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Contents

REDEMPTION AND THE SERVICE OF GOD

A PERSONAL TRANSACTION WITH JESUS

SATISFACTION

THE CHILDREN'S PATHWAYS

REDEMPTION AND THE SERVICE OF GOD

Isaiah 44: 6-8; Exodus 15: 13, 17; 1 Chronicles 17: 21, 22

R.T. These scriptures may help us to a deeper understanding of the place that redemption may have in the service of God. We speak of it in the gospel, rightly so, but there are two sides to the matter; we are not only redeemed from, as would be prominent in the gospel, but we are also redeemed to. Redemption does not leave us where it finds us but has in view, as the scripture in Exodus shows, the abode of God's holiness. As redemption applied to the people, they had to get out of Egypt; redeemed people could not remain in Egypt.

The end in redemption is that we may be a habitation of God. We use the expression 'the glory of redemption' and it is something that will swell the praises in every family. The redeemed are a selective company; Isaiah uses the expression very freely - 'the redeemed of Jehovah'. It does not exactly apply to all men; the value of it is available for all men but the personnel who are redeemed are a select company. Isaiah uses some very fine expressions about them, such as "the redeemed shall walk there", chap 35: 9. I think the sense of redemption coming into our souls involves movement and would find some expression in the service of God.

In the first scripture we see who the Redeemer is: "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts". It is God expressing His love by acting as a redeemer. It would bring into our souls some sense of what we are to God. You find in this section of scripture that as the idea of redemption dawns on the people they brighten up, they begin to move and to be responsive. I think the spirit of that could be carried with us in the service of God. As I say, this first scripture brings home to us who the Redeemer is. I thought in the second we see that we are redeemed in view of His abode. The wilderness is covered very quickly in that song; we are redeemed in view of being a dwelling-place for God. And David in Chronicles uses it too in what we can speak of as the service of God,

that God has redeemed a people to Himself; "the one nation... that God went to redeem". I thought there was possibly something to be gleaned in an enquiry like that, to swell our praises in the service of God.

E.C.B. Do the references in verses 22 and 23 of Isaiah 44 help what you have in mind? "Return unto me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, ye heavens; for Jehovah hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, the forest, and every tree therein! For Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel". I wondered if that bore on your thought and whether it might help us in the service of God.

R.T. I was impressed, in thinking of this, how much redemption finds expression in song in Scripture. Exodus 15 shows that, and in Revelation 5 there is the idea of song and liberty. I think if we had some sense that we were the redeemed of Jehovah it would bring us into the liberty of sons, to function in perhaps a less restricted way than we may at times.

E.C.B. I think there is need for that amongst us, that there should be more unrestricted sense of response. We had a word on Tuesday night about spontaneity. The very word 'redeemer' has in mind the One who redeems, has it not? The prime thing is that He has His own interest before Him. I wondered if we sufficiently have in view God's side of redemption when we are so occupied with our own.

R.T. Yes, it is redeems to Himself, He has His rest in view. The boards in the tabernacle were able to stand up because they were founded in sockets of silver. I think redemption sets us together. We may come into it individually but it is a collective idea - the redeemed of Jehovah, they walk there, and the redeemed shall sing. The sense of it brings God's love in a fresh way into our hearts, that He loved us and He expressed His love in a way like this, that He redeemed us, took away every encumbrance, so that we should be in the liberty and joy of being sons in His presence.

C.G.H. Do you think that in verse 6 of Isaiah 44 there are perhaps references to two of the divine Persons? I am just wondering to

whom 'his' would refer. "Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer": is 'his' there Israel?

R.T. 'His' would be the same as we have in Colossians and Ephesians; "in whom we have redemption".

C.G.H. It would refer more to Christ personally.

R.T. Yes, I think so. I am glad you bring that up because we have read Old Testament scriptures but they were looking on to our day; so it is identified for us in the New Testament: "in whom". It says "taken us into favour in the Beloved: in whom we have redemption", Eph 1: 6. In Colossians as well (see chap 1: 14), we have it in a Person, and that Person has made Himself well-known in the way He has moved in redeeming love.

H.A.H. Do the references in Leviticus and Ruth to the right of redemption help? God has rights in creation by virtue of His power in creating for His pleasure. His rights in redemption have been established in virtue of His own activities in love, as you say, in that one of the Persons of the Godhead has come into that position on God's behalf.

R.T. I thought this scripture in Isaiah brought that idea in, that God exercised the right He had. He might not have done it; there is an idea of sovereignty in redemption. He had the right and, as in the book of Ruth, He exercised that right when we were encumbered. But in the exercising of that right He has freed us from every encumbrance so that we can be in His presence in holy liberty.

D.J.H. I wondered as to sovereignty and even supremacy, which seems to be suggested in these references in verse 6. Does redemption and His rights in it show evidence of His supremacy acting in love.

R.T. When God comes in as a redeemer there is none that can stand, and that is very beautiful in this latter half of Isaiah. Nations and everything must give way so that God can have His people freed from every hindrance to be in the liberty of being in His presence. I think the sense of these things would broaden our response.

E.C.B. Perhaps you would say a word as to the blood in this connection, because redemption is connected with His blood in the New Testament.

R.T. It brings home to us the cost, does it not? Redemption is not without cost; how much God thought about us that there was such blood shed on our account, shed that righteousness may be met shed that the basis may be laid so that He could exercise His rights as a Redeemer. But you would have more to say about it.

E.C.B. Some of these thoughts are important for us because they are fundamental. The blood of bulls and goats does not have intrinsic value, but as has been said here recently the blood of Christ has, and that is why it is referred to in the New Testament as precious is it not - because it has intrinsic value?

R.T. I have often reflected on that verse: "but by precious blood, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, the blood of Christ, foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world", 1 Pet 1: 19,20. It was no emergency measure. Think of God looking down the history of time and looking on to the blood of Christ! His purposes depended on that blood being shed, and His purposes depend on redemption's rights being exercised so that we can be in the joy of those purposes now.

D.J.H. Do you think the reference to "I am the first and I am the last" would connect with that? Would He being 'the first' be a question of His purpose flowing out and He being 'the last' His end being secured in redemption?

R.T. Yes, and the connection between the first and the last would be that He has come in as a Redeemer; and His purposes are all effectuated because He has exercised His rights in redemption. But as we said, the basis of that right being exercised was that such blood had been shed. He righteously moved, the price was fully paid and the redeemed should be before Him in the enjoyment of His purposes.

E.C.B. That scripture in Peter brings out that redemption is by what is incorruptible, does it not? And is not the consequence of

redemption that an incorruptible order of things has been established for God?

R.T. I thought that side should come into our minds, that we are not redeemed to go back again. If you are redeemed from a thing you are away from it for ever. For the fulness of it we await a new body, but if God has brought the joy and light of redemption into our hearts it means that we are freed from a thing for ever, so that we can be for Him for ever, we can be in the liberty and joy that His love designed.

C.G.H. Redemption implies previous ownership, does it not?

R.T. And it implies that the persons who were previously owned had become encumbered, the persons whom God had a right over. He had a right over all men, but He has exercised the right of redemption to free some of them, and that company is known as the redeemed. I think the sense of that would give us liberty and cause us to be, as has been said, more spontaneous in our response to Him.

H.J.T. You said that this enters into the service of God. Would it specially affect us as we drink together of the cup, the cup of the new covenant in His blood?

R.T. Yes, I am sure it would; it would affect us throughout the service but, as you said, the blood brings home to us the price that the Redeemer paid. So we would be free; I think a sense of liberty comes in as we drink into the cup, that we are freed from every encumbrance to enter into His thoughts in purpose.

C.R.B. Does the glory of the Redeemer here bring in the power of the love that would exclude everything else and everyone else, so that we are just occupied with God?

R.T. Yes, "who, as I, shall call...?" The 'I' in this section is very fine; He says "I know not any". Redemption frees us from every other influence and every other object so that God is before us in this way, would you say?

C.R.B. There is a wonderful majesty here, is there not? "Is there a God beside me? ... I know not any". It is love that excludes every other influence, is it not?

R.T. Yes, and there is a sole object before our hearts. I think the 'Is' are very striking in this section; "I am the first, and I am the last... And who, as I, shall call I appointed... Have I not caused... ?" God's majesty and greatness before whom nothing can stand comes into the soul.

V.H.B. Do you think it is a good exercise to meditate upon what it cost God and what it cost the Son that we might be redeemed?

R.T. I think that would produce depth with us, that such a price was paid that we may come into the purposes of God.

V.H.B. And we could never fathom the depths that were contained in those three hours of darkness.

R.T. So redemption was a work accomplished, but the Person who accomplished it comes before the soul; "Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer". He often uses that title very feelingly and affectionately towards the people to revive them. You find as it comes in that there is response, a reviving among the people of God. I think it would produce movement with us.

D.L.S. Is 'the Redeemer' the peculiar glory of the Lord Himself in relation to redemption? The glory of redemption is a wonderful thought, is it not?

R.T. We use those expressions, redemption's glory, and the glory of redemption, frequently but do we think enough about it? Say something about it for us.

D.L.S. It would be the spring from which praise would arise. We would be entitled to stand on that ground and become those who could worthily answer to it.

R.T. It is obvious that they become a very select company: "the redeemed shall walk there"; they have liberty to move about; there are no encumbrances; they are not hindered through conscience or sin or defects in any way, but they are free to walk, and they have in

Zion and they sing. I think the fact that God has exercised His rights in this way brings home to our souls how much He loves to have us before Him in His presence for His own pleasure.

C.R.B. You referred to Colossians; it is related there to the kingdom of the Son of His love. Would you expand on that a little?

R.T. It just brings home to us that God would have things arranged to suit Himself. The kingdom of the Son of His love conveys an idea where God has everything as He would like to have it. There are no influences that would hinder, but the Son of His love predominates and the redeemed are there and at home there.

E.C.B. In chapter 35 to which you have referred more than once it says "they shall obtain gladness and joy" (v 10). I wondered if you had in mind the question whether we have obtained gladness and joy, the redeemed walking and the ransomed returning, everlasting joy on their heads and so on.

R.T. Yes, I think the sense of redemption would give us everlasting joy. If God has redeemed us, who can divert us? Why should we be diverted? But He redeemed us that He may have us entirely secured for His own pleasure. Another interesting thing is how much holiness is connected with redemption; it brings home to us how near we are to God.

C.G.H. The thought referred to as to joy is an experience which really overcomes, or lies behind, what is sorrow. We may sorrow and yet there is that underlying joy; is that not so?

R.T. Yes, but I think the sorrows would be quickly overcome by the redeemed, because "If God be for us, who against us? He who, yea, has not spared his own Son" (Rom 8: 31,32) gives the sense of redeeming love. I am sure if that filled our souls more we would not be overcome by the sorrows. The Redeemer and redemption has a note of victory and triumph about it.

C.G.H. That is what I had in mind, because we may be affected physically at times, but underneath all that there is something that subsists in the way of satisfaction and joy.

R.T. Yes. I feel the need for increased liberty that redemption would give us. It says in that passage in chapter 35, "even fools, - shall not err therein" (v 8). I just speak to encourage us all to be more responsive. We often tend to sit on our seats and rehearse things perhaps a bit, but even fools shall not err.

S.J.K. You have referred more than once to the soul. It says "the redemption of their soul is costly", Ps 49: 8. Would the soul be that part of us that could enter with joy into the service of praise?

R.T. Yes. I think it refers to the vital side of things, that God would have what is vital. "Sorrow and sighing shall flee away", Isa 35: 10. We come into the liberty that God has in mind in His purpose, to be responsive there.

H.C.H. Isaiah speaks several times about the Redeemer. In chapter 48 it says "Thus saith Jehovah, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am Jehovah thy God, who teacheth thee for thy profit, who leadeth thee in the way that thou shouldest go" (v 17). He "teacheth thee for thy profit".

R.T. Well, the enjoyment of redemption would make us very teachable. It keeps us from looking back, it keeps us from being encumbered even by our own histories, that the mighty power of God's love expressed in redemption has secured us from all that we were and all that surrounded us; it has secured us from a scene of bondage that we may come into the abode of His holiness. Exodus 15 brings that home to us. The blood was shed before this, but it says "Thou by thy mercy hast led forth the people that thou hast redeemed; Thou hast guided them by thy strength unto the abode of thy holiness". Nothing can hinder God effectuating His purposes.

E.C.B. So does Exodus 15 bring out that we are not redeemed in order to be in the wilderness?

R.T. I thought that; the land and God's abode is immediately in mind. The wilderness was bringing out what kind of people they were, but God had in mind that redemption brought them into the place that He had purposed.

E.C.B. Because redemption has to do with purpose and not with God's ways.

R.T. That is right, and it is something that needs to guide us more. In His ways there is much that has to be worked out, but they are working out His purpose.

E.C.B. I wondered whether if we reflected more on the question, why did God redeem us? it might help us, because the answer to that must be that He redeemed us for His own sake. Our blessing and our being liberated were necessary if He was to enjoy what He had in view in redemption. God is the object of His own work in this regard, is He not?

R.T. From one point of view there is no answer to that question, Why did He redeem us? Who could answer that? There was certainly nothing in us. It brings out His sovereignty, that He moved like that in redemption. But then we come to see the reason for it was that He wanted to have us in the abode of His holiness. And the sense of redemption laying hold of us would help us to be more settled there.

D.J.H. I think this helps us as to an enquiry raised during the week as to mercy in relation to the service of God. It comes in in this context, does it not? "Thou by thy mercy hast led forth the people that thou hast redeemed; Thou hast guided them". We were wondering as to how we would refer to mercy, glorifying God for mercy and yet without being occupied with our past history. It is not a question of past history here but is His mercy operating in redemption with a view to our entering into the abode of His holiness.

R.T. If we look at the Psalms, David uses mercy a lot in his response to God, and I think these things would help to broaden us in the expressions we use, because as we come into God's presence there is a wide range of things to engage us, glory upon glory that will evoke answering praises for all eternity. We may at times get restricted in the way we think. But these impressions

would broaden us so that there is increased liberty and increased joy in the response to God.

C.G.H. The experience we pass through now in the course of our responsible history, although relieved week by week on the Lord's day morning, is a kind of intermediate stage of our soul history, is it not? We have passed out of the world, we are free of Egypt, but we are in the wilderness which does not provide for our spiritual gain; we have to get that from heaven, do we not?

R.T. It says here "Thou hast guided them by thy strength unto the abode of thy holiness". It does not speak about them going out from that. As you say, there is the wilderness to be gone through, but we go through it in the light of His purpose; if we do not we will not be rightly in the wilderness.

P.S.W. So in the other verse you referred to, "plant them in the mountain" is very specific and very stable, is it not?

R.T. Yes, it is very beautiful. There is the idea that you can have your roots there, you can take root in the mountain of His inheritance.

P.S.W. It is not the scattering of the seed; it is something very definite in the way that each one is handled.

R.T. That is very fine, that there is a plant, something that is precious, something that is capable of being fruitful, and it is fruitful as it is planted in this kind of soil.

P.S.W. Would it connect with the plants of the Father's planting (see Matt 15: 13)?

R.T. I think that is something to lay hold of, that we are planted in God's purpose. As we move out we move in the light of those purposes in our wilderness pathway.

C.R.B. Would you say something as to what you had in mind as to verse 17 and verse 13 by some distinction.

R.T. I had not much in mind as to the distinction between them but just that the idea of redemption would produce movement. We are

redeemed from one set of circumstances to be at home in another. In verse 13 they come into the abode of His holiness and in verse 17 there is the sanctuary. You have some impression about them.

C.R.B. I was really enquiring, but verse 17 would seem to be the final consummation of God's purposes; there is a certain glory about finality, but does the abode of His holiness show how God arrives at that in the tabernacle, even in the wilderness conditions? There is a sense in which God is dwelling despite surrounding conditions, but it is all related to the land; the land is in view.

R.T. I think that is very fine, that God has His abode now; the ground has been cleared and God is free to have His abode in those wilderness circumstances. But then the sanctuary would be further in; it says "The Sanctuary, Lord, that thy hands have prepared". It is inside. I think it would allude to the holiest.

G.A.P. Would the service of the Holy Spirit be involved in "Thou hast guided them by thy strength unto the abode of thy holiness"? I was thinking that a redeemed people would be available and sensitive to the Holy Spirit's operations.

R.T. Yes; and I think the section would bring home to us that, as in God's presence, we can look back and see the way that He moved, exercising His rights in mercy, exercising His rights in redemption. God exercised those rights. I think it enhances to us the kind of God He is and would deepen our response to such a God.

E.C.B. Does the mercy-seat in the tabernacle speak of redemption as well as propitiation?

R.T. Yes, Romans would bring that out. Say some more.

E.C.B. I was wondering whether in the mercy-seat there is not just propitiation, which is the side that we very much think of, but it reminds us all the time, as you have quoted already, of redemption's glory.

R.T. Propitiation would be wider than redemption, would it not?

E.C.B. It is wider in its bearing, because it is available for all, but redemption raises the question of who is in the gain of it.

R.T. And I think it, as it were, saturates our hearts with His love, that He moved like this to have us in the joy and in the presence of His purposes.

C.G.H. I suppose the reference just made to propitiation would indicate that God has a basis upon which He can clear the whole scene from sin and introduce a scene of righteousness according to His own glory.

R.T. Yes; redemption, to my mind, brings us more into His purposes. Propitiation is connected with sins, and redemption frees us from our sins, but it gives us a sense that we are in His presence, we are wanted there we are loved. And if we have the sense in our souls' of being there as wanted, as David obviously had, I think it would give us a lot more liberty than perhaps we are accustomed to enjoy.

J.M.W. Does the line of the hymn, 'We should be part, through Jesus' blood', involve what you are saying, our being for God's pleasure?.

R.T. And you can sing that verse at the end of the meeting, can you not? Say more.

J.M.W. It is the exclamation Mr Darby makes: 'O Love divine!' You were speaking about God's love being involved with His purpose, the side of redemption, and I thought it would cause us to be freer in our expressions.

R.T. That is exactly what I was thinking.

C.G.H. That would help the younger brothers among us would it not? to feel free in the service, and although they might feel they could say very little, at any rate what little they could say they are free to say, are they not?

R.T. Yes, and if the older brothers gave a lead, the young ones would soon follow. I think that perhaps the older persons get more crystallised than the younger ones. David was an older man here but he is speaking about the one nation "that God went to redeem". He is looking back in a positive way and seeing that in God's ways,

in the exercise of His rights in mercy and redemption, He has endeared Himself to His saints.

F.P.A.S. You said earlier in the meeting that we might bring this matter in at any point in the service. Have you any more to say about that?

R.T. I think that is true about a good many things. We tend to put things in compartments, but I think there is room for expansion in our minds. We can count on what God has wrought in us to function responsively at its true level at any given time, would you say?

F.P.A.S. Yes; so you would not say that we could not have a reference to redemption in the marital setting, as we say. I wondered whether the Ruth scripture would justify that.

R.T. Yes. What did Jacob say? "the God that shepherded me all my life long to this day, the Angel that redeemed me from all evil", Gen 48: 15,16. That is possibly a reference to the Spirit, that the Spirit has part in this kind of work, protecting us, guarding us, bringing home to us some impression of how precious we were to God. So these things only seem to stimulate enquiry and broaden our thinking.

F.P.A.S. Then in that connection I would like to enquire what is meant by "the acquired possession". The Holy Spirit comes in there. It says "who is" - that is the Person of the Spirit - "the earnest of our inheritance to the redemption of the acquired possession", Eph 1: 14.

R.T. The actuality of it will be future. It says "ye have been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the earnest of our inheritance to the redemption of the acquired possession". The footnote says 'up to'; it is more than 'till'. I think it means that the fulness and joy of the thing can be ours now in the Spirit, would you say?

F.P.A.S. Yes, I think that is very helpful.

R.T. So as we enjoy these things we would be less bound in our thoughts and enjoy increased liberty in serving God, because redemption really underlies sonship.

C.G.H. Could you distinguish redemption and purchase?

R.T. Purchase is the way that redemption expressed itself; purchase involves money, but redemption is even more than purchase. If a thing is available to be purchased anybody can buy it; but only God could redeem. You may purchase a thing without having the right to redeem it. God alone had the right of redemption, but He expressed that right in that He purchased us.

E.C.B. Does not redemption have in mind a previous existence? I wondered if that was behind the enquiry as to redemption being referred to in the marital setting as we speak, that the assembly had no previous existence prior to the death of Christ save in divine purpose. Therefore it may be that it is more accurate to speak of purchase in regard to the assembly, as Acts 20 does, than to speak of it being redeemed. Is that right?

F.P.A.S. I thought that, that the assembly is not redeemed.

R.T. I think that it is right to say that. Yet the glory that was exercised in redemption is something that the bride would understand and cherish, is it not?

E.C.B. The idea of purchase implies a desire to possess; redemption implies the desire to liberate. Is that so?

R.T. Yes, to liberate from every encumbrance, so that it can function at its true dignity. We are not exhaustive in what we are saying, but I think these things would promote our enquiring and being stimulated that there may be a breadth in our response.

C.R.B. "They shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, their God", Rev 21: 3. That is really the fruit of redemption, is it not?

R.T. Yes it is; I think that is very precious. And in the presence of God the sense that He moved like that would sweeten our praises, would it not? And no authority can lay claim to hinder us, we are there unencumbered, to praise Him alone.

C.R.B. Is there not a wonder about the love that we can claim God as our God, that would free us from everything that relates to an

order of things which is not in keeping with such a God?

R.T. That is very good. The sense that we are loved, and the sense of love, bring their own liberty.

V.H.B. Do you think that mercy and sovereignty very much come together in Ephesians, chosen in Christ "before the world's foundation, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love", chap 1: 4?

R.T. Yes, these things, mercy and redemption, have come in as the handmaids of His love to effectuate His purpose. So the way He has made Himself known would help us to praise Him better.

D.J.H. I was thinking of that hymn of Mr Coates: 'For Thou hast brought again to Him More than by man He lost'. He has more from man by redemption than He ever had in man in creation simply in innocence, has He not? Is that the glory of redemption that we were enquiring about earlier?

R.T. Yes, and it seems to apply in a peculiar way to men. It gives man a certain status and a sense of how much God has men in His mind in His purposes.

E.C.B. Does not our liberty in speaking to God - the Father, the Son, or the Spirit - really depend on our knowledge of God and how well we know Him? I wondered if the crystallisation process takes place when we have more knowledge of things than of divine Persons.

R.T. That is good, and it is the reason God says so often in Isaiah, I am thy Redeemer. It is a Person, a Person has exercised His rights and has moved like that. The Person that has done it is greater than all He ever did.

E.C.B. It has often been remarked how free persons are with God in Genesis; they speak to God in almost uninhibited liberty. Then redemption comes in in Exodus and should really improve that liberty, yet it may be that traces of the law and what belongs to it cling to us, so that we have not the liberty that we might have. But it is a great thing, is it not, to hear a brother ranging freely in the service of God?

R.T. I think we would all covet it; and, as you say, the more we know God, the more liberty we will have. Redemption came in in Exodus because the people were in Egypt; they could not sing in Egypt but redemption came in that they might be free from all that bondage and be dwelling in the abode of His holiness, might come into the sanctuary.

D.J.H. The law had not yet come in here. This is very early in the history, as we would speak as applying it. Would that all bear on what you are saying?

R.T. The law was needed because they were in the flesh. In redemption you go beyond the law, you come into the abode where God has everything as He would have it arranged.

E.C.B. In Isaiah 43 there is a reference to God as Redeemer which implies they are coming out of captivity, out of Babylon, which would bear on us too, do you think? It is not merely out of Egypt but it is out of Babylon.

R.T. Yes, and every trace of Babylon would be removed, would it not? Redemption not only brings the persons out but it removed every trace of anything that would be unsuitable to the abode of His holiness.

C.G.H. What is the distinction between Egypt and Babylon?

E.C.B. It has been said - just remembering some ministry - that Egypt is the state out of which the church is taken and Babylon is that into which she falls. But Babylon represents the world in its glitter and attractiveness and prosperity and all that kind of thing. The people are brought back out of that.

D.A.B. In connection with what you said about having the right of redemption, one must also have the resources. I was thinking of Boaz. He said to the one who had the right of redemption, "If thou wilt redeem it, redeem", Ruth 4: 4. And he said "I cannot redeem it" (v 6). But in Ephesians it says "in whom we have redemption through his blood" (chap 1: 7) and in Acts 20 we are "purchased with

the blood of his own" (v 28). So that God and the Redeemer have had the resources for the work that was done.

R.T. Yes, so that wherever we were, whether Babylon or Egypt, it only emphasised the resources of divine love. Whatever encumbrance we may have been under, the resources have been greater, and they have been exercised in love that we may be freed from the taint of these things. Peter speaks about the "vain conversation"; we are redeemed from the taint of all that has gone before that we may be in the liberty and joy of a people secured for God.

H.C.H. In the Songs of Degrees it says "with him is plenteous redemption", Ps 130: 7. That is remarkable, is it not? Then it goes on to say, "And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities".

R.T. Yes, the encumbrance has not been too great for God. We may think of how great the liabilities are, but it has only magnified the resources that God has in redemption.

C.R.B. These thoughts come into David's heart as he goes in and sits before Jehovah, when he had just been adjusted to find out that God's thoughts were different and greater than his own thoughts. Is it something to seek help from the Spirit about, to be able to rest before God and seek grace to ponder over these things?

R.T. Yes it is, and the Spirit would help you to say more than you intended. You find that in ministry, and in the service of God, the Spirit helps you to say more than you thought about before. I think that is the liberty that redemption would bring about, God's love so enjoyed that we are able to be led further in, able to come nearer to enjoy a little closer the love that has redeemed us. So as you say, David here is sitting, he is restful, he is not worried about what the next hymn will be. The enjoyment of redemption would free us from these things that are so near to us at times; the redeemed will say the right thing, they will function at the true level.

C.G.H. So for the Spirit to lead you a little beyond what was first in mind in getting up to give thanks, or to express praise, would indicate that at the moment the Lord by the Spirit leads you beyond

what was in your mind. And that is really quite an experience, is it not?

R.T. It is an experience. I think it is something to think about, that if that happens you should give some time to think about what the Spirit helped you to say. I remember saying to a brother, after an address, that I had enjoyed something he said, and he said, I had not thought about it before. Well, these are the best parts of any ministry, something that comes in that had not been thought about before. If that is our experience we should give time to ponder the things that come in.

E.C.B. The reverse is true too, is it not, that you do not say the things you had intended to say?

R.T. That has often happened and the Spirit is in that, is He not? We may think we know best, but the Spirit knows best. It shows we are in a living system. Redemption brings us into, not a dead system, but a living system. Babylon would be a dead system where things can be written down, and so on, but redemption would bring us into a living system where we are caught in the flow. "The redeemed shall walk there" is a very beautiful expression. "And a highway shall be there and a way... of holiness... even fools, - shall not err therein". The sons are functioning without looking over their shoulder, are they not?

E.C.B. You can then understand something of "mediator of a better covenant" (Heb 8: 6) can you not?

R.T. Yes, that is very good. So things are in the hand of the Son, in the hand of One who is dispensing blessing all round and we are just there to absorb it. David here is absorbing some of that blessing. And as we absorb that rather than think about ourselves or other things, we are able to function at the true level of sonship.

E.O. It says "Let the redeemed of Jehovah say so", Ps 107: 2.

R.T. Very good. Well, let that happen, let the redeemed say so. Why do we sit quiet so often? I think redemption causes movement; that is very obvious from these scriptures. Redemption does not

leave you where it finds you but causes this spontaneous movement.
May it mark our gatherings more.

LONDON

10 February 1980

Key to initials

C.R.Byng; D.A.Burr; E.C.Burr; V.H.Browne; C.G.Hitchcock;
D.J.Hutson; H.A.Hutson; H.C.Hatcher; S.J.Knappett; E.Oliver;
G.A.Palmer; D.L.Stewart, Edinburgh; F.P.A.Stocks; H.J.Taylor;
R.Taylor, Barnet; J.M.Wallach; P.S.Warren

(All local except where otherwise stated)

A PERSONAL TRANSACTION WITH JESUS

A.B.Parker

John 3: 35,36; John 4: 1-16

The verses read from John 4 give an instance when the Lord Jesus dealt with a person alone, and continued speaking until a remarkable result was reached. How intimate Jesus was in speaking to that Samaritan woman! I have not read the entire section because it is so well known to us. My concern is that, in some way, through the preaching, we may have to do, personally and directly, with the Lord Jesus. We are not here for entertainment, nor just to hear and forget, but that the Lord may speak to us in such a way that there will be change with us. We could not have a private interview with the Lord and not be changed. As long as we are left here there will be need for change. Soon our bodies will be changed - a glorious matter that will be effected in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and it will be complete - but the moral change which suits the body of glory usually takes a lifetime to work out in detail.

The Lord Jesus has committed Himself to speak with us, that is, exercised persons, privately and intimately in this present period of church history which is characterised by Laodicean conditions. Such conditions have been contributed to by us to our sorrow. The way out of such conditions is by overcoming. However, it is to exercised persons in Laodicean conditions that the Lord, in His word to John at Patmos, committed Himself to have to say to, if they will hear His voice and open the door to Him: "Behold I stand at the door and am knocking; if any one hear my voice and open the door, I will come in unto him and sup with him, and he with me", Rev 3: 20. That supposes a personal, private interview with the Lord Jesus. Have you had it? Have you let Him in? Oh, do hear His knock, do hear His voice, and let Him in! "The Father loves the Son". He who is supreme in love's economy loves the Son "and has given all things to be in his hand". We want to catch the feeling of this word which prefaces the story of Jesus speaking personally and privately to the

Samaritan woman of John 4. The Spirit of God tells us this, and then goes on to indicate that the Samaritan woman was a part of the "all things". Do you not want the assurance that you, too, are included in what is in His hand? Open to Him and let Him come in. Tell Him that you, too, want to have a personal, private interview with Him like this woman had. Just say to Him now, in your heart, Lord Jesus, speak to me. You or I are not too small to be in His hand. There are millions of needy persons on this earth at this very moment; nations are in great distress; violence and corruption are increasing worldwide; the world economy seems to be on the verge of collapse. Yet from God's side everything is in the hand of Christ and will work out for God's glory. And you are not too small to be in the hand of the Son for blessing. Ere long the earth will have served its purpose. The whole order of things that has continued since Adam's day will soon be folded up, but not before it becomes an expression of the mighty triumph of God, through Christ. What a wonderful triumph the Millennium will be! God will be vindicated through Christ's glorious administration before He brings in the new heavens and a new earth. He has made no mistake in placing all things in the hand of Christ. And you are not too small to be included in what is in His hand!

"He that believes on the Son has life eternal and he that is not subject to the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides upon him". Are you subject to the Son? This appeal is the preface to this occasion when, I trust, the Lord will speak to you personally. Have you seen life in this aspect? If you are not subject to the Son you will not see it. Is it possible that the wrath of God is abiding upon you? Oh, you say, I was converted years ago. But I am not raising that question; I am raising the point as to whether you are subject to the Son. In grace He is seeking you now; let Him knock at your door (I trust He is doing it now), let Him in and have a private, personal interview; let Him go into matters with you which relate to your eternal salvation so that the wrath of God will not abide upon you and you may see life.

The Lord Jesus when here in the path of God's will "must needs go through Samaria". Geographically, in order to reach Galilee from where Jesus then was, it was necessary to go through Samaria. A look at the map will indicate this to be so, but the Spirit of God, I believe, is telling us more than geography. He is telling us that there was another reason why Jesus went that way. There was a "must needs". Could one lone woman be a "must needs"? The Lord may do very great things to bring blessing to one soul. In Luke 15 He tells us about one lone person in whom heaven was interested and to secure him a whole country was plunged into famine. Philip the evangelist was called from a great work, which was proceeding in Samaria, to meet and bring blessing to one lone Ethiopian as he journeyed. And if you are in God's thoughts for blessing, who can tell what heaven will do even now? In order to redeem Israel from Egypt and have them for Himself He gave Egypt for their ransom. Pharaoh's servants said "Egypt is ruined" (Exod 10: 7), but that was not the whole story, for after that He destroyed Egypt's army in the Red Sea.

What is God prepared to do to secure you? What has He done? He has spared not His own Son but has delivered Him up for *you*, not only to secure you for eternity. great and wondrous as that is, but that you may be brought into subjection to the Son now, so that wrath will not abide upon you and you truly may see life. This is a very real matter. The Spirit of God alone can bring it about, but you must not resist Him; so say within yourself, I want to hear what God is saying to me; I want to be subject to the Son.

When the Lord passed through Samaria He came to a place where something had happened centuries before in the ways of God. Jacob had given a portion of land to his son Joseph. It is like "The Father loves the Son and has given all things to be in his hand". The disposition of God has not changed, nor will it change. He has put everything into the hand of the Son. Then it says "a fountain of Jacob's was there". Should it not read, a fountain of Joseph's was there? No! Joseph held it for Jacob, and the Lord Jesus is doing just that. The Father has given all things to be in His

hand; He had given this woman into His hand and the Lord is about to cause a fountain to spring up in her to the Father. That is just what He did, and He did it quickly. Before He completed His personal talk with her He had won her for the Father, and she begins to ask about worship. He settled her matters quickly; He told her all things that she had ever done. Will you not let Jesus in? Are you making it difficult for Him to get your ear?

Something happened here in Plainfield years ago. There have been witnesses here to the fact that the Father loves the Son and has given all things to be in His hand. There has been territory in this place which the Father gave to Christ, and He has maintained in it a response to the Father. Will it continue? Are you going to be available for the lord to give you "living water" which will spring up into eternal life? Are you going to be a worshipper who worships in spirit and in truth? We are identified with an area in which the Lord is working. There are many areas in which He is working. Who can say what is the extent of His labours? But we speak of what we know, and we would not hesitate to say that the Lord wants the fountain in this place to spring up with greater definiteness and satisfaction to the Father's heart. He is looking for worshippers who worship "in spirit and in truth".

Do you enjoy eternal life? Do you know the difference between life and eternal life? Do you know the difference between what men call life in this world and eternal life? Do you know the difference between newness of life and eternal life? that one is life in the wilderness and the other life in the service of God in the assembly? The Lord Jesus would say to you, I am knocking; I want to come into your personal circumstances on the most friendly terms; I will sit down with you and sup, and as we sup, I will speak to your heart - first of all about your matters, and after that about what I am maintaining for the Father's heart; and I want you with Me in this.

So Jesus took this woman in hand. He knocked on her door when He said "Give me to drink". She could have paid no attention to Him, for she was a Samaritan, and Samaritans have no dealings with Jews. But she asked Him "How dost thou, being a Jew, ask to

drink of me who am a Samaritan woman?" Will she open the door to Jesus? Jesus said to her "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that says to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water". If you could only realise who it is that is knocking! You may say, It is just A.B.P. That may be so, but who is really knocking? Can we not say that Jesus again is knocking at your door? What could be greater than to be wanted by Jesus to become a worshipper? The woman said "the well is deep; whence hast thou living water?" Will you not just throw your doubts aside? Will you not cease to hesitate? Will you not say, Lord, I will open the door? The woman opened her door when she said "Give me this water". Then Jesus began to speak about her matters, saying, "Go, call thy husband". What a word that was! She may have thought that no one knew about her private affairs. What about you? Is there something in your life which not even your parents know? Are you afraid that it will come out if you confess the Lord? But think how much of a relief it will be to know that whatever it is, it is washed away by the blood of Jesus. He knows all about it; He bore it in His body on the tree and He wants you free from the guilt of it, whatever it is. Jesus knew the woman's moral state, and He knows yours.

And so we could go through the details of the interview with this woman, how the Lord Jesus skilfully won her confidence, telling her all things she had ever done, but in a way that she emerges from the interview with her heart purified by faith and a blessed Man filling it. And this is just what He wants to do with you. He wants you to cease covering up matters no need like this woman to go out in the heat of the day so that you will not be known, but in liberty to speak to everyone because another Man is filling your heart. Such was Paul. Think of his history, but he could say "we... have been manifested to God" (2 Cor 5: 11), and again, "it is the very smallest matter that I be examined of you or of man's day... He that examines me is the Lord", 1 Cor 4: 3,4. What a joy and peace there is in believing, and in confessing, knowing that everything has been adjusted and settled - He "told me all things I had ever done". But

this is not all; He will take us over to His side of things; we will sup with Him, and hear of things which eye has not seen, and ear not heard, and which have not come into man's heart, which God has prepared (see 1 Cor 2: 9). Not only are they to be revealed to us by the Spirit, but the Lord Jesus, as we sup with Him, will open heavenly things up to us. Think of how He spoke to the two on their way to Emmaus, telling them from all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. This is the end toward which He is working in our day. He wants to bring us into the understanding of heavenly things, not only that we may see life, but may really live to God in the joy of sonship.

Divine things are so vast and so glorious, and the time left for our formation in them so brief, that we cannot afford not to open the door to Christ and give Him full access to our hearts. May we do so and spend the rest of our time to the will of God.

PLAINFIELD

17 November 1974

SATISFACTION

A.McBride

Isaiah 55: 1-3

This is a wonderful proposition on the part of God. He is prepared to feed us, give us something to drink, something that will satisfy. Think of God addressing Himself to you. Yes, to you, and me: "Ho, every one that thirsteth". Think of God, as it were, opening His heart to you. Are you going to let that message go over your head? Are you going to pass it by? God in His wonderful goodness is speaking to a sin-parched world. He is saying "Ho, every one that thirsteth". It is like the call of the preacher, God calling your attention, God speaking "once, and twice", Job 33: 14. Think of God's feelings in the gospel: "Ho, every one that thirsteth". Are you thirsting, friend? Can you really say that you are satisfied? How can you be satisfied without Christ? The heart of every man, woman and child is so made by God that it is incapable of being satisfied without Christ.

One of our spiritual fathers said that man never secures his own happiness (see F.E.R. Vol.7, p.210). Legislation is coming in all around us to make more room for leisure and such things. Money is being poured into the leisure industry, man allegedly catering for his own happiness. What is the result? Just a continuation of the misery and dissatisfaction. All around us, industrially and in every other way, there is nothing but dissatisfaction. The god of this world will keep it that way because he is not capable of providing the satisfaction that would meet the need of any man or woman or boy or girl. There is only One who can do that, and that is God Himself, and He presents Christ as the answer to every problem of man - your problem, my problem, your soul-sickness, my soul-sickness. God presents Jesus, the blessed Saviour, as the answer for all, and in this wonderful way: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye... buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk". Think of that! "Come ye to the waters" - that is the flow of God in grace to man, in wonderful grace. Are you coming? He says "Come ye buy, and eat". Find

something for your soul, something for your constitution, something to refresh and build you up, to give you life.

The woman in John 4 was thirsting. She came to the well. She found Jesus there. She came to the well but she found a different kind of water from what she came for originally. She was what men would call a bad woman. She was so ashamed of herself that she did not come at the time when others came to the well. It was customary, I understand, in those days that the women went to the well at a certain time of day. But this woman obviously had not gone at that time. Maybe she was a social outcast. I do not know what your standing in society is, but there she was. She came to that well. There was a Man sitting at the well. He began to speak to her. Jesus is anxious to draw near to you. It says "He must needs pass through Samaria", John 4: 4. Think of the way the Lord Jesus took just to meet that needy soul. He sat there waiting patiently for her coming. Then He began to speak to her. I do not know whether John gives us the whole conversation. He gives the essentials of it anyway. But there was something wrought out in the soul of that woman that would be entirely between her and Christ.

I wonder if you have come to this, come to some experience of coming into the presence of Jesus, finding that only He can satisfy you? She thought that she would get satisfaction in that well. She brought her pitcher and was ready to draw the water out of the well. But the Lord says "Every one who drinks of this water shall thirst again" (v. 13). If you keep on the way in which you are going, you will thirst again. Even although you may be coming to the meetings, you will thirst again unless you have had a personal transaction with the Lord Jesus. Coming to the meetings in itself is fine; keep coming, but you must come to know the Saviour for yourself. He said to that woman "Whosoever drinks of the water which I shall give him shall never thirst for ever " (v 14). It is more than the water. It is the drinking. It is the appropriation, the partaking of it, the receiving of it from the hand of Jesus. Have you had a touch from Jesus? Have you come into His presence as a sinner? Do not be afraid to tell the Lord Jesus that you are a sinner. You can tell Him anything.

Some things you might not want to tell even to your father or your mother. Some things you would not even tell your best friend, but you can tell Jesus. He knows it anyway. He knows the state of your soul. He knows the bitterness, He knows the dissatisfaction, the uncertainty, the sense of guilt that is there at times. He knows what your innermost thoughts are. You can come to Jesus freely.

There He was, sitting at that well. I think the very fact that He sat at the well would indicate that He had a friendly attitude towards this woman. He was sitting, not standing or towering over her or confronting her, just sitting there. I think it stresses the availability of Jesus to a needy soul, and He is available to you. Oh yes, He is in heaven, He is not sitting at a well now, but He is just as available. When you get down on your knees and just turn your heart to the Lord and speak to Him either audibly or inaudibly, you have an immediate access into His presence. He is listening, ready to fill you with the refreshment of the sense of your sins forgiven. The woman drank of *that* water. She left her own waterpot. She had had enough of that. She found Christ and He filled her heart. 'None, none but Christ can satisfy'. Are you satisfied with Christ? Have you found the blessed Saviour? And has He found you?

The woman went away into the city and said "Come, see a man" (v 29). She became a preacher, an evangelist. "Come, see a man who told me all things I had ever done". She had no more secrets, no more sense of shame or anything of that kind. She was satisfied with Christ. He had met every need.

In Isaiah 55 it says "Come ye... without money". Even if you have no money, come and buy. I think it is to stress the importance of a transaction. It is not that you have anything you can contribute. You come in all your need, in all your poverty, in all the depth of your longing for satisfaction, for forgiveness. Come as you are, but come and buy; that is, have a transaction with Jesus. He is the blessed One who has paid the price. He has paid the awful debt. That debt was paid at Calvary's cross by a blessed suffering Saviour as He took on Himself, holy sinless One that He was, the whole weight of God's judgment against sin. "Him who knew not sin he has made

sin for us, that we might become God's righteousness in him", 2 Cor 5: 21. Have you found that Jesus has met your need on the cross? And more! On that cross He has met the claims of God in respect of sin. He has satisfied God. It is a wonderful thing to be able to preach that. The claims of God's throne have been satisfied. Every attribute of God has been met, every requirement of His divine nature has been glorified in the sacrifice of that blessed One, Jesus our Saviour. God is satisfied and He has given the proof of it in that He has raised Him from among the dead. Do you know that the resurrection of Jesus is the proof that atonement has been made, that the claims of God have been met? The blood of Jesus has satisfied God, and the judgment of God against man in death has been fully met. God has raised Him from among the dead and put Him at His right hand, a blessed Saviour for you and me. Are you coming? "Come ye, buy, and eat: yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price". What blessing God would give you! He is not simply bringing forward to you His righteousness and your unrighteousness. No! God in wonderful grace is meeting it with His own supply. "Eat". What food you can eat! Wine and milk - the joy of satisfaction. Wine would speak of the joy the gospel would bring into your soul. Milk would speak of the sustenance that would build you up. Children are given milk to build up their constitution. God does that in the gospel. He presents Christ that we may feed upon that blessed One, to feed on Him as the One who came so near to display God in love.

The man in Luke 10 had wounds and the Samaritan came to him where he was "and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine" (v 34). The Lord Jesus knows how to meet your need. He will do more than just meet your need. He will fill you with joy, give you a sense of the joy that is in the heart of God a sense by the Spirit of the blessedness of what it is to come into relationship with Him. I suppose the man on the Jericho road was typical of so many of us, brought up in a Christian household. He was at Jerusalem but he wanted the world, he wanted something else. He left there and went down on the Jericho road and was met by robbers. He found the

awfulness of what the world is. It would strip you of every vestige of respectability. They left him in a half-dead state. The priest and the Levite passed him by, but the Samaritan, as he journeyed, came up to where he was. Jesus comes to where you are in all your need, and He would draw near to you tonight. He "bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine"; that is, he brought in a sense of comfort, of relief. What a relief it is to know your sins forgiven! If you have never had that experience, I trust you will soon have it, that you will know the relief and comfort of knowing your sins forgiven. The Saviour can soothe you, can give you a sense that He has borne everything for you.

What a way He took to come to you! What joy springs up in your heart, the first flush of joy after you are converted! "Pouring in oil and wine; and having put him on his own beast, took him to the inn and took care of him". God proposes these wonderful things in the gospel. The impression from this scripture is that the heart of God is full. Why keep going on the way you are, when there is a wonderful answer in Christ? In John 7 it says "In the last, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried saying" (v 37). They had been having a feast and they had had it for three days and still were not satisfied. They were not satisfied because they had not invited Jesus. On the last day He was standing there calling on those who thirst, giving them a promise. "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink". That is like God. "Ho, every one that thirsteth". "Jesus stood and cried". He was bypassed by the whole system of the world, by all these religious leaders who had their feast of emptiness for three days, but there He was standing, crying "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believes on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water". How they flowed out of the woman in John 4! "Come, see a man", she said. I trust that each one here will come to Jesus and find that in Him there is satisfaction. Come into the blessing that God would give you. Come and drink and, by the Spirit, out of your belly shall flow rivers of living water. That means that in your life there is an

answer to the gospel, there is a change in your life. Your life is changed when you come to Christ and receive the Holy Spirit.

Not only is God proposing forgiveness of sins, but He is also ready to give you the gift of the Holy Spirit. He says "I will pour my Spirit... and my blessing", Isa 44: 3. The heart of God would pour out His Spirit. In John 7 the intention is that the Spirit is received in the heart to seal the work of Christ, so that there is an outflowing from satisfied hearts of rivers of living water. May you enjoy these things; may you find satisfaction in Christ, for His Name's sake!

GRANGEMOUTH

14 January 1979

THE CHILDREN'S PATHWAYS

Scripture speaks of "the right paths of the Lord"; therefore it is for us to search them out, follow them and stay in them. However much these paths may have been trodden, there are always fresh sights and experiences to be enjoyed in the company of others who, by God's grace, are also in "the way". For instance, as in the turbulent time of Jeremiah, there are still "the ancient paths" and "the good way". No doubt it is the fear of God that is referred to, not a dread of Him but just owning the claims of His love upon us. It is a narrow way in the sense that there is less to distract us, and also the eye of a Holy Father is continually upon the pilgrim travelling along it. It is the path that leads into life.

We often speak too of the path of faith. In some respects this is like the woodland and moorland trails where further directions are given on reaching a certain point. We never know what is before us but the traveller on the path of faith has always one object in view. He looks off from the difficulties and circumstances to Jesus who has trodden the whole of this way and whose coming again is his constant expectation. In connection with the great Christian privilege of knowing the Father, the Lord is Himself "the way, and the truth, and the life". I have heard of a roadside sign with these words upon it:-

Without the WAY there is no going
Without the TRUTH there is no knowing
Without the LIFE there is no living

Then there is the path of the truth. The shortest book of the Bible was written to a mother with her children and brought greetings from their cousins. However young or old these children were, the apostle John wrote that they were "walking in truth", that is living as true believers. They were loved by many for the eternal truth's sake and they could always rely on the grace of God the Father. It is by being first loved that we learn to love as a response so that doing the will of God becomes a ready thing. As with older believers, a

believing child should soon urgently desire to remember the Lord in the breaking of bread. This is called the Lord's supper. Have you thought and spoken about it yet?

J.C.Evershed