpent’s head is often called the *proto-evangelium*, or the first announcement of the gospel. Evil will not have the final word. Redemption will come through a representative human. God Himself will act to save.

3. Redemption through Covenant and Sacrifice

- a. The Patriarchs—God establishes His covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12, 15, 17) in which He promises that “In you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” Redemption is not merely personal, but global.
- b. The Exodus—this is the Old Testament’s central redemption events. God’s people are redeemed from slavery to freedom; from bondage to inheritance; from death to life. God redeems Israel by blood (the Passover) and by power (the Red Sea). This event becomes the lens through with later salvation is understood.

- c. The Law and Sacrificial System—the law reveals God’s holiness and humanity’s inability to save itself. The sacrificial system teaches that sin leads to death, substitution is necessary, and that forgiveness comes through atonement. These anticipate a greater, final redemption.

4. Redemption Anticipated: Kings and Prophets

- a. The Kings. David’s kingship introduces the hope of a righteous ruler who will reign forever. The promise of an eternal throne (2 Samuel 7) ties redemption to this coming King.
- b. The Prophets. They diagnose Israel’s deepest problem not as political oppression but as sinful hearts. They promise a new covenant (Jeremiah 31), a suffering servant who will bear our sin (Isaiah 53), and a new heart and Spirit in God’s people (Ezekiel 36). Redemption is shown to require not just external rescue, but internal transformation.

5. Redemption Accomplished in Christ (The Gospels)

Jesus presents Himself as the fulfillment of all previous redemptive patterns:

- He is the true Passover Lamb
- The greater Exodus
- The Obedient Israel
- The Son of David
- The Suffering Servant

His death is explicitly described in redemptive terms:

- “The Son of Man came to give His life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45)
- At the cross sin is judged, justice is satisfied, mercy is extended, and God and man are reconciled. The resurrection confirms that redemption is effective and complete.

6. Redemption Applied (Acts and the Epistles)

The New Testament letters explain what Christ’s work means:

- Justification: guilt removed
- Adoption: relationship restored
- Sanctification: corruption healed
- Redemption: freedom purchased at a price

Redemption is both already accomplished (Christ has redeemed us) and not yet consummated (we await full redemption).

7. Redemption Completed (Revelation)

The Bible ends where it began, but better. There is a restored creation, God dwelling with His people, and no sin, death or curse. Revelation portrays redemption as cosmic in scope:

“You ransomed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation,”
Revelation 5:9

Redemption is not merely rescue from hell, but the reverse of the curse and the renewal of all things.

How does this impact how we read the Bible?

- Every book fits into the story of redemption, therefore we don't read it in isolation.
- The Old Testament is pointing forward, not backward. This means that we don't read the stories of the Old Testament like a moral handbook, but as God moving history towards Christ.
- We read the commands of the Bible in light of grace, not as a path to salvation. This protects us from legalism and moralism.
- We look for Christ in all the Bible. He is the fulfillment of God's promises, and the climax of God's redemptive work. We ask: how does this text anticipate, explain, or apply Christ's redemption?
- We read the Bible with hope, not despair. God is moving everything towards final restoration, which means sin and death do not have the last word. God finishes what He begins.
- We read the Bible as a call to worship and mission. Worship is gratitude for the grace that redeems, and mission is the proclamation of the good news of a Redeemer.