

Law of Redemption (Kinsman Redeemer)

The Hebrew word *Go'el* is the active participle of a verb meaning to recover or redeem. The term is used over 100 times often rendered "redeemer". A *Kinsman-Redeemer* is a close family member who had the privilege or responsibility to act for a relative in trouble and would pay or redeem what his relative could not. The job of redeemer fell first to: (1) full brothers; then (2) to uncles who were the father's brother; then (3) to cousins, and finally (4) to other blood relatives of the family (**Le.25:48**). The Old Testament stresses that Israel belonged to Jehovah because He redeemed them (**Du.7:7-8; Is.35:9; 51:11; 62:12**). In the book of Ruth, Boaz was the kinsman-redeemer for Ruth whose husband died (**Ru.2:1**). Job endured incredible circumstances, yet he looked past them to a Redeemer Who would be his salvation (**Jb.19:25-26**). Two principles for redemption stand out: (1) they are helpless to free themselves; (2) it takes outside intervention to give them freedom.

Kinsman-Redeemer Requirements:

1. Must be a kinsman (**Le.25:48; 25:25; Ru.3:12-13**)
2. Must Himself be Free (**Ru.4:4-6**)
3. Must be Able to Perform or Pay (**Ru.4:6f**)
4. Must be willing to Perform or Pay (**Ru.4:9**)

Redeemer of a Brother's Liberty (Slavery)

Ex.15:13; 21:30; Le.25:35-55; Du.7:8; 13:5; Ru.2:47-49

If the redeemer's kinsman is under debt (may include crime, war), the *Go'el* may liberate him by satisfying the claims of the custodial party.

The Mosaic Law provided for the rights of slaves. All males were to be set free after 6 years, except for women who had no means to support themselves (**Ex.21:7-8**).

In the New Testament all people are slaves to sin (**Jn.3:18; Ro.3:19; 7:14; 1Co.15:22; Ga.3:10**). The principle of redemption is that we are in bondage to the slavery of sin, yet we are given freedom from its domination (**Jn.8:31-36**).

Redeemer of The Widow

Ex.22:22; Du.25:5-10; Ru.4; Mt.22:24; Mk.12:19; Lu.20:28

(Law of the Levirate Marriage)

This law is important in understanding the book of Ruth. If a close relative died and left a widow without children, he was to marry her to raise up children in her dead husband's name so the family name will not die out (**Ge.38:8**) in Israel (**Du.25:5-7**).

This was not required, but was an obligation that she could put on him. If he chose not to he had to give her his shoe (symbol of shame that he failed to do the kinsman part).

This seems strange to Westerners, but shows the importance of the family line. This practice has the heir preserving the family estate for the widow in her old age. The brother-in-law of the widow would likely already have been married. In this case, the widow would be forced to share in the brother-in-laws' estate rather than that of her deceased husband.

Redeemer For The Land

Le.25:24-34; Ru.; 2:25; 4

If a family estate were sold to strangers, the Kinsman-Redeemer had the right to buy the land or estate back for them. Westerners treat land like a commodity. But Israel had to restore land back to the original clan every 50 years at the Jubilee. However, if the Kinsman had the resources to buy back the land, he could do so at any time. This was a forced sale. The Kinsman-Redeemer had the right to make the redemption.

Redeemer of Blood

Nu.35:12-27; Du.19:6-12; Jo.20:3-9

(Avenger)

Since murder means cutting off a man from his earthly kin and possessions, it was the duty of his relatives to avenge him.

The Bible provided a right to the Kinsman-Redeemer (also called the Avenger) to kill the person responsible for the wrongful death of a relative. This may seem strange to our western and modern sensibilities.

This was not limited to murder, but even to involuntary manslaughter. God provided "Cities of Refuge" where the guilty could flee to and be safe.

However, they had to remain in the city. If they left the city, the avenger was free to slay the guilty.

They could leave the City and go free upon the death of the High Priest.

Redemption And The Firstborn

God commanded Israel to redeem their firstborn. This looked back to the first Passover just prior to Israel being released from slavery in Egypt (**Ex.13:11-15**). All the firstborn were under the sentence of death. The only escape was through the innocent blood of a lamb smeared on the door posts and lintel of each house. The firstborn were doomed to die, but God provided a means for their release. Now they are redeemed and belong to God. A price was set (death) and God provided a means of escape. In the New Testament Jesus Christ is God's firstborn, who God gave to redeem mankind (**Jn.3:16**). The word *αγοράζω* (*agoradzo*) means "to buy; to redeem; to acquire by paying a ransom". It is derived from *agora* meaning "marketplace". Redemption is the basis of our eternal inheritance (**Ep.1:13-14; He.9:15**), and our justification (**Ro.3:23-24**). Plus it includes total forgiveness of sins (**Ep.1:7; Cl.1:14**). Redemption results in adoption (**Ga.4:4-6**). This doctrine is used to orient believers in time of stress (**Jb.19:25**). At the point of redemption we can have peace of mind, stability, and a relaxed mental attitude by knowing that God has paid for and provided for everything.