

Dr. Tiberius Rata, Old Testament Theology, Session 4, God as Redeemer Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Rata, Old Testament Theology, Session 4, God as Redeemer, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Rata's Old Testament Theology session four explores the concept of God as Redeemer, beginning with its prominent portrayal in the **Exodus event**. The lecture examines the **Hebrew and Greek terms for redemption**, noting their evolving meanings from Old Testament contexts like land and property to the New Testament emphasis on **Christ's atoning death and resurrection**. The session highlights the **conflict in Exodus as Yahweh's demonstration of sovereignty over the Egyptian gods**, further connecting Old Testament notions of redemption, such as the kinsman-redeemer, to the **ultimate redemption found in Jesus Christ**.

2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Rata, Old Testament Theology, Session 4 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Theology → OT Theology, Rata).



Rata_OTTheology_Session04.mp3

3. Briefing Document: Rata, Old Testament Theology, Session 4, God as Redeemer

Briefing Document: God as Redeemer in the Old Testament

Subject: An overview of Dr. Rata's lecture on God as Redeemer in Old Testament Theology, focusing on key Hebrew terms, the Exodus event, Old Testament concepts of redemption, and the progression of the theme leading to the New Testament.

Main Themes and Important Ideas:

This session by Dr. Rata explores the concept of God as Redeemer in the Old Testament, emphasizing the Exodus as the central redemptive act. The lecture traces the meaning and evolution of redemption through key Hebrew terms, its application in various Old Testament contexts (land, people, and spiritual deliverance), and how this understanding lays the groundwork for the New Testament concept of redemption through Jesus Christ.

Key Points and Supporting Quotes:

1. Introduction to God as Redeemer and the Exodus:

- The session focuses on "God as a Redeemer," with the "greatest act of redemption from the Old Testament" being "the exodus event."
- Dr. Rata suggests viewing the Exodus in terms of conflict: "Yahweh versus Pharaoh, Yahweh versus the gods of Egypt, and sometimes it's Yahweh versus Israel."

1. Hebrew Terms for Redemption:

- Two primary Hebrew terms for redemption are introduced:
- **gaal:** "to redeem or to act as a kinsman," exemplified in the book of Ruth with the "kinsman, Redeemer, and the goel."
- **pada:** "to buy off or to ransom."
- Dr. Rata notes the New Testament Greek equivalents: *lutromai* (to set free or redeem) and *agorazo* (to actually choose to buy in the marketplace). He highlights that the meanings of these terms evolve over time from their usage in the law.

1. Exodus as Yahweh's Revelation and Victory over Egyptian Gods:

- The Exodus is presented as Yahweh revealing himself as the true God: "Everything that's happening here in the book of Exodus is Yahweh showing his people that he is the true God." This connects to God's self-introduction in Exodus 3:14 as "I am who I am."
- The plagues are interpreted as a direct confrontation with and judgment upon the "gods and goddesses of Egypt."
- **Exodus 12:12 is highlighted as a key verse:** "I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborns in the land, both man and beast. And on all the gods of Egypt, I will execute judgments." This emphasizes the purpose of the plagues as Yahweh versus the Egyptian deities.
- The 10th plague and the establishment of Passover are seen as particularly significant, with Passover being a "finger pointing towards Christ, who is our Passover lamb."
- Dr. Rata systematically pairs each of the first five plagues with a specific Egyptian deity, illustrating Yahweh's powerlessness of these false gods (e.g., the Nile turning to blood as a slap in the face of Amun, the frog plague against Heket, etc.).
- The inability of the Egyptian magicians to replicate the plague of gnats is noted, with a quote from Philip Rykens suggesting this shows the limits of Satan's power: "since Pharaoh's magicians were servants of Satan, the plagues of gnats clearly show that Satan's power has its limits."

1. Old Testament Understanding of Redemption Beyond the Exodus:

- Before the Exodus narrative, redemption in the Old Testament primarily related to the "redemption of land or property" and the care of the "poor and the needy" as seen in Leviticus 25.
- The Israelites were seen as "tenants on God's land," and the concept of the Goel (kinsman redeemer) was crucial for redeeming sold property or a poor relative.
- The Year of Jubilee is mentioned as a mechanism for restoring land to its original owner, highlighting God's concern for the poor. Dr. Rata clarifies that biblical redemption in this context was distinct from the American system of slavery and aimed at protecting the vulnerable.

- Redemption also applied to the "firstborns," who were to be holy to the Lord but could be redeemed for five shekels. Hannah's dedication of Samuel is given as an example where redemption did not occur.
- The redemption of a "deceived relative's wife" as seen in Leviticus and exemplified in the story of Ruth, where the Goel plays a central role. Boaz ultimately acts as the kinsman redeemer for Ruth, linking to the lineage of David and Jesus.
- The role of the Goel in the "cities of refuge" (Numbers 35, Deuteronomy 19) for unintentional manslaughter is also mentioned.

1. **Development of the Concept of Redemption in Wisdom Literature:**

- Dr. Rata points out a shift in the understanding of redemption in the "wisdom literature, to Job, and to the Psalms." Here, redemption moves "from land and people to actual redemption from enemies," "from the wicked," "from death," and "from punishment for sin."
- This signifies a "development in the language" where the meaning of redemption evolves beyond its legalistic connotations in the earlier books. Psalm 103 is cited as an example of redemption from death.

1. **God's Promise of Redemption in Exodus:**

- Prior to the plagues, God explicitly promises the Israelites redemption from slavery in **Exodus 6:6-8**: "I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from the slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment. And I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God."
- This passage emphasizes Yahweh as Israel's Goel, acting eschatologically to deliver them. Isaiah is mentioned as further developing this idea of God as the redeemer.

1. **New Testament Understanding of Redemption Through Christ:**

- The New Testament concept of redemption is presented as distinct from Leviticus but aligned with the themes in Psalms and Job, with a crucial difference: it always refers to "Jesus's death and resurrection and what he has accomplished for us."
- "Jesus came to accomplish our redemption. The giving of his life was the ransom price, and the ransom was a substitutionary in character."

- Several New Testament verses are cited to support this:
 - **Mark 10:45:** "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."
 - **Luke 1:68:** "...he has visited us and accomplished redemption for his people."
 - **Galatians 3:13:** "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law."
 - **Galatians 4:4-5:** "...God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."
 - **1 Corinthians 1:30:** Jesus became "our wisdom and our righteousness and redemption."
 - **Romans 3:24:** Justification "as a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus."
 - **Ephesians 1:7:** "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses."
 - **1 Peter 1:18-19:** Redemption "not with perishable things like silver or gold...but with the precious blood of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ."
 - **Titus 2:14:** Jesus "gave himself that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for himself a people for his own possession, zealous for good works."
 - **Hebrews 9:11-12:** Christ entered the holy place "not with the blood of goats and calves, but through his own blood, he entered the holy place once and for all, having obtained eternal redemption."
 - **Hebrews 9:13-14:** The blood of Christ cleanses our conscience from dead works to serve the living God, a greater redemption than that achieved by animal sacrifices.
1. **Concluding Statement:**
- Dr. Rata concludes by reiterating that "God, the creator, is the God, the covenant maker, and the covenant keeper, and he's also the redeemer."

Significance and Implications:

Dr. Rata's lecture provides a comprehensive overview of the concept of redemption in the Old Testament, highlighting its historical and theological development.

Understanding the Old Testament usage of terms like *gaal* and *pada*, the significance of the Exodus as a demonstration of God's redemptive power against false gods, and the broadening of the concept in later Old Testament books is crucial for appreciating the richer and more profound understanding of redemption offered in the New Testament through Jesus Christ. The lecture emphasizes the continuity of God's character as Redeemer throughout Scripture, culminating in the ultimate redemptive act of Christ's sacrifice. The discussion also cautions against anachronistic interpretations of Old Testament practices like redemption of persons.

Further Questions/Considerations:

- How do the social and economic contexts of ancient Israel inform their understanding of redemption?
- What are the specific nuances of the terms *gaal* and *pada* in different Old Testament contexts?
- How does the "warrior God" imagery in Exodus connect with the concept of God as Redeemer?
- In what ways does the Old Testament concept of covenant relate to God's role as Redeemer?
- How does the New Testament build upon and transform the Old Testament understanding of redemption?

4. Study Guide: Rata, Old Testament Theology, Session 4, God as Redeemer

Study Guide: God as Redeemer in the Old Testament

Key Concepts:

- **Redemption (Old Testament):** Primarily understood in the context of reclaiming property, land, or family members (kinsman-redeemer - *goel*) and being bought out of a difficult situation (*pada*).
- **Exodus Event:** The central act of redemption in the Old Testament, demonstrating God's power and commitment to his people's freedom from slavery in Egypt.
- **Yahweh vs. the Gods of Egypt:** The plagues served as a direct confrontation, demonstrating Yahweh's sovereignty and the impotence of Egyptian deities.
- **Purpose of the Plagues:** To show Israel and Egypt that Yahweh is the one true God and to execute judgment on the false gods of Egypt.
- **Passover:** The culminating event of the tenth plague, prefiguring the ultimate redemption through Jesus Christ, the Passover Lamb.
- **Redemption of Land and Property:** Levitical laws addressed the redemption of sold property by a kinsman-redeemer to protect families and maintain land ownership within the community.
- **Redemption of People:** Laws also addressed the redemption of individuals who had sold themselves into servitude due to poverty, with provisions for their eventual release, especially during the Year of Jubilee.
- **Firstborn Redemption:** The requirement to dedicate the firstborn son to God, with the option of redeeming him through a monetary offering.
- **Kinsman-Redeemer (Goel):** A male relative with the responsibility to redeem family members, property, or avenge a blood crime. Seen in the context of land redemption (Leviticus), wife redemption (Ruth), and avenging a death (Numbers, Deuteronomy).
- **Development of Redemption Theology:** In later Old Testament books (Job, Psalms), the concept of redemption expands to include deliverance from enemies, death, and the consequences of sin.

- **Redemption (New Testament):** Primarily understood through the lens of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, where he acts as the ultimate Redeemer, paying the ransom for humanity's sin and offering eternal freedom.

Quiz:

1. What are the two primary Hebrew words used for "redemption" in the Old Testament, and what are their basic meanings? Provide an example of where one of these terms appears prominently.
2. According to the source, what is considered the greatest act of redemption in the Old Testament, and what does it reveal about God's character?
3. Describe the three main conflicts some scholars identify when studying the book of Exodus. Which conflict is highlighted as the purpose of the plagues, and what was God's aim in this conflict?
4. How did redemption in the Old Testament manifest in the context of land or property ownership among the Israelites, according to Leviticus 25? What was the significance of the Year of Jubilee in this system?
5. Explain how the concept of a kinsman-redeemer (*goel*) functioned in Old Testament society, providing at least two different scenarios where a *goel* would be called upon to act.
6. How did the understanding of redemption seem to evolve or expand beyond the legal contexts of land and family in the wisdom literature (Job, Psalms)? Give an example of this shift in meaning.
7. According to Exodus 6:6-8, what specific promises did God make to the Israelites regarding redemption from their bondage in Egypt?
8. How does the New Testament understanding of redemption differ from its primary meaning in the Old Testament? What is the central event and the primary agent of this redemption?
9. Based on the New Testament passages cited, what are some of the key benefits or outcomes of the redemption accomplished through Jesus Christ? Provide at least two examples.
10. How does the author connect the Old Testament concept of God as Redeemer, particularly in the Exodus, to the character of God as creator and covenant maker?

Answer Key:

1. The two primary Hebrew words are *gaal*, meaning "to redeem" or "to act as a kinsman," and *pada*, meaning "to buy off" or "to ransom." The term *gaal* appears frequently in the book of Ruth in relation to the kinsman-redeemer.
2. The greatest act of redemption in the Old Testament is the exodus event. This event reveals God as the warrior God who powerfully intervenes to deliver his people from oppression, demonstrating his commitment to his covenant and his sovereignty.
3. The three main conflicts are Yahweh versus Pharaoh, Yahweh versus the gods of Egypt, and Yahweh versus Israel. The conflict highlighted as the purpose of the plagues is Yahweh versus the gods of Egypt, with God's aim being to demonstrate that he is the only true God and to execute judgment on the false deities.
4. In the context of land or property, redemption involved a near relative (kinsman-redeemer) buying back land that a poor brother had been forced to sell. The Year of Jubilee ensured that sold land would eventually return to the original owner or their descendants, preventing permanent dispossession.
5. A kinsman-redeemer had the responsibility to redeem a relative who had sold themselves into servitude due to poverty, paying off their debt. Another scenario was in the book of Ruth, where the *goel* had the option to redeem the widow of a deceased relative and the family's land, ensuring the continuation of the family line.
6. In the wisdom literature, the concept of redemption broadened to include deliverance from personal enemies and the wicked, as seen in the prayers of Job and the Psalmist. It also began to encompass the idea of being rescued from death and the punishment for sin, indicating a more spiritual dimension.
7. God promised to bring the Israelites out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, deliver them from slavery, and redeem them with an outstretched arm and great acts of judgment. He also promised to take them as his people, be their God, and bring them into the land he swore to their ancestors.
8. The New Testament understanding of redemption centers on Jesus Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection as the means by which humanity is set free from sin and its consequences. Unlike the Old Testament focus on tangible things or societal obligations, New Testament redemption is primarily spiritual and eternal.

9. Key benefits of redemption through Christ include forgiveness of trespasses (Ephesians 1:7), being justified by grace (Romans 3:24), being redeemed from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13), and being purified from every lawless deed to become God's own possession (Titus 2:14).
10. The author presents God as the creator who establishes a covenant with his people, and the act of redemption in the Exodus is portrayed as God fulfilling his covenant promises to deliver them. This act of redemption demonstrates his power and faithfulness, reinforcing his identity as the sovereign God who acts on behalf of his creation and covenant partners.

Essay Format Questions:

1. Analyze the significance of the Exodus event as the foundational act of redemption in the Old Testament, discussing its various facets and implications for Israel's understanding of God.
2. Compare and contrast the Old Testament understanding(s) of redemption with the New Testament understanding, highlighting the key differences in focus, means, and ultimate goal.
3. Discuss the role and responsibilities of the kinsman-redeemer (*goel*) in Old Testament society, illustrating its importance through examples from the Pentateuch and the book of Ruth.
4. Evaluate the purpose and impact of the ten plagues in Egypt, considering them not only as acts of deliverance for Israel but also as a confrontation between Yahweh and the gods of Egypt.
5. Trace the development of the concept of redemption throughout the Old Testament, examining how its meaning evolved from concrete, socio-economic contexts to more abstract and spiritual dimensions in later writings.

Glossary of Key Terms:

- **Redemption:** The act of buying back, rescuing, or setting free from bondage, obligation, or penalty. In the Old Testament, it often involved reclaiming property or family members. In the New Testament, it primarily refers to deliverance from sin and death through Jesus Christ.
- **Gaal:** A Hebrew verb meaning "to redeem," "to act as a kinsman," or "to avenge." It is associated with the role of the *goel*.
- **Pada:** A Hebrew verb meaning "to buy off" or "to ransom," often referring to a monetary payment for release.
- **Lutromai:** A Greek verb meaning "to set free" or "to redeem," frequently used in the New Testament to describe Christ's redemptive work.
- **Agorazo:** A Greek verb meaning "to buy in the marketplace" or "to purchase," used in the New Testament in the context of Christ purchasing believers out of slavery to sin.
- **Exodus:** The second book of the Bible, recounting the Israelites' liberation from slavery in Egypt under the leadership of Moses.
- **Yahweh:** The personal name of God in the Old Testament, often translated as "LORD" in English Bibles.
- **Goel:** The Hebrew term for a "kinsman-redeemer," a male relative who had the responsibility to redeem family members, property, or avenge a blood crime.
- **Plagues (of Egypt):** Ten catastrophic events sent by God to afflict Egypt in order to persuade Pharaoh to release the Israelites from slavery.
- **Passover:** The Jewish festival commemorating the Exodus from Egypt, particularly the night when God "passed over" the houses of the Israelites marked with the blood of a sacrificed lamb.
- **Year of Jubilee:** A sabbatical year observed every 50 years in ancient Israel, during which debts were canceled, slaves were freed, and land was returned to its original owners.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the "end times" or the final destiny of humanity and the world. In the context of redemption, it can refer to God's ultimate act of deliverance and restoration.

5. FAQs on Rata, Old Testament Theology, Session 4, God as Redeemer, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: God as Redeemer in the Old Testament

1. What are the primary Hebrew terms used for "redemption" in the Old Testament, and how do they differ? The Old Testament primarily uses two Hebrew terms for redemption: *gaal* and *pada*. *Gaal* means "to redeem" or "to act as a kinsman." It often appears in contexts where a relative steps in to fulfill an obligation, such as redeeming property or a family member. The book of Ruth provides a prominent example with the concept of the *goel*, the kinsman-redeemer. *Pada*, on the other hand, means "to buy off" or "to ransom," suggesting a purchase or payment to secure release. In the New Testament, the Greek terms *lutromai* (to set free or redeem) and *agorazo* (to buy in the marketplace) are used. The meanings of these terms evolve over time, reflecting different aspects of redemption in various contexts, from legal obligations to deliverance from enemies and ultimately, in the New Testament, to salvation through Christ.

2. What was the significance of the Exodus event in the Old Testament's understanding of God as Redeemer? The Exodus event is presented as the quintessential act of redemption in the Old Testament. It serves as the primary lens through which Israel understood God as their Redeemer. In this event, God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, demonstrating his power and commitment to his people. The Exodus narrative highlights God as a "warrior God" who confronts and defeats Pharaoh and the gods of Egypt. This act of liberation established the pattern for understanding God's redemptive work throughout the Old Testament and pointed forward to future acts of deliverance.

3. How did the concept of redemption relate to land and property ownership in ancient Israel? In the Old Testament, redemption was closely tied to the concept of land and property, which were ultimately considered to belong to God, with the Israelites acting as tenants. If an Israelite became poor and had to sell their land, a close relative, the *goel* (kinsman-redeemer), had the responsibility and right to buy back the land to keep it within the family. This system also included provisions for the Year of Jubilee, during which sold land was to return to the original owner. These regulations were intended to protect the poor and prevent the permanent loss of ancestral land, reflecting God's concern for the vulnerable in an agrarian society.

4. How did the plagues in Egypt demonstrate God's role as Redeemer, particularly in relation to the gods of Egypt? The plagues sent upon Egypt were not merely acts of judgment against Pharaoh but also a direct confrontation between Yahweh and the gods of Egypt. Each plague targeted specific Egyptian deities, demonstrating Yahweh's superior power and the impotence of these false gods. For example, the turning of the Nile into blood challenged Amun, the protector of the Nile, while the plague of frogs mocked Heket, the goddess of childbirth and fertility. The tenth plague, the death of the firstborn, led to the establishment of Passover, which foreshadowed Christ as the ultimate Passover lamb. The purpose of these plagues was to reveal Yahweh as the only true God, delivering his people from the oppressive power of Egypt and its idols.

5. Besides land, what other aspects of life in the Old Testament were associated with redemption? Beyond the redemption of land and property, the concept of redemption in the Old Testament also extended to people. This included the redemption of a poor relative who had to sell themselves into servitude, with provisions for their eventual release, particularly during the Year of Jubilee. Additionally, the firstborn sons, who were considered holy to the Lord, could be redeemed through a financial payment. The role of the kinsman-redeemer also applied to situations such as redeeming the wife of a deceased relative to continue the family line, as seen in the book of Ruth, and in the context of unintentional manslaughter, where the *goel* had a role related to the cities of refuge.

6. How did the understanding of redemption evolve from the legal context of the early Old Testament to the wisdom literature and later prophetic books? Over time, the concept of redemption in the Old Testament underwent a significant development. While initially rooted in the legal and social contexts of land, property, and family obligations, the theme of redemption expanded in the wisdom literature (like Job and Psalms) and the prophetic books (like Isaiah). In these later writings, redemption began to encompass deliverance from enemies, the wicked, death, and even the punishment for sin. This shift reflects a growing understanding of God's saving actions beyond the material realm, hinting at a more spiritual and comprehensive form of redemption.

7. How does the New Testament understanding of redemption relate to and differ from the Old Testament concepts? The New Testament understanding of redemption builds upon the Old Testament foundation but centers decisively on the person and work of Jesus Christ. While the Old Testament highlighted God as the Redeemer through events like the Exodus and provisions for the vulnerable, the New Testament proclaims Jesus' death and resurrection as the ultimate act of redemption. The New Testament emphasizes that Jesus gave his life as a ransom to redeem humanity from sin, the curse of the law, and death itself. The imagery of buying back and setting free is retained, but the focus shifts to a spiritual and eternal redemption accomplished through Christ's sacrifice. Key themes include redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, and adoption as children of God.

8. What does the concept of God as Redeemer teach us about God's character and his relationship with humanity? The concept of God as Redeemer, as revealed throughout the Old and New Testaments, underscores several key aspects of God's character. It demonstrates his love, compassion, and commitment to his people, particularly the vulnerable and oppressed. God's role as Redeemer showcases his power and sovereignty over earthly forces and false gods. Furthermore, it highlights his justice and faithfulness to his covenant promises. Ultimately, God's redemptive actions reveal his desire for a deep and intimate relationship with humanity, seeking to deliver them from all forms of bondage and bring them into his presence for service and worship.