

A Theological Appraisal of Redemption and its Implications in Contemporary Missions

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Abstract

The core message in missions is Redemption, God's act of reconciling and restoring humans to Himself, which pervades the pages of the scripture from the Old Testament to the New Testament. This paper seeks to theologically assess the concept of Redemption in the Bible, utilizing literature and drawing implications for contemporary missions. The paper reveals the biblical and theological basis for Redemption in history and draws its applications and implications for missions. It also shows that Redemption comes to humans as an embodiment of God's nature of love, mercy and grace, an ultimate sacrifice for humans' sins and failures, an accomplishment of God's plan and purpose of reconciling humankind to Himself and an example for those redeemed to follow in spreading the message of Redemption to others in contemporary missions.

Keywords: Redemption, theology, Missions, reconciliation, sacrifice, contemporary.

Introduction

Redemption is one of the principal Biblical themes expressed profusely in both the Old and New Testaments. Many scholars refer to the whole Bible as the redemption story because of the systematic arrangement of God's plan to bring the fallen man back to fellowship with Him, starting from Genesis 3 till the culmination of the manifestation of the Incarnate God in the New Testament, who practically gave Himself to release, restore

and reinstate man back into His original plan and purpose for creating him.

The theological assessment of Redemption highlights God's nature, plan, and purpose for humans. He created humans for relationship and fellowship, but the fall of humankind distorted the original intent of making them. God, in His love, went all the way through the history of humankind to redeem them from their fallen state, as indicative of his covenantal relationship with the nation Israel that extends eventually to the whole world in Christ Jesus. The picture of the exodus event that leads to the birth of the nation Israel typifies how He wants the world as a whole to be birthed into a new relationship with Him through His redemptive work, having been brought out of the bondage of sin into adoption as His sons, which has many implications for Christian Missions.

This paper focuses on discovering the Biblical basis for Redemption, reviewing the historical development of the doctrine of Redemption as a branch of Soteriology, and elucidating the application of Redemption in contemporary times and its implications for Christian missions in Nigeria.

Biblical Basis for Redemption

Redemption is one of the key themes in the Bible. It links the Old Testament with the New Testament, with a unifying message of God's purpose for humankind despite humans' fall from grace in the Garden of Eden. The Bible is usually called the redemptive story or history.⁴⁰ It is the deliverance of humans out of some imprisonment into a spacious position of becoming heirs of God through Jesus Christ, who serves a third party in favor of the oppressed and in opposition to the oppressor.⁴¹ From the Old Testament to the New Testament, the

⁴⁰Ligon Duncan, "Redemption" in *The Gospel Coalition* Accessed on October 12, 2023, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org>

⁴¹John Stott, *Christian Mission in the Modern World* (USA: Inter Varsity Press, 2008), 151-152.

concept of Redemption is well pronounced and established, with almost every section of the scripture having specific reference to it. God, who creates humankind in His image and likeness, shows His loving disposition towards them as His crown creation. Redemption reveals a special attachment God reserves for humans in His heart, which made Him not abandon humans to the consequence of their disobedience but seek them out even when they stand condemned before Him, the Holy, Righteous, and loving God.

The concept of Redemption in the Bible from the original languages reveals God's continuous and consistent purpose concerning humankind. The Hebrew words connoting Redemption in the Old Testament are (1) "*gah-al*," translated ransom, Kinsman redeemer, deliver, purchase avenger of blood, which means, to redeem according to the oriental law of kinship, being next of kin to buy back a relative's property or marry his widow (Exodus 6:6; 15:13; Ruth 3:13). (2) "*Padda*" translated, redeem, redeemed, delivered, redeeming, rescued, and ransom means to ransom, release, and preserve (Leviticus 27:27, Deuteronomy 9:26; 21:8, Exodus 13:13,15.) (3) "*P'Dooth*" has the same meaning as "*Paddah*," translated distinction, deliverance, division, redeem, Redemption (Exodus 8:22,23; Psalm 111:9, Isaiah 50:2) (4) "*Pah-rak*" meaning to break, deliver, rend, tear in pieces (Genesis 27:40; Psalm 17:2-3; 136:24; 1 Kings 19:11). Likewise, in the New Testament, the Greek words used to connote Redemption are four, namely; (1) "*Lutreo*" translated "redeem" (Luke 24:21; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 1:18; Luke 1:68; 2:38; Heb 9:12), "ransom" (Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:48) means to ransom literally or figuratively. (2) "*Apolutrosis*" meaning the act of ransom in full; riddance, or specifically Christian salvation, translated; deliverance, Redemption (Luke 21:28, Romans 3:24; 8:23; I Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:7, 14; 4:30, Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:15, 11:35). (3) "*Agorazo*" meaning to go to the market, to purchase, and translated "buy" and "redeem" (Matthew 13:44,46; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23; 2 Peter 2:1, Rev 3:18; 5:9; 14:3-4). (4)

“*Exagorazo*” translated “redeem” (Galatians 3:13; 4:5, Ephesians 5:16; Colossians 4:5). Thus, while Redemption in the Old Testament means to ransom, deliver, purchase, avenge, rescue, make a division, to break off or tear in pieces, conceptually and contextually it means similar things in the New Testament like to ransom, deliver, loose by a price, purchase out of the marketplace, or taken out of a forum⁴² Thus, Redemption as an act of God shows the proclamation of His holiness, fulfillment of His righteous decree against the power of sin and demonstration of His love to the sinner.

Furthermore, Thiselton observes three points in the biblical context for Redemption as usually denoting rescue from bondage, peril, or jeopardy by an agent such as a redeemer to a state of freedom, security, new life, or new ownership. Using the “Exodus event” in the Old Testament as a classic example, he notes that God rescued Israel and set her free from bondage in Egypt through wondrous acts to a new life as his people under Moses and eventually under Joshua, as they inherited the promised land. The New Testament builds on the Old Testament presuppositions, with Jesus declaring His Mission of saving people from sin and evil, serving as the agency for Redemption into a new experience (Mark 10:45, Matthew 20:28; 13:44,46).⁴³ Redemption in both the Old and the New Testament presents God as being on a mission to get man back from his fallen state to his rightful place through the redemptive work of His incarnation, who substituted Himself for man and satisfied the complete requirement for his freedom and restoration by His suffering and death on the cross.⁴⁴

⁴²Kevin J Conner, *The Foundations of Christian Doctrine: A Practical Guide to Christian Beliefs* (England: Sovereign World International 1988), 236-237.

⁴³Anthony C. Thiselton, *Systematic Theology*, (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2015), 184,187

⁴⁴Daniel Holcomb, *The Doctrine of Salvation and Support of Missions in Mission Unlimited: Biblical and Doctrinal Foundations of Support of Missions* ed. Morris Ashcraft (Tennessee: Stewardship Commission of The Southern Baptist Convention), 1976, 280-289

Redemption reveals God as the Supreme Being on a well-thought-out mission.

Moreover, Illustrations of Redemption in the Old Testament were well presented in its law in Leviticus chapter 25 and as practiced in Ruth 4 and Jeremiah 32: 6-15, which showcased the function of the Kinsman redeemer who must meet three qualifications: (1) must be a near relative, (2) must be willing to redeem the lost property or buy back relative, and (3) must be able to pay the total price of Redemption. All these foretold Jesus Christ's role as the Kinsman Redeemer, thereby fulfilling the laws of Redemption as (1) the near kinsman redeemer by incarnation through virgin birth (Hebrews 10:5-8), (2) willing to redeem the human race and the inheritance lost through sin (Hebrews 10:5-10, Psalm 40:7-8), (3) able to pay the total redemptive price (Revelation 5:9, 14:3-4; Galatian 3:13; Titus 2:14).⁴⁵ God is orderly and does not carry out His plan arbitrarily, so that man will understand and relate with Him in love and not out of terrifying fear. From the foundation of the world, He had foreseen and planned out how He would redeem humans from the bondage and consequence of their sins. God is timeless, but through the ages, He has worked out His redemption plan and made it more evident from the Old Testament precepts to the New Testament fulfilment, down to the understanding of early church Fathers, till the present age.

Historical Development of the Doctrine of Redemption

The doctrine of Redemption evolved through the ages from the primitive Christian period after the Apostles passed on to the Apostolic Fathers, Apologists, Alexandrian Fathers, Greek Fathers, Western Fathers, the Middle Ages, and Reformers, till contemporary times. In the primitive Christian proclamation, the proclaimed Savior was Jesus Christ, who came to minister in the world, and the ministry involved surrendering His soul to death as a "*lutron*" (ransom) for the deliverance of many from

⁴⁵Conner, 237-238

death.⁴⁶ Their message of salvation immediately after Christ's ascension centered more around deliverance from sin, law, and death, obtained only through faith in Christ's sacrificial death. The high point of their proclamation is the significance of Christ's death on the cross to man and the benefits that it brings to humankind.

The first century presented the rise of the Apostolic Fathers (c. AD 97-140), like Clemens Romanus, who emphasized the result of the redemptive work of Christ as making man become God's possession and that He gave His knowledge, faith, and virtues. His blood has redeemed us since it granted us grace for repentance. In his second epistle, he maintained that Christ had abolished the darkness of foolish creature worship and brought man instead into God's knowledge of truth, imparting to humans his laws. Ignatius' position on Redemption centered on the fact that faith in the death of Christ enabled humanity to escape death, and his suffering brought salvation and peace. Barnabas warned Christians to avoid the dangers of accepting Jewish ordinance, but that Christ's suffering and death had brought forgiveness of sins and deliverance from death. These fathers essentially posited Redemption as Christ is the Redeemer, who revealed the Father (God) and taught the new moral law, but above all, His suffering and death freed humankind from sin and death.⁴⁷ They emphasize Christ's passion and death and its benefits to humanity.

After these early attempts at developing the doctrine of Redemption, heresies arose, gnostic teachings, and misrepresentations of the gospel. The Gnostics attempted to distort the doctrine of Redemption by teaching that it originates in the spirit world and that the Redeemer has many delineations of his person, such as being a celestial eon that did not necessarily suffer in the physical body, as they saw him as

⁴⁶Reinhold Seeberg, *Textbook of the History of Doctrines*, Charles E Hay (trans.) (Michigan: Baker Book House, 1954), 33.

⁴⁷Seeberg, 57-78.

separated from the body described as psychic substance. He was also described as the unbegotten son, both incorporeal and invisible, though he appeared as a man.⁴⁸ Though muted in the times of the apostles, these teachings and heresies resurfaced again with significant influence, which gave rise to the Apologist in the second century.

The Apologists consist of the Antignostic Fathers like Tertullian and Iranæus, who touched on Redemption in response to the Gnostic heresy. Tertullian explained it as tied to covenants. The first was the natural covenant of moral law aimed at redeeming man from the consequences of the fall. The second was the Decalogue given through Moses to save Israel from bondage to idolatry practiced around them. At the same time, the third was Christ's suffering and death in the human body, which was to redeem and restore man to the original image of God. Iranæus posited that Christ came to teach humankind that by being part of the human race through his incarnation as the new Adam, he made man acceptable to God and freed him from the devil, death, and the dominion of sin.⁴⁹ He clearly explained that the original Adam, by disobedience, introduced the principle of sin and death. Still, Christ, by His obedience, reintroduced the principle of life and immortality through His identification with the human race as the natural man born of a woman, able to conquer the devil and that He redeemed man by His blood as the ransom to free him from the devil's enslavement.⁵⁰ The focus of the Apologist was to defend the authenticity of Christ's work on the cross as part of God's plan for Redemption and that He represents man physically, to pay for his sins and bring him into a new relationship with God.

Also, Alexandrian Fathers like Clement Alexandrinus affirmed that Christ surrendered his life to death, became a ransom for humans, and overcame the devil. Still, he did not conceive

⁴⁸ Ibid, 96.

⁴⁹Ibid, 123-131

⁵⁰J.N.D Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (USA: Prince Press, 2003), 173-174

Christ as propitiation but instead emphasized humans' free will as part of the salvation process. Origen, however, presented Christ's death in the light of deliverance from the devil and demons, a sacrifice for sin offered to God, purification from sin, and an advocacy of humans' cause before God the Father. Also, Origen opined that the death of Christ is not only offered to humankind as a model for believers dying on account of piousness but also affects the commencement and progress of man's deliverance from the devil, while the sacrifice of sin offered to God is for the purification of humankind from sin and establishing an advocacy for humans' cause before God the Father.⁵¹ They attempted to build further on the Apologists' work, though their concept did not capture all aspects of the importance of Redemption. The doctrine was still developing and focused on establishing the factual representation, meaning, and significance of Christ's death to man.

By the third century, the formation of Eastern Greek Orthodox theology and Western theology occurred. The doctrine of Redemption for the Greek Orthodox largely came from Athanasius, Methodius, Irenaeus, and Ignatius, who all hold that Redemption brings salvation as Christ became a sacrifice, a ransom brought to the Father, so humans can be free from condemnation, with emphasis on man receiving life and freedom from devil rather than what sin and the devil can do to a humankind. Western theologians like Augustine posit that Christ died as the sacrifice for sin, representing humans, and rose as evidence of new life brought to humans, highlighting three aspects in his propositions: as the sacrifice for sin that brings forgiveness to humans, as deliverance from the devil, and as a pattern and example for believers.⁵² It is worth noting that while the Greek Fathers stressed the restoration of humankind to Divine life, the Western Church prioritized the remission of sins through the sacrificial death of Christ, connecting the doctrine of Redemption with that of Original

⁵¹Seeberg, 154.

⁵²Ibid, 295-361

sin.⁵³ Apart from their emphasis, the positions of Eastern and Western Fathers were not too different from each other in presenting Redemption as the result of Christ's sacrificial death, unlike the doctrines of Christology, Grace, and Trinity, which took center stage in the controversies that enmeshed the Church between the third century and the fifth century.

In the medieval period, Anselm expressed a new aspect of soteriology called ransom teaching, where he referred to Redemption as Jesus paying salvation account to the devil, which Thomas Abelard countered and propounded the theory of Redemption that Christ reveals the love of God through his death that liberated humans not just from sin but also giving them freedom to become the children of God, which many modern theologians subscribed to.⁵⁴ Also, St. Thomas Aquinas added to the discourse by noting that though sin could be abolished as a physical reality, it could be repaired morally by the objective merit of the Redeemer, which, when applied to repentant sinners, enabled them to cooperate with grace towards justification and sanctification.⁵⁵ Also, the redemption theory of medieval times focused on the concept of satisfaction in the salvation work made through the suffering and death of Christ; medieval scholasticism premised Redemption on Christ's death and suffering as a means of satisfaction of God's requirement for a man to be free.

Furthermore, Anselm, Bonaventure, and Aquinas all attempted to establish a doctrine of Redemption that would bring together all the various aspects of the significance of the saving work of Christ. Anselm notes that the life and death of Christ satisfied the sins of men and merited their forgiveness in His obedience

⁵³Elizabeth A Livingstone, "Redemption" in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, Accessed October 14, 2023, <https://www.Oxfordreference.com>

⁵⁴Jerome Siculo Buthelzi, *A Critical Analysis of Salvation in Free Evangelical Assemblies in Swaziland: A Contextualized Theology*, (MTh Thesis, South African Theological Seminary, 2011), 52

⁵⁵Livingstone, <https://www.Oxfordreference.com>

and submission to God's decree as required for man to be free. Abelard opines that Christ bears the punishment of death imposed for sin to liberate men from condemnation. Hugh of St. Victor says that Christ, through His death, satisfied the contempt of man's disobedience and gained access to divine mercy for humankind. Peter Lombard draws from Ambrose and Augustine to assert that Christ releases men from sin and punishment to restore humanity. Bonaventure establishes that the Redeemer must be capable of transmitting justice to humankind for them to be converted from the damage of the fall, the same way that brought all to sin. Aquinas also notes that Christ bore the worst form of criminal death, and with the good He offered and the evil endured, He paid the penalty and satisfied the requirement for the remission of humans' sin. Thus, the critical elements of the Redemption theory of this period are satisfaction for the dishonor of sin, substitution for the punishment imposed, and the restoration of humankind.⁵⁶ Thus, the key themes for developing Redemption Theories in medieval scholasticism are substitution theory, which addresses Christ's death as substitutionary for man; satisfaction theory, which establishes His death as satisfying God's righteous judgment against sin; and restoration theory, which emphasizes the effect of His death as restoring the sinful man to original status and purpose. To date, this tripod is being used to engage discourse on the Redemption doctrine.

Furthermore, the teaching of faith alone by Martin Luther and John Calvin characterized the Reformation Period between the 16th and 17th centuries. They denied the possibility of human cooperation in the redemption process. Still, they emphasized the works of Redemption as resulting in forgiveness of sin and justification by imputation to the sinner the righteousness of Christ, by His suffering and death. Though John Calvin and Jansen proposed that Redemption is exclusive to the elect, Pope

⁵⁶J. Patout Burns, "The Concept of Satisfaction in Medieval Redemption Theory" in *Theological Studies*, 36, 1975, 285-304

Innocent X considered this position as heresy in 1653.⁵⁷ The reformers emphasized faith as the basis of appropriating Christ's sacrificial death that brings Redemption, resulting in salvation, and not religious piety or practices, thereby departing substantially from the earlier position of humans' free will as instrumental to Redemption in medieval times

Contemporary Applications of Redemption and Its Implications for Missions

Douglas Estes notes that for Christians, soteriology is critical for theology because salvation is the fundamental need of all people, and it revolves around the atoning and sacrificial death of Christ Jesus on the cross, coming through the grace of God by faith.⁵⁸ Redemption is one of the soteriology sub-doctrines that practically explains the significance of the suffering and death of Christ to the salvation of humans. The gospel message hinges on the work of Christ on the cross and its import to the sinful condition of humans; the death of Christ and his suffering bring about the question of why it is so necessary for Christ to die in such a way. Nevertheless, the redemption doctrine captures the reason why Christ must die in such a brutal way: to show the gravity of sin. The redemption model of soteriology has become an almost universally accepted interpreter of the effect of Christ's death, where sin and death have become recognized as persons, bought off to allow for the recovery and restoration of sinful humankind and to set them free for them to love and obey God.⁵⁹ It is because His death is a ransom for the sinner's freedom from sin and the powers of the devil, meant to demonstrate His love, wisdom, and capacity for man's deliverance from the devil, which also enables humans to have access to relate with God. Redemption doctrine

⁵⁷Livingstone, <https://www.Oxfordreference.com>

⁵⁸Douglas Etes, "Soteriology" in *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization*
Accessed October 18, 2023,
<https://doi.org/10.1002/9780470670606.wbecc1287>

⁵⁹ John McIntyre, *The Shape of Soteriology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 32

emphasizes more on the freedom believers have through and in Christ.

Therefore, Redemption connotes God's love and plan for humans. Duncan explains Redemption ("*apolutrosis*") as referring supremely to the work of Christ on humankind's behalf, whereby He purchases and ransoms them at the price of His own life and uses it to secure deliverance from the bondage and condemnation of sin. Duncan further illustrates it with a song with the following lines: "He paid a debt He did not owe because we owed a debt we could not pay." He also notes that Redemption is the term used frequently in the New Testament when speaking of the saving work of Christ.⁶⁰ The writer agrees with Duncan because most of the salvation messages of Paul, Peter, and John utilized the death of Christ and its significance as the main thrust for the proclamation of the gospel. Thus, the message of salvation from the angle of the doctrine of Redemption easily connects humankind to God as he understands the significance, relevance, and blessings of Christ's suffering and death, emanating from God's unconditional love for him, thereby stimulating faith in him to accept the gospel by faith readily.

Also, God did not offer Redemption to enslave the redeemed or coerce them by force to come back into a relationship with Him; instead, He offered it freely to make humans respond willingly and lovingly to Him in appreciation of what He has done. God, the Redeemer, sets the prisoner free and gives them perfect freedom; out of gratitude and love for the Redeemer, the redeemed present themselves to Him as His servants (1 Peter 2:16).⁶¹ The positive response of the redeemed rises from understanding the person, plan, and purpose of the Redeemer, to engage in His Mission. Thus, God deals with humans in understanding that leads to the willing acceptance of His

⁶⁰Ligon Duncan, <https://www.thegospelcolation.org>

⁶¹Minnesota Churches of God Conference, "The Seven Doctrines of Salvation"
Accessed October 12, 2023, <https://mncogconference.org>lesson21>

Lordship over them, which also facilitates a cordial and growing relationship between the Redeemer and the ‘redeemed.’

Furthermore, another contemporary application of Redemption is that it offers hope to Christians that hopeless conditions can be redeemed and reversed. Anthony Chute notes that humankind needs Redemption in the face of all the world’s troubles of sin and evil. He defines it as the reversal of the fall, indicating that those who were spiritually dead have become alive while those who were children of wrath are now become children of God (Ephesians 2:4, 1 John 3:1) and that the only person qualified to undo the effect of the fall is Jesus Christ, the God Incarnate.⁶² Indeed, man faces existential problems, but in Redemption, humankind is better positioned to bring God’s intervention in existential crises. Redemption restored the right as sons of God to humans and brought them into an unperishable inheritance in God. It then means that a redeemed human can operate in the providence and power of God to overcome his existential crises.

However, Flavel describes the application of Redemption as twofold: one is primary while the other is secondary. The primary application is God’s act of accomplishing his redemption plan in Christ in His love and justice. At the same time, the secondary is the act of the Holy Spirit in bringing the sinner to conversion in experiencing and enjoying what God has accomplished through sanctification, gifts, and callings, eternity with God, election, regeneration, spiritual blessings, unity of soul with Christ and glorification.⁶³ Redemption shows more about the Triune God and how He works as God the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit in fulfilling His Redemptive plan and purpose.

⁶²Anthony Chute, *What is Redemption? The Important Meaning for Christians from the Bible*, Accessed, October 23, 2023
<https://www.crosswalk.com>

⁶³John Flavel, *The Method of Grace in The Gospel Redemption* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1982), 13-18

Implications for Christian Missions

Hidalgo B Garcia defines Mission as the redeeming act of God towards people and His creation to restore the relationship between humans and Himself in Christ and bring every aspect of life under Christ's Lordship. He further stressed that God's Mission is the Church's Mission.⁶⁴ Likewise, Lockard opines that though the Church is involved in the Mission, in carrying out her missions, she should not be viewed as the starting, goal, and end of the Mission, but rather as the one sent to fulfill the mandate of the Mission; which is to make known the redemptive action of God that paved the way for the Church and Mission.⁶⁵ It shows that the Church must take the gospel of Redemption as a priority as the agent of God to fulfill His Mission in the world. The Church is the redemption herald for the world to let them know the provision of God's deliverance from the bondage of sin, evil, and the devil, release from slavery status, and restoration into His image through the sacrificial death of Christ.

Also, the Church should intentionally engage in activities promoting God's redemptive Mission. The spread of the gospel of Redemption is imperative to reach the people who need this blessing that God procured for humans by Himself. Garcia gives some statistics that indicate that about 3 billion people still need to hear the gospel. About 1.1 billion will not listen to it unless someone takes the gospel to their people group. There are 10,000 unreached people groups in more than 6,500 languages. All these data indicate the need for the Church to see itself more in the light of the Mission of Jesus, which is to redeem the world by His suffering and death.⁶⁶ Holcomb notes that Missions is the "insightful and intensive involvement of the

⁶⁴Hidalgo B Garcia, "Missiology: Some Reflections from Asian Contexts" in *Calvin Theological Journal*, Vol. 44 2009, 95

⁶⁵Anna-Marie Lockard, *Mission in Creative Tension: Paradigm Shifts in Relationship to Church and Mission*, (MTh Final Thesis, South African Theological Seminary, 2006), 47

⁶⁶ Ibid, 60

whole Church” (newly redeemed humanity) in the Redemption of its immediate situation by becoming responsible for it and addressing the “redemptive” task at hand.⁶⁷ The Nigerian Church in Missions should prioritize reaching the unreached groups in their contexts and languages with the gospel that Christ has redeemed them from their sinful self and demonic rule to become children of God.

Also, in carrying out the missions, Christians must saturate them with love so that they will not contradict the nature of God that brought about Redemption. Sin is central to human history, and the very need of humankind is to be free from sin, which made God manifest His love in terms of Redemption. Thus, God directed His love for humans towards delivering man from sin, which makes His purpose a redemptive and missionary purpose that gives birth to the salvation plan for the whole world.⁶⁸ Daila notes that Missions as the heartbeat of God is best understood when His redemptive acts are seen as a preparation for a redeemed people (Israelites) to witness to the nations, His person, and provisions, particularly the provision of Redemption.⁶⁹ The Missions that will project God’s redemptive love should reflect His passion from the Missioners for humanity. It should radiate the unconditional love that made Christ sacrifice Himself for humankind.

Furthermore, Eddie Arthur also notes that “The Cross shapes mission” and that at the very center of “missional engagement with humanity is a profound humility and a willingness to suffer rejection and pain” epitomized through Christ’s suffering and death for the Redemption of man, which was an inescapable part of the Mission of God.⁷⁰ It implies that doing

⁶⁷Holcomb, 289

⁶⁸Charles R. Watson, *God’s Plan for World Redemption: An Outline Study of the Bible and Missions* (Philadelphia: The Board of Foreign Mission of the United Presbyterian Church of North America), 23

⁶⁹Eliazar Baba Daila, *Missions: The Heartbeat of God* (Jos: Challenge Press, 2018), 83

⁷⁰Eddie Arthur, *Missio Dei: The Mission of God*, (n.p.: 2009), 5-6.

Christian missions in Nigeria and everywhere on the part of individual believers involves unavoidable sacrifices and suffering. It costs Christ His life for believers to be redeemed. In that case, those carrying the gospel of Redemption must be ready to partake of His sufferings and let go of some of their comforts in 'giving' and 'going' so that the unsaved souls will benefit from the redemptive work of Christ.

Another implication is that Christian missions in Nigeria should be holistic and not just target souls' salvation only. The country has many existential challenges that require the Church to carry out its tasks to reflect the redemptive love of Christ. Christian Missions should proactively engage in transformative and restorative missions through practical social actions, assisting those who have suffered calamities, delivering and empowering those under the ravaging power of poverty, and responding to the youths yearning for meaningful and comfortable lives.

Conclusion

The doctrine of Redemption gave a theological solid backing to the missiological concept of proclaiming the gospel of Redemption to the world. It is one of the most robust bases for the proclamation of the salvation of humankind and the chief revelator of God's loving and sovereign plan and purpose to execute His Mission for man, also called the Redemption story, as established in the Old and the New Testaments. Missions practitioners must understand the concept of Redemption biblically, follow its historical development through the ages, and apply it to the contemporary context while being aware of its implications for those who proclaim the gospel of Redemption.

Therefore, God planned Redemption, facilitated it through the history of humankind and committed its gospel to the Redeemed humanity to spread it to those who are yet to be redeemed. The Redeemer brought complete Redemption by

satisfying its requirement, substituting Himself as the sacrifice needed to restore humankind and gave grace and inspiration to man to receive the Redemption and understand its ramifications in order for those redeemed to engage those who are yet to receive it through acts, activities and proclamation of the redemptive gospel to fulfil the Mission of the Redeemer.

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