# Redemption

Welcome to my website, www.redemption.org.nz
My name is Paul Duncan. I come from New Zealand. This is a non-commercial website for promoting and resourcing small groups in local community. Its theme is redemption. Redemption means taking a bad situation and turning it around and making something good out of it. It is a bit like the time I parked my car in the wrong place. When I came back it was gone, towed to the Council car park. I paid my $65 and redeemed my car. We talk about redeeming a voucher.

Redemption is the theme of most big stories. There is a bad situation, usually a hero, and, by the time the story is through, the hero has turned it around and made it good. That is redemption. We love these stories because they resonate in our hearts. That is the way it should be. Life does not always turn out the way it does on the movies. However, there is a cosmic mega narrative at work in our world. It is a story of redemption of biblical proportions. It is a story on a global scale which starts at the beginning of humanity. Its hero appeared in the centre of human history and it ends in glorious triumph at the end of the current epoch of human history. It is the cosmic story of redemption.

Let me give you the trailer. In the beginning God made our first parents and put them on the earth which He had made for them. They started out on good terms with their maker but decided to go it alone and do their own thing. Bad idea. They had two sons – Cain and Abel. Both sons made a sacrifice to God who approved of Abel’s animal sacrifice but not Cain’s fruit. Cain got jealous, angry and murdered his brother. God called Cain to account. He told him, “Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground.”[[1]](#footnote-2)

If we fast forward 4000 years, we see the history of human expansion written in blood as despots send their boys to fight their wars. However, threaded through history, is a tiny nation of people whom God prepared and placed in a land which, to this day, is the centre of global geography: Israel. Into this people God sent His Son to be born of a virgin – He would be a God-man. His birth marks the beginning of our time scale: AD. His name was Jesus. He lived a perfect, sinless life but was a challenge to the ruling power brokers, so they condemned Him to die by crucifixion on a Roman cross. He was called the lamb of God and, like Abel’s sacrifice, was approved by God. It was all part of God’s plan – God’s mega narrative to redeem humanity.

The blood of God’s Son, Jesus, also cried out from the ground. However, in a dramatic twist to the plot, instead of vengeance, the blood of Jesus cries out mercy. His blood cries out grace, freedom, and forgiveness for lost human beings. The vengeance which ought to have been unleased onto rebellious human beings, God unleased onto His own Son – it is unthinkable. Where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more.[[2]](#footnote-3)

When God’s anger against the sin of humanity had been fully unleashed onto His Son as He hung nailed up to that cross, God then abandoned Him to death.[[3]](#footnote-4) They buried Him in a tomb. However, in another dramatic twist, on the third day God raised Him from the dead. Job well done. Justice fully satisfied. As you can imagine, His disciples, at the time were completely lost to this story line. So, He returned bodily to Heaven to re-join His Father, and they, together, sent the third person of the Godhead to earth. He is called the Holy Spirit. He was sent 40 days after Jesus left and He took up residence inside believers. One of His tasks was to help believers understand this mega narrative and how it plays out in the rest of human history. It turns out that because Jesus was fully human, and also fully God, His blood is effective for all humanity for all time. His blood continues to cry out mercy, grace, forgiveness, freedom and love for any and everyone who believes.

That is the cosmic story of Redemption. That is just the trailer. The whole drama is still being written in the lives of regular human beings, like you and I, who each have an invitation to come to the party. Each one of us has a price on our heads but, as Jesus’ blood continues to cry out from the ground, it shouts ‘paid in full’ for those who accept His invitation.

And that leads us to another quirky twist in the great drama. Woven through human history is a tapestry of religious systems each claiming to know the way back to God. Each of them has their rituals, their holy books and model devotees. They leave the rest of us quite sure we just do not measure up. Jesus was born into a society dominated by a corrupted form of Judaism. In that setting He stepped into peoples’ worlds, broken people, sinful people, rejects of the religious system and He had no prescriptions whatsoever. There was nothing they had to do to measure up. His message was, ‘I measure up, just believe in me’. What did they have to do to get right with God? Nothing. Just believe. Religion was made redundant – obsolete. He himself was the Way, and He continues to be the Way to this day.[[4]](#footnote-5) It seems too good to be true, but it is true, because God is good.

There is nothing you and I must do, but there is something we must be. We must be ourselves. We must be real. We must come as we are with all our hurts, losses, fears, doubts, and sins. We must take off our masks and stop pretending. We must come out from hiding. Just be real. Come as you are, the real you. Come with an open heart. Come and meet Him for yourself.

We find the written account of God’s mega drama of redemption in the Bible. But unlike most dramas, it is non-fiction. It is a true account of real historical events. It is 66 books, written by more than 40 authors over 1500 years. Its authors were inspired by the Spirit of God, proven by the fact that many of the significant events of Jesus’ life were prophesied in detail hundreds of years before He came. These were fulfilled in His life in precise detail.

Another thing recorded for us by the four writers of the gospels were their own eye-witness accounts of meetings Jesus had with various individuals. He met people from all walks of life and with all kinds of need. These meetings were life transforming to all who came to Him with faith. Their transformations were multi-dimensional – body, soul and spirit. Everything changed when Jesus stepped into peoples’ lives – even the local politics and religious systems which held the common people in control. The presence of Jesus upturned, not only their lives but sometimes also the social order. Jesus was the ultimate change agent of ordinary lives at grass roots level.

I took a long hard look at the record of many of these encounters. It was life transforming for me. I wrote up what I found and recorded them in the series of stories, ‘People Jesus Met’. They include the cripple, the blind and the lame; sailors, soldiers and public servants; the despised, the desperate and the demonised; the socially ostracized, the morally decadent and religious elite. Jesus met anyone and everyone who came without prejudice or judgment. In His own words He came ‘to seek and to save the lost.’[[5]](#footnote-6)

The purpose of writing the gospel accounts, according to John (the disciple), was so that we also might ‘believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and that, by believing, we may have life in His name.’[[6]](#footnote-7)

The epic drama of redemption history is still being written. Lives of broken, hurting sinners like you and I are still coming to Jesus. As each of our lives gets touched and changed by Him, our life becomes another chapter in God’s great plan of redemption of the human race.

Let me encourage you to open one of these stories. Read it or watch the video. As you do, know this. Jesus loves you as you are, but He loves you too much to leave you as you are. He will meet you just as real as He met the person in the story. Come with an open heart. He had you and I in mind when He spilt His life blood on the earth from the cross. That blood still cries out mercy, grace and love for you and for me. Come to Him, and your life will be another chapter in the mega drama of redemption, until He returns to take us home to live with Him forever in Heaven.

Let me encourage you also to join a small group of people to discuss these stories together. Discuss the questions at the end of each of the text of each story. They are sure to provoke lively discussion. Get real together, with others. I discuss some ideas for group meetings in another video.

Finally, I would love to hear from you. Tell me what you think about this website, the stories, and about Jesus Himself and your own real-life experience of redemption.

Paul Duncan
[www.redemption.org.nz](http://www.redemption.org.nz)

1. Gen 4:11 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Rom 5:20 3Mark 15:34 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. John 14:6 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Luke 19:10 5 John 20:31 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)