

## Redemption and Judgement in the Bible

**Original Sin** The concept that all human beings have a tendency towards evil, inherited from Adam and Eve who sinned by taking the apple from the tree of knowledge against God's decree and were subsequently cast out into the world.

- **Noah**

In this story, God judges that man has become wicked and decides to send a flood to purify the world. God deems Noah to be righteous and instructs him to build an ark to save his family and the animals of the world.

- **Moses**

God redeems Israel from Egypt through the work of Moses, bringing ten plagues to Egypt and eventually parting the Red Sea to allow Moses to lead the Israelites to freedom.

- **Jesus**

Jesus Christ is often referred to as 'The Redeemer'. By sacrificing himself on the cross, dying for the sins of humanity, Christ was able to redeem humanity, allowing the possibility of **salvation**.

### Purgatory

- Purgatory comes from the Latin word 'purgare', which means to purify or clean.
- In Roman Catholic theology, purgatory is often interpreted as a physical place, which acts as an intermediate state on the journey to heaven in which souls not already worthy are made ready through experiences of punishment and purification.
- Throughout the ages, the concept of purgatory has become wider ranging to become a metaphor for temporary suffering.



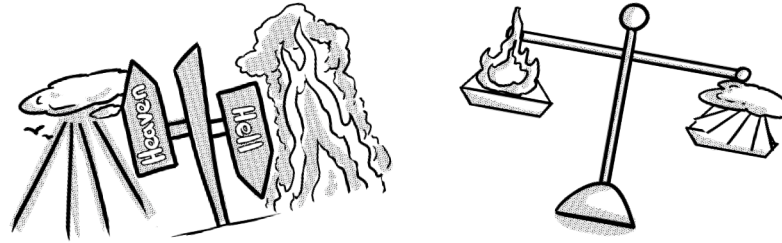
## What is redemption?

The word "**redemption**" means to "buy back". It comes from the Latin word redimere (re – "back"; emere – "buy").

Traditionally, the concept applied to our ability to "buy back" an individual's relationship with God, to **atone** (make up) for previous sins. However, the term can also be applied to non-religious situations, such as an individual who might have lost status in society or fallen out with another individual. For example, a man might make his wife angry by forgetting their anniversary, but **redeem** himself by buying her favourite flowers.

The idea of redemption is central to many texts – ultimately it appeals to the reader's sense of hope: that there is the potential to succeed even after failure.

*Task: What do you understand by the term 'redemption'? Discuss with a partner what you think the term means, and give examples of 'wrongs' a person might do, and how the might "buy themselves back" in the eyes of God, or other people.*



## KS3 Spine Redemption and Judgement

## Redemption and Judgement in Shakespeare

Many of Shakespeare's plays explore the steps a character must take in order to pursue redemption after an error in judgement. Within these plays, there are also subtle references to the concept of purgatory. However, the shift back to Protestantism under Elizabeth I resulted in a move away from the more specific teachings of the Catholic Church regarding sin and purgatory.

- **Macbeth** A play that seems to focus more on the concept of punishment than on the ability to be redeemed, as a Scottish King and his Queen are haunted by their past deed.
- **The Winter's Tale** Forgiveness and redemption play a central role in *The Winter's Tale* in which a jealous king is able to find peace through a miracle.
- **Hamlet** The ghost of Hamlet's father implies that he has returns from purgatory "Doomed for a certain term to walk the night" and Hamlet himself lives in a perpetual state of emotional 'purgatory' as he questions the meaning of life.

*Task: Use this link to read a summary of 'The Winter's Tale'*  
<https://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/winterstale/summary/>

*Write a paragraph about how Leontes might be seen as 'redeemed'.*

### Discussion points:



- What are your own beliefs regarding redemption?
- What do you believe happens to us after death?
- Should you be able to redeem yourself from any sin?
- Or are there some things that are unforgivable?

## Greek Tragedy

The genre of tragedy was developed by the ancient Greeks. It focuses on the journey of a tragic hero who undergoes great pain and suffering due to his or her **tragic flaw**.

Though the subjects of the play rarely found **redemption**, the audience were expected to feel a sense of **catharsis** (an act of emotional cleansing) by the end of the play, which was meant to suggest **redemption**.

*Task: Use the following link to make some extra notes on tragic heroes: <https://www.litcharts.com/literary-devices-and-terms/tragic-hero>*

## The Middle Ages

Many famous texts of the Middle Ages are marked by a very Roman Catholic sense of judgement and **redemption**. Arguably the most famous of these is Dante's *Divine Comedy*, an epic poem that charts the author's fictional journey through hell, purgatory and heaven.

*Task: Draw a picture of what you imagine purgatory to look like and label the features within it.*

## WWI Poetry

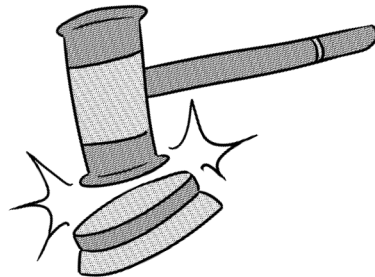
Much of the poetry to come out of World War I featured ideas of redemption and judgement as soldiers questioned their faith in the harsh conditions of the front lines and the trenches. The poems of Wilfred Owen, Rupert Brooke and Siegfried Sassoon all make use of the recurring theme of sacrifice of both Christ and the common soldier.

## The 19<sup>th</sup> Century

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the genre of gothic literature became popular, often dealing with questions of the soul and the afterlife.

Famous texts include:

- ***A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens**  
Three ghosts attempt to teach Scrooge the meaning of Christmas to help him redeem his soul. In this story, the ghost of Marley appears in a purgatory-like state as a warning to Scrooge.
- ***Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley**  
Both punishment and redemption feature heavily throughout this novel. The monster follows Victor, punishing him for his sins against the monster, whilst both Victor and the monster seek redemption for their faults.
- ***The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson**  
Dr Jekyll seeks to separate the two halves of his own soul in an attempt to separate himself from sin and the judgement attached to it.



## KEY TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION
redemption	to “buy back”; to be saved from sin; to regain something in exchange for payment
divine judgement	judgement from God
salvation	deliverance from sin, bought for mankind by the death of Christ
atonement	to make amends for a wrong doing
purgatory	a place or state of suffering, between heaven and hell; mental suffering
tragedy	a type of play dealing with tragic events with an unhappy ending
catharsis	the act of releasing strong emotions, usually at the end of a play

*Task: Learn the definition of each key term.*

## KS3 Spine Redemption and Judgement