

Jeremiah 31:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he.

Analysis

This verse uses two crucial redemption terms. 'Redeemed' (ga'al, גָּאַל) refers to the kinsman-redeemer who buys back family property or redeems enslaved relatives (as Boaz did for Ruth). 'Ransomed' (padah, פָּדָה) means to pay a price for release from bondage. Both terms emphasize that Israel cannot free themselves—they need a Redeemer who is both willing and able to pay the price for their release.

The phrase 'from the hand of him that was stronger than he' acknowledges the reality: Babylon was too powerful for Israel to defeat. Only one stronger than Babylon could redeem Israel—namely, God Himself. This establishes a crucial theological principle: humanity is enslaved to powers we cannot overcome (sin, death, Satan), and we need a Redeemer stronger than our captors. Christ is this Redeemer, stronger than all opposing powers (Colossians 2:15).

The redemption language here directly connects to Christ's work. We were enslaved to sin, sold under its power (Romans 7:14), unable to free ourselves. Christ paid the ransom price with His own blood (1 Peter 1:18-19), redeeming us from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13). He is the kinsman-redeemer who, being truly human, could redeem humanity, and being God, was stronger than all opposing powers.

Historical Context

Cyrus of Persia was the instrument God used to redeem Israel from Babylon. Isaiah prophesied that God would call Cyrus 'my shepherd' and 'his anointed' (Isaiah 44:28; 45:1), though Cyrus himself did not know the LORD. God raised up one stronger than Babylon to accomplish Israel's redemption. Yet Cyrus was merely a type pointing to Christ, the ultimate Redeemer who defeated powers far greater than any earthly empire.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do the redemption terms 'redeemed' and 'ransomed' illuminate what Christ accomplished on our behalf?
2. What does it mean that we were enslaved to powers 'stronger than us,' and how does this magnify Christ's redemptive work?
3. In what ways does God's redemption of Israel from Babylon serve as a type or foreshadowing of Christ's redemption of His people from sin?

Interlinear Text

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|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|-----------|--------------|---------------------|
| כִּי | פָּדָה ה' | יְהוָה ה' | אֶת | יַעֲקֹב ב' | וְגָלָל ו' |
| H3588 | hath redeemed | For the LORD | H853 | Jacob | and ransomed |
| | H6299 | H3068 | | H3290 | H1350 |
| <hr/> | | | | | |
| מִיָּד | קִיּוֹנוֹ | יָדוֹ קִיּוֹנוֹ | מִמָּוֶן: | | |
| him from the hand | of him that was stronger | | H4480 | | |
| H3027 | H2389 | | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 48:20 (Redemption): Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob.

Isaiah 44:23 (Redemption): Sing, O ye heavens; for the LORD hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the LORD hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel.

Titus 2:14 (Redemption): Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Isaiah 49:24 (Parallel theme): Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?

Psalms 142:6 (Parallel theme): Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low: deliver me from my persecutors; for they are stronger than I.

Jeremiah 15:21 (Redemption): And I will deliver thee out of the hand of the wicked, and I will redeem thee out of the hand of the terrible.

Matthew 12:29 (Parallel theme): Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

Matthew 20:28 (Redemption): Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

