

*Starting with this extract, explore how **Redemption** is presented in A Christmas Carol*

Yes! and the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own, the room was his own. Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make amends in! "I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future!" Scrooge repeated, as he scrambled out of bed. "The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven, and the Christmas Time be praised for this. I say it on my knees, old Jacob, on my knees!"

He was so fluttered and so glowing with his good intentions, that his broken voice would scarcely answer to his call. He had been sobbing violently in his conflict with the Spirit, and his face was wet with tears.

"They are not torn down!" cried Scrooge, folding one of his bed-curtains in his arms, "they are not torn down, rings and all. They are here -- I am here -- the shadows of the things that would have been, may be dispelled. They will be! I know they will."

His hands were busy with his garments all this time; turning them inside out, putting them on upside down, tearing them, mislaying them, making them parties to every kind of extravagance.

"I don't know what to do!" cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath; and making a perfect Laocoon of himself with his stockings. "I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel, I am as merry as a schoolboy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world! Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!"

He had frisked into the sitting-room, and was now standing there: perfectly winded.

Irrevocably, Scrooge is used by Dicken's to explore the process of **redemption** within the text, he follows the path towards good from a starting point of resistance to change and abject selfishness, in order to navigate this path of **redemption** religion and faith become imperative sources of guidance.

Along Scrooge's trajectory of **redemption** he alters his **worldview** and disposes of his previously stubborn nature in order to be **receptive** of the **teachings of the spirits**. Scrooge exclaims the mantra "I will live in the Past, the Present and the Future!" In doing so he makes references to each of the spirits who have intervened in his immoral traits and appears to be indoctrinating himself with their **teachings**. The verb 'live' is used as a metaphor to depict the importance of keeping the past alive in the present in order to learn from it and adapt accordingly. This indoctrination is particularly apparent as he 'repeated' this resolution to himself, portraying not just his commitment to embracing this newfound, **worldview** but also conveying a sense of confidence and almost pride in his transformative decision. Moreover, 'the Past, the Present and the Future' depicts a triadic structure which may be symbolic of the Holy Trinity, Dickens thus suggests that this Holy Trinity feeds directly into the trajectory of change and the influence of religion looms large in the process of transformation and redemption. Through imbuing his **redemption** with **religious** allusions and pious undertones Dickens appeals to a highly devout Victorian readership who value the influence of God. Dickens has perhaps intended emphasise the notion of **learning** and change by directly juxtaposing Scrooge at the end of the text to Scrooge's prior stubborn and 'solitary' self who isolated himself both from the influences of others in the present but also the influences of the past and the future. Dickens thus holds the capacity to learn and change, particularly the ability to be **receptive** of religious moral values as central to Scrooge's **redemption**.

Dicken's further reifies the significance of **religion** in the context of **redemption** through an array of **religious** allusions which suggest **redemption** and religion are inherently linked. The simile "as happy as an angel" depicts how Scrooge perceives his **redemption** as associated with him finding his faith in God. The ecclesiastical emblem "angel" presents an archetypal embodiment of morality and good to an almost cliché extent; for Scrooge, his transformation was so extreme that he perceives his new character as having a holy or celestial character. Conversely, Scrooge at the beginning of the text was an "old sinner", the semantic juxtaposition between his former self and the "angel" he becomes emphasises this stark change in nature. Dickens almost presents Scrooge on each side of his **redemption** in a hyperbolic manner; he begins as the paragon of evil, a "squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scraping, clutching, covetous old sinner". The use of seven adjectives makes particularly apparent that Scrooge began deliberately immoral as these seven adjectives serve to be reminiscent of the Seven Deadly Sins. In doing so the extent of his **redemption** is emphasised, as Scrooge rids himself of a heavy burden of sin. Ultimately, Dickens uses Scrooge to articulate that within a Victorian society, **redemption** must be navigated through the guidance of **religion**. Additionally, Dickens uses Scrooge's **redemption** to depict that the power of faith is so strong that it can resurrect even the most malevolent individuals from a life of sin. **Redemption** within the text becomes synonymous with connecting with **faith**.

Juxtaposition punctuates Scrooge's **redemption** as it serves as a useful tool to articulate **change and transformation**. In Stave Five, he exclaims he is "as light as a feather" which is the antithesis to the simile in Stave One in which he is described as "as hard and sharp as a flint". Dickens uses **antithetical** images to highlight how Scrooge has **changed** in every capacity and his **redemption** is thus a holistic form of **transformation**. These similes stand in opposition to each other as "flint" is a dark and heavy rock that metaphorically captures Scrooge's heinous side whilst "feather" has connotations of lightness which are typically associated with good and comfort. This **juxtaposition** is emphasised further in the contrast between the harsh consonant 't' in "flint" and the softer "th" sound in "feather" which might convey that Scrooge's **transformation** has called for a reconfiguration of every aspect of his character from abject evil to the epitome of good. Furthermore, Dickens uses the notion of time to contrast Scrooge's initial self to his post-**redemption** self; he begins as an "old sinner" yet transforms into "quite a baby". This **juxtaposition** makes explicit that Scrooge has regressed to a younger, more innocent state, even in terms of their age, the two natures of Scrooge are diametrically opposed. Additionally, Scrooge embodies two **juxtaposing** states in the eyes of **religion**; the connotations of youth and innocence that the noun "baby" has suggest that integral to Scrooge's **transformation** is the repenting of the sins he has accumulated throughout his life. This references the salient idea of rebirth within Christianity which consequently communicates that from **redemption** Scrooge has acquired a personal connection with God whereas he was previously a "sinner". Dickens has perhaps attempted to evoke a more sympathetic view of Scrooge in the reader as he is painted more favourably in the eyes of God. The notion of **change** and contrast is pertinent within Dickens' exploration of **redemption** both in his lexical choices and the religious imagery he alludes to.

To conclude, Scrooge's transformation presents an almost exaggerated process of **redemption** as he shifts between two extremes. Consequently, Dickens is able to display both the importance of religion in guiding morality and its power to incite change, he does this through repeated ecclesiastical allusions and juxtapositions to emphasise a change that is innately intertwined with religion.