

Lamentations 3:58

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life.

Analysis

Grateful testimony: "**O Lord, thou hast pleaded the causes of my soul; thou hast redeemed my life.**" The Hebrew ravta Adonai rivei nafshi ga'alta chayayi (רָבָתָךְ אֲדֹנָי רִיבֵּי נַפְשֵׁי גָּאֵלָתֶךָ) uses legal and redemption imagery. Ravta (רָבָתָךְ, "you have pleaded") comes from riv (רִיבֵּ), meaning to plead a case, contend, or advocate. God acts as legal advocate for the speaker's soul (nafshi, נַפְשֵׁי).

"Thou hast redeemed my life" uses ga'alta chayayi (גָּאֵלָתֶךָ). Ga'al (גָּאֵל) is the kinsman-redeemer term, referring to a family member who buys back relatives from slavery or poverty (Leviticus 25:25-55, Ruth 4). Applied to God, it emphasizes His covenant relationship with His people and His action to restore them. Chayayi (חַיִּים, "my life") refers to physical life preserved from death.

Theologically, this verse celebrates God's dual role as Advocate and Redeemer. As Advocate, He pleads our case against accusers (Job 16:19-21, Romans 8:33-34). As Redeemer, He buys us back from slavery to sin and death (Exodus 6:6, Isaiah 43:1, Galatians 3:13, 1 Peter 1:18-19). Christ fulfills both roles perfectly—our Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1) and our Redeemer through His blood (Ephesians 1:7, Revelation 5:9).

Historical Context

God pleading Jeremiah's cause refers to vindication despite false accusations. Jeremiah was charged with treason for prophesying Jerusalem's fall (Jeremiah

37:13-14, 38:4). His message seemed unpatriotic, yet it was God's true word. By orchestrating rescue from the cistern and preserving Jeremiah through Jerusalem's fall, God demonstrated His approval of the prophet. Jeremiah's survival and witness vindicated him against accusers.

The redemption language recalls Israel's exodus from Egypt. Exodus 6:6 declares: "I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments." Deuteronomy 7:8 explains the motivation: "because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen." Similarly, exile wasn't permanent—God would redeem Israel from Babylonian captivity.

This redemption came through Cyrus (Isaiah 45:13), but its fullest meaning points to spiritual redemption through Christ. Job expressed faith: "I know that my redeemer liveth" (Job 19:25). Psalm 130:7-8 promises: "Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." Christ accomplishes this comprehensive redemption—from sin, death, and judgment.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does God pleading our causes as an Advocate demonstrate His personal involvement in defending His people?
2. What does the kinsman-redeemer concept teach about God's covenant relationship with us and His obligation to buy us back?
3. In what ways does Christ fulfill both the Advocate role (1 John 2:1) and Redeemer role (Galatians 3:13, Titus 2:14)?
4. How should knowing God has pleaded our causes and redeemed our lives shape our confidence and gratitude?

Interlinear Text

תְּנַאֲכֵל	נַפְשִׁי	רִיבִּי	אָדָנִי	בְּבִתְּךָ	תְּנַאֲכֵל	תְּנַאֲכֵל
thou hast pleaded	O Lord	the causes	of my soul	thou hast redeemed	my life	

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Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 51:36 (References Lord): Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will plead thy cause, and take vengeance for thee; and I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry.

Psalms 103:4 (Redemption): Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

Jeremiah 50:34 (Redemption): Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name: he shall throughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

Psalms 71:23 (Redemption): My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee; and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.