

REDEMPTION

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The text

This edition is based on the texts of Mr North's books which first appeared on the website of Lanark Christian Fellowship many years ago.

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Contents

1 - IN HIM THROUGH HIS BLOOD.	7
2 - IDENTIFICATION AND SUBSTITUTION...	14
3 - ATONEMENT.	29
4 - THE BLOOD OF SPRINKLING.	36
5 - THE LION-LAMB.....	48
6 - A LAMB FOR A HOUSE.....	59
7 - THE TABERNACLE (GOD'S HOUSE).....	66
8 - THE LAMB OF GOD - THE FIRSTBORN...	91
9 - THE KINSMAN-REDEEMER.....	96

10 - JUSTIFICATION..... 116

11 - CAPTIVITY TURNED - PENTECOST. 142

1- IN HIM THROUGH HIS BLOOD.

Redemption is a mystery. In the Colossian letter Paul relates it to 'the kingdom of his dear Son', into which we have been translated. He speaks of the Father's dear Son in whom we have redemption through His blood, and places all in context of creation, deliverance, firstborn, the Church. This array of familiar words connected here with such phrases as inheritance of the saints in light, kingdom of His dear Son, image of the invisible God, power of darkness, firstborn from the dead, has greater significance than may at first appear. In other settings these phrases would be very familiar, for each of them carries historical overtones. But leaving these, we will consider the great miracle of redemption itself.

It is not the fact and means of redemption that concerns us here, but Paul's assertion that we have redemption in the Son of His love. The fact that redemption is through His blood inspires us all with grateful love that He should have been so lovingly willing and unspeakably ready to suffer and die for us. Our souls need little stirring up to wonder at such love and grace. Redemption is through bloodshed. This is declared again and again throughout scripture, in the Old Testament by Moses and in the New Testament by Peter, Paul and John and the writer to the Hebrews. Each of these emphasises the importance of bloodshed, saying that apart from it there could have been no remission of sins.

In his first epistle Peter writes, 'ye were not redeemed with corruptible things but with the precious blood of Christ'. The

Hebrews letter states, 'almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission'. Both these writers also speak of the blood of sprinkling, the latter drawing our attention to what it accomplishes. John in turn tells of its amazing power to cleanse and loose, and the part it plays in overcoming satan. Should we be able to compile a list of the virtues, uses and accomplishments of the blood of the Lamb, it would surely be almost unending. Poets and prophets, preachers and teachers have left us such a legacy of sacred knowledge of the blood of Christ that no attempt to add to it need be made here. We are all sufficiently acquainted with this vast treasure to be able to quote many of the various authors verbatim; and so we should, for who would be redeemed except the blood had been shed, and who could

have supplied blood so precious as His? We must never submit to any attempt to diminish the abundance of testimony to the redeeming power of the blood of Christ; instead we too must for ever testify to the efficacy of that blood and strongly assert its indispensable place in the whole scheme of redemption.

To do this properly we all need to be taught of the Spirit, especially with regard to the revelation given through Paul. This apostle claims to have been caught up to paradise to receive special revelation from God. He says also that there came a time in his life when he went up to Jerusalem in order to communicate to the apostles and elders the gospel he was preaching. They 'added nothing to me', he says, but there is no doubt he added to them. In certain matters the Lord through Paul greatly enlarged upon

the things He had previously revealed to Peter and John. Through Paul, the Lord has been pleased to make known vast mysteries, taking him into His confidence and revealing to him the workings of many secrets not otherwise revealed. This precious knowledge of our oneness and identity with the Lord Jesus is of incalculable worth; it is also of utmost importance to us, for apart from this we should not have known the deepest secrets or redemption.

All the great amount of truth previously revealed on the subject would have been incomplete without Paul's vital contribution. The extensive scriptural literature on the subject, from Moses onwards into the Church age, makes much of it, but it is given to Paul alone to tell us 'in Him we have redemption'. Seldom is the little preposition 'in' emphasised, with the result that the

immeasurable truth it opens up is largely unknown.

The word 'in' emphasises the person above His blood; it announces plainly that the shedding of His blood was a means to an end. The bloodshed was necessary and indispensable to our redemption. It was not the end of it, however, but only the foundation. Beyond the fact of redemption through bloodshed, that little word 'in' draws our attention to the Redeemer who shed it. Properly understood, it reveals redemption in an entirely new and greater light, for it draws attention to truth not otherwise made known. This new realm of truth may be best summed up in the word identity.

What glories await discovery by the awakened heart beginning to understand the fullest implications of this miracle

wrought by God. No wonder the apostle prays for the Ephesians that the eyes of their hearts may be enlightened. He had just told them they had been made acceptable in the Beloved 'in whom they had redemption through His blood.' Now he prays that they shall 'see' all he is writing to them. He wants all men to see and enter into the 'in-ness' of it all. Much has been made of the outwardness of redemption — the cross, the tortures, the blood, the suffering, the death, and rightly so, but it is high time the churches entered with understanding into the 'in-ness' of it all.

2- IDENTIFICATION AND SUBSTITUTION.

We must enter into the meaning of this saying - 'Jesus died for me as me'. The truth of substitution may be defined as 'one in place of another'; it has often been preached in such words as 'in my room and stead'. This has come to mean 'one taking the place of another with the purpose of taking the sin of - bearing the punishment of - paying the debt of - dying the death of - another, upon the condition that the other be entirely exonerated, reprieved and set free'. More than that, because of the justifying intention of God in the act, the one reprieved goes out from under all condemnation, entirely forgiven by Him and given a righteousness which not only avails for the present, but also for all the past days of his life. This righteousness is the

righteousness of man, for it is the righteousness of the Man Christ Jesus. It is also the righteousness of God made manifest in flesh; it is perfect.

Substitution has come to mean transference also. In the act of redemption the sinner's sin is transferred from him to Jesus Christ, the righteous Man, and this righteous Man's righteousness is transferred to the sinner. It should be noted at this point that the state of sinlessness cannot exist as of itself. God is sinless, but He cannot be sinless unless He is righteous. Sinlessness is a negative state - absence of sin; it can only exist as the result of the positive, powerful state of righteousness. That is why in order to save men God has to impart righteousness to them. In us it becomes the powerful working principle of new life apart from which it could not be.

Sinlessness, righteousness and holiness must co-exist in us as one as they do in God, or else they cannot exist in us at all.

Righteousness precludes sin and produces holiness. In regenerate men sinlessness is the direct result of the powerful working of righteousness producing holiness as its fruit in the life. Sin does not grow on the tree of righteousness, its fruit is holiness. 'Either make the tree good and its fruit good', says Jesus, 'or else make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt'. A good tree cannot bring forth corrupt fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

These truths introduce us to some of the basic powers and workings of redemption, without which it could not be. But Paul informs us of something greater by far, unto which all these are steps on the way. Words like substitution, atonement, justification

etc. are technical terms of theology. They are classifications necessary to analytical thought; they must never be accepted as rigid limitations or watertight compartments. For instance substitution must not only be understood as Jesus dying for me instead of me, but also for me as me. When He hung on the cross, Jesus was not only made sin, He was also made the sinner. He was made murder, adultery, filth, uncleanness, the lie, deceit, pride, betrayal and whatever other manifestation of evil may be named as sin. He was also made and treated as the murderer, the adulterer, the source of filth and uncleanness, the one who both did and was capable of doing all these things. Jesus went to the cross as the sinner, there to be made the sin, the one needing cleansing, forgiving, justifying, saving, reconciling, redeeming. He also went to the

cross as God, the one who cleanses, forgives, justifies, saves, reconciles, redeems. More, He went there as cleansing, forgiveness, justification, salvation, reconciliation, redemption. So completely is Christ Jesus everything, and made everything to us.

On this ground of realisation Paul seeks to impart the revelation to us - identification. Substitution has neither justification nor spiritual meaning unless it is part of this. God Himself would not have been true, nor could He have justified us unless upon this ground. In fact there could have been no justification for anyone or anything except upon the basis of identification. All would have been a manipulation of ideas having no substance, and entirely without truth. There could be no true God; in fact nothing. Spiritual identification, as it is now revealed

unto men, arose from identity of being in God, and is not, nor could have been, possible apart from it. New Testament salvation is an adaptation and application of God's own being and life and requirements to man and his needs. Its comprehensiveness is astounding; even the beginnings of understanding are overwhelming. God's propositions and provisions to us in Christ are well-nigh incredible.

This is why each one in the New Covenant must be taught of God. To read the writings of those who were so taught is to receive the first faint glimmerings of the seeming broad daylight of understanding in which they lived. Their intention by writing was to bring us all into their own enjoyed state; it is also the purpose of God who inspired them. He wants us to pass into Him in conscious

experience of redemption and to live eternally in that state. For this reason God became Man.

We behold the beginnings of this identification in the incarnation when God miraculously identified Himself with man by birth. We further see it at Jordan, as the Lord steps into the place of sinners and identifies Himself with them there by water baptism. There John said, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world'. Jesus said, 'Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness'; and God the Father said, 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased'. But not until Calvary do we see it in all fullness.

God did a marvellous thing at Calvary, but it was not the final goal; the blood shed there was the most vital factor in the plan of

redemption as it was revealed at that point, because it flowed from that identity and unification from which all came and into which it brings (all). Jesus was not a sinner by birth, nor was He a sinner at Jordan, but at Golgotha He was made the sinner. He had to be, or else He had no business with the cross, nor would it have been right for His Father to sacrifice Him there. God had to be just in what He did.

Not for Him the high-handed actions and despotic words of men. In all His words and works He had to be justified before angels; He also has to be seen to be right in the eyes of all devils and principalities and powers. More than that, God has to be seen to be righteous and just and faithful in all He does before the eyes of all His saints. Not that God is judged of men, or that man ought to approach his Lord with this in mind, but so

great and gracious is our God that He has even acted with this in mind too. He is absolutely perfect beyond degree. Therefore everything He achieved at Calvary was primarily by identification, and as following logically from that by substitution also. All was accomplished in, and upon, and by, one person, in one act, at one time.

Gethsemane had been the place of final decision. To God, Jesus' sweat there was as precious as His blood on the cross; it is recorded plainly enough, 'his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground'. To His Father that hour of agony sealed the redemptive virtues latent in His blood, so soon to be shed; it justified the whole course they had so far travelled together, and vindicated the actions He intended shortly to take. 'Abba, Father', Jesus cried in repetitive assertion of Sonship;

child and Son and man though He was, He felt a babe as the shadow of death loomed over Him, dark and threatening. 'Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.'

What the Father said to Him there no one knows; we only have the record of what Jesus said to His Father. It may be that between the words 'me' and 'nevertheless' the Father said 'it is not possible' or 'no Son, this cup must be drunk to the bottom', and Jesus replied in resignation and agreement, 'nevertheless not my will but thine be done'. On the other hand, perhaps this is the first of the occasions when Jesus called upon His Father and received no answer. We have no means of knowing. Angels came and ministered to Him.

He arose strengthened from His vigil, physically restored, and went obediently to

the cross, confident in His God and Father. The Man's last appeals against God's sentence were uttered, He had received and agreed to His final directives. From that moment He was treated as the sinner; the Spirit led Him all the way. Betrayal, apprehension, desertion by man followed in swift succession, but these were only the beginning of sorrows; imprisonment, torture, mockery, beating, blasphemy, denial, judgement all following in their train added to His miseries.

To us who view afar off, all were so wrong, but to Him all was so right. He had accepted the cup and was drinking it. It was self-applied, though given Him from His Father's hand; He blamed nobody. He loved and excused His civil judge and totally forgave those who carried out the sentence. Having taken the sinners' place, He was fully

prepared to be made sin. He pleaded no cause, sought no reprieve, asked no mercy, begged no pardon; boldly He approached the awful hour, bearing His cross, accepting the terrible curse. He had consented to it all; He knew His own righteousness would sustain Him; His Father would keep Him and His God would save Him.

So as the man of sin - the sinner bearing his own sin - the Man bearing the sin of the world - the victim of the curse - He went to the cross. There He hung totally identified with man, as the outcast, the unforgivable, the unjustifiable, the unredeemable, the forsaken. He was the soul needing salvation, humanity needing redemption, personality needing justifying, enmity needing reconciling, nature needing regenerating, death needing life and man needing God. Hopeless, helpless, He became nothing and

less than nothing. With awful wonder we are permitted to see His identification with man going far beyond 'being found in fashion as a man' , to utter identity with him in his sin. More even than that, going further still beyond the comprehension of the mind, He became the representation of man's nature - sin itself.

Here lies the deepest mystery of everything connected with God's love and man's salvation. At the same time He became as the sinner, and on that same cross where He was so identified with sin, He was the sinless man utterly identified with God and clearly identifiable as righteousness. The wonder of Jesus on the cross was that there He was also the Christ; He did not need to forsake one in order to become the other. He was both; had He not been both He would have ceased to have been either. While still

representing the sin-man in extremity of need, He was also the man born of God to destroy that evil man and end that extreme need.

In short, Christ Jesus is made unto us absolutely everything. He was both the man needing to be redeemed and the Redeemer supplying the redemption he needed. Paul saw this great truth as clearly as any man. At what point he was caught up to paradise to receive the heavenly revelation is difficult to decide, but the knowledge gained from insight into this mystery lay behind many, if not all the things he said. With marvellous clarity of vision he says, 'I am (was) crucified with Christ'; with breadth of understanding he writes, 'through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus through faith in his blood', and further still says, 'in whom we have redemption'.

3- ATONEMENT.

The idea of redemption is first introduced into the Bible in the Old Testament, and is most basic of all to the salvation therein revealed. Unlike its companion truth Atonement, it is not exclusive to that covenant, but by Christ Jesus is basic also to the salvation God provides in the New Covenant. On no account must the blood of redemption be confused in our thinking with the blood of atonements; they are not the same. In the Old Testament different sacrifices had different meanings and were made for a variety of reasons, and their blood(s) effected different results.

In most cases the multiplicity of blood(s) and the reasons for which it was shed is answered in the New Testament by the blood of Christ, but not in every case. The

reason for this is that atonement was never intended for, nor is it provided by God, for the Church. It is not a Church experience, therefore it is not a New Testament doctrine. The doctrine of the Atonement belongs exclusively to the Old Testament; it was an interim provision of God for Israel only; He introduced it to them at Sinai when He gave them the law. Atonement rightly belongs to law, it goes with its nature and partakes of its limitations.

Atonement perfectly fits in with the system of imputed righteousness which God instituted for Israel, for its stated purpose is to provide coverage. Upon the basis of the implied coverage afforded by a specific atonement made according to the Law of God, a man could find forgiveness for a particular sin and be justified in His sight. That is why the word is better used always in

a plural sense - atonements. By its very nature this provision could only be most limited, very repetitive and entirely retrospective and retroactive; priests made an atonement only. The blood made atonement for the soul, but when shed it only made an atonement.

Beside personal atonements, Israel also kept an annual national atonement. This was completely retrospective in character. It was ordained of God to take place on the tenth day of the seventh month each year. We will not here examine the ordinance in detail, but notice the points relevant to our theme. The atonement made on that day was for the stated purpose of cleansing the people from all their sins before the Lord. It was comprehensive. As stated, it embraced all sins of a certain kind.

The writer to the Hebrews is most helpful here. Referring in chapter nine to the annual atonement, he plainly states that upon that occasion the offering was for the errors of the people. Of old in Israel these errors were not called errors but 'sins of ignorance'. The atonement was not instituted to deal with the sins of which the people were aware, but the sins of which they had no knowledge, either on the Day of Atonement or at the time when they were committed. A whole range of things is covered by this classification, all of which could be described as sins of omission or commission because of ignorance. These were all dealt with at once, a whole year's sins of ignorance were 'covered', atoned for, blotted out, in one day. Sins of which the people had knowledge were not included in that particular atonement however. Everyone of these had

to be atoned for individually, either as soon as it was committed or immediately it was recognised for what it was; refusal to do this meant excommunication from Israel, and forfeiture of life. In those days certain sins were entirely unforgivable. Careful reading in the book of Leviticus will be sufficient to inform the enquiring mind of all it should know about this.

It is a most comforting thought that errors are regarded as such by God, for few there are who would think they never made any mistakes. But it is the more sobering description given by God to Moses which more truly shows the nature of errors.

Before the Lord they are sins. Before men and women they may truly be errors, but not in His eyes. He must deal with everything according to its intrinsic as well as its moral nature and manifestation and

occurrence. So, although He did not impute sin to the person who did it in ignorance, or punish the people because of their errors, He nevertheless still regarded all these as sins. He did not overlook or excuse them, but kindly remembered all, appointing a day of special atonement that the offence they caused Him should be totally forgiven.

The element in which the atonement was effected was blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat by the high priest. But all blood was not the same blood; God neither regarded it as the same nor allowed it to be used for the same purposes. Special selection of animals and bloods was ordered by Him, each strictly legalised and appointed for and limited to specific purposes and ends. He did this because He was dealing with different kinds of sins.

On the Day of Atonement the blood which was ordained of God for these was goats' blood. Previously the same day the blood of a lamb, together with its body, had been offered upon the altar of burnt sacrifice. There was to be no mixture or confusion of bloods; God's selection for the atonement was deliberately not lambs' blood. On that day, as on every other, no blood may be shed until the lambs' blood was shed: that blood must take precedence over all other blood(s). The blood of the lamb on the altar - the blood of the goat on the mercy seat. The Hebrews' letter is quite clear about this, 'the blood of bulls and of goats', it repeatedly says, adding nothing about the lamb. Taking note of this, we may well ask, 'why the difference and what is it?'

4- THE BLOOD OF SPRINKLING.

Turning to the New Testament we discover that John is the great advocate of the Lamb: he sets Him forth in his Gospel and exalts Him in the Revelation. To John the blood is 'the blood of THE LAMB', and there is no other blood beside. It is exclusively of the Lamb's blood he is speaking when he says, 'the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin'. That his mind is also taken up with the ritual associated with the events of the Day of Atonement can hardly be doubted, for closely following the above remark he says of Jesus Christ the righteous that 'He is the propitiation (Gk. place of propitiation, or Propitiatory - Mercy Seat) for our sins'. He makes no reference to bulls or goats, yet with spiritual insight and divine understanding the apostle is dealing in this

section of his epistle with sins of ignorance. These are the sins which are being constantly cleansed from us as we walk in the light, sins of which we are ignorant, sins not recognised as such by us, mistakes, sometimes repeatedly made, words, works, tones, deportment - so many things about us which are as yet unlike Jesus whom we love so well. This is the continuous function and ministry of the blood to us as we walk on in the light unto the full image and likeness of sonship.

Lower down in the epistle John deals with the other side of the sin question, and in this shows the hand of the same God at work. There must be clear understanding of heart and absolute cleavage in the mind between known sin and sins of ignorance. This passage deals with known sin, stating that 'he who is born of God does not commit sin',

going even further and saying 'he cannot sin'. This is a very strong statement, which at first may appear by implication to be contradictory in spirit to what he has said earlier. So much so in fact that some have dared to alter the text in order to tone it down to some degree. But all to no avail. God cannot be corrected, and to tamper with His word is in itself sin, and an attempt to administer Him a rebuke. John meant what he said, and seeing that he was God's amanuensis, so does God. Nevertheless, the two seemingly contradictory passages do present a problem to many devout souls who have not seen the distinction drawn by God between sins in this manner.

Unseen by us but known to God there is an iniquity even about our holy things because there is a part of us as yet unredeemed. By His power and in His grace God can and does

sanctify to us things that originated in sin and came from satan via the fall into the human race. He also sanctifies unto Himself what He has not yet redeemed, but not by the coverage afforded under the old covenant by atonement. In the New Covenant sanctification is by the cleansing power of the blood of the lamb. However, although He does guarantee entire sanctity, God cannot overlook the evil origins of things, or shut His eyes to their nature. Nevertheless, upon His terms He keeps us cleansed by the blood, sanctifying us from all evil unto fellowship with Himself and each other without sin. For this reason no one taught of God says he has no sin. He does claim to have the seed of God in him though, and believes he does not habitually commit sin; parallel with that he also knows he is not without errors and needs cleansing

constantly from them. Each of these is a manifestation of the power of the original intentions of satan and the purpose of his present contamination of the saints who may be unaware of these things. They are glaringly offensive to God though, and must be purged by the momentary cleansing of the blood. God does not now allow for an annual cleansing, He sanctifies by permanent cleansing administered constantly.

The holy things of the Old Testament, though they were inanimate things and amoral, had to be atoned for also, therefore annual cleansing was administered to all these that they should be sanctified to God too. This done they were fitted for continued use for another year. As the people's sins of ignorance were counted as covered on the Day of Atonement so that Israel could

continue as a nation, so were the 'holy things', which the priests handled and thereby contaminated, cleansed and given further permission to continue in use.

All this is bound up in the great mystery of the redemption and the Redeemer; it lies deeply rooted in the still greater mystery of identification. How could Jesus be God and man at once? How could He be made sin and yet remain free from it at the same time? The answer to the second question is found in the correct answer to the first. No man can explain the mystery but all men may rejoice in it. Similarly we cannot explain how it is possible to be free from sin and yet never be able to say we have no sin: all depends upon the power of the blood of Jesus Christ and the pleasure of God. We may all rejoice in the experience of it though

and cry with John 'the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanses us from ALL sin'.

The retroactive aspect of the blood shed and then sprinkled on the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement is very clear; that blood did not cover the future but the past. The children of Israel were not thereby granted another twelve months license to sin, but pardon for a past year of unrecognised sins and absolution from the punishment they deserved. Atonement must not be confused in the mind with indulgence; it was not a contrivance whereby permission to sin was gained from God. It was a method devised by God to cover the past twelve months of sin, and should draw our attention to His exceeding great patience and everlasting mercy. It was effective only for those who, upon recognition and conviction of some previous sin, had confessed it to God and

brought Him the appropriate atonement at once. Although atonement gave assurance about the future, it did not allow presumption.

Unlike the justification and sanctification afforded by the blood of the Old Testament atonements, the blood of the New Covenant does not cover sin. Superior to that it is sprinkled on hearts to actually cleanse away the sin. It is not the blood of atonement but the blood of redemption; we are actually redeemed from sin. But although the blood of Christ is effective throughout all eternity over the whole range of human sin, according to God's purposes, it is no more prospective in application than the blood of bulls and goats. The historic sacrifice and bloodshed of Jesus was sufficient to deal with all sin for ever. But no man must become presumptuous; a redeemed person

may only experience the power and efficacy of the blood by continually walking in the light where constant cleansing is available. Cleansing is only moment by moment. It is designed by God to keep us instantly cleansed throughout this life as we walk in fellowship with Him on all matters.

Permanent cleansing is only effected by instant cleansing.

It is important to notice that when thinking in terms of the animal creation and Jesus, nowhere does the scripture refer to Jesus' blood as the blood of a goat or of a bull; always it is presented as the blood of a lamb. Jesus is not called the goat of God or the bull of God but the Lamb of God; John says of Him that He (Himself the person), 'beareth away the sin of the world' and 'the blood of His Son cleanseth us from all sin'. Jesus the person bore it away bodily; Jesus' blood

cleanses from the contamination of it.

Redemption, justification and sanctification by cleansing combine in His blood and are set forth in the New Testament as superior to the coverage granted to Israel by atonement.

Something else of major importance confronts us here. A particular controversy which has long raged among theologians at once disappears when the word atonement is banished from our thinking and from the preaching of the New Covenant. Such phrases as 'partial atonement' or 'limited atonement' are seen to be misleading if only it is recognised that sin cannot be covered. If the thought of a collation of sins be retained, limited coverage might be entertained, but God in Christ did not principally deal with a multitude of sins, but with sin as a principle. Sin is the nature of

the seed from which human life comes, defiling the springs of thoughts, expressing itself in words and actions. How then could God deal with it partially? It is not possible; there is no coverage for sin, only total exposure.

Principles cannot be dealt with by half, or by partial measures. Counter action extending to the whole, plus the introduction of new principles is the only way they may be dealt with. Less would leave them still operative and at best could only be considered repressive. This whole principle is revealed by redemption. The entire nation of Israel was redeemed in and from Egypt; redemption was all-inclusive. On the other hand justification was only operative for the individual who sought atonement for his sin - it was imputed to that person alone upon bloodshed and sacrifice. But the blood of

the lamb upon the houses in Egypt was for the entire house of Israel. Although each house of each family was full of sinful men, if it was sprinkled with the blood of the lamb it was passed over by God. All Israel was redeemed, but of no Israelite was it said that he or she was justified or that atonement had been made. Atonement for sin was a later revelation.

5- THE LION-LAMB.

The Lord the Lamb is referred to by John in Revelation chapter five as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, which may at first be regarded as surprising, for the lion is an unclean beast. The lion had no place in the Levitical scheme of sacrifices, but roamed freely on the earth as the mighty lord of the animal kingdom. But this titular relationship to the animal world is not made about Jesus in connection with sacrifice. When He is called the Lion it is by one of the elders around the throne, but when John looks for the lion he sees 'a Lamb as it had been slain' standing in the midst of the throne. The Lion and the Lamb are one; the elder sees the Lamb as the Lion and John sees the Lion as the Lamb.

At the time both are gazing upon the throne, John sees the cross, the sacrificial Lamb, the blood; the elder sees the tomb, the royal Lion-King, the resurrection. John, all-human, can never forget the One whom they pierced; the elder, all-divine, can never think of Him save as King of creation. Their individual perspective was quite natural to them both. They speak as they should, each from their first and longest knowledge of their Lord. The elder knew Him first as God and King. John knew Him first as man and slave: the elder knew Him as God and King made man and slave, but John knew Him as man and slave made God and King. Each knew and worshipped Him in the reverse order to the other and therefore spoke of Him in that way - we know Him to be one and the same. What a privilege is granted us.

It seems that the elder regarded Calvary as the great battleground where Jesus won honour and gained the authority to open the seven-sealed book held in the hand of the inscrutable One sitting on the throne. He saw the cross as the place where the greatest spiritual battle of all the ages was fought. It was as though Golgotha was a jungle where two mighty lions met and fought to the death. Neither granted the other any mercy; two ancient enemies matched themselves against each other in sheer naked strength. As those two lions met and engaged in battle, primitive forces of good and evil were unleashed, and with unmitigated hatred they fought on until one should destroy the other.

It was a foregone conclusion who would win. The battle was short and sharp, and even though he mustered all demon forces to his

aid, the devil was defeated. He rallied all his hosts, but the lone Lion of Judah overcame him and them. In view of this, some things spoken by Jesus before His crucifixion take on new significance: one was spoken in Gethsemane - 'Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?' The other was to Pilate - 'Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above'.

Just previously Pilate, in his ignorance, had said, 'I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee', and Jesus' remark was primarily an answer to that claim. But His final acceptance of the Father's will in Gethsemane and the point-blank refusal to accept angelic help were the Lord's declaration that He was determined to allow nothing to stand between Him and the

cross, and that He required help from no one. The Lord's answer to Pilate could be interpreted to mean, 'I am going into battle with satan and you cannot prevent me'. He went, He won. Hallelujah! That is how the elder saw it.

However, the words John heard were more than a revelation of an angelic or heavenly view of Calvary; his words also show the divine view of history. Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, is the root of David, the warrior-king. In Jewish eyes David was the greatest king in Israel's history; he was the man who won back the promised land for Israel. Kings of Judah liked to trace back their lineage to him but few of the kings who sprang from David were like their 'root father'. None of them knew that he himself in spirit sprang from Jesus the Lion, the root of the tribe. Jesus is the root and foundation

of true kingship; His lion-like effort and total victory at Calvary took Him to the cross and the throne. He had overcome satan as surely as David had overcome the raging lion, the prowling bear and mighty Goliath; He was the root of David's victory, and the foundation of his throne and kingdom and royalty and glory.

The patriarch and prophet Jacob had first seen it. Judah was his fourth son and seemed unlikely indeed to be given the kingly crown and sceptre; had he not three brothers older than himself? He had indeed but, as the eye of God, Jacob penetrates into the cause of present events and also sees into the distant future. Reuben, his firstborn was weak, unstable as water; he could not have the pre-eminence, there was nothing kingly about him. Simeon and Levi, next in order and named together, joined to commit

a most deceitful crime; they united their strength to sin and consequently forfeited what either separately might have obtained. They were therefore divided and scattered in Israel; neither of them could wear the crown.

'Judah', said Israel his father with prophetic voice, 'thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise', and first in Judah as a person and then through his family and tribe the lion-like qualities of his father emerged, culminating eventually in the kingly virtues of David and then of David's Son. Neither weak nor divided, He was first a lion's whelp, then He couched as a lion, an old lion, waiting till the crown and sceptre were His; He became the root from which David sprang.

The prophetic saga of Judah was the spiritual manifest of the best qualities of

Jacob the man, Israel the nation and David the conquering shepherd king. But chiefest of all, the Lion-Shiloh, unto whom the crown and sceptre belong and the gathering of the people shall be, is Jesus Christ the King. The elder saw it all and proclaimed Him as 'the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David', and there before him John saw Jesus the Lamb on the throne. As realisation dawned on him, John in heart and by many visions passed into the fulfilment of Jacob's prophecy. At last he heard myriads of angels around the beasts and elders, together with every creature in heaven and earth and under the earth and in the sea, praising God and the Lamb. Every one was gathered.

What a Lion the Lamb is! How much He accomplished on the cross - far too much for us to attempt to list or classify here even if we knew it all. New discoveries of His

triumphant crucifixion shall surely continuously be revealed to us as time unfolds; and eternity itself shall add new dimensions and perspectives to our grateful understanding. Although we must await these great future revelations, let us with all our heart enter more deeply into the things that are already revealed. The Lion-Lamb has both overcome satan and also completely borne away the sin of the world. In this chapter the theme of praise around the throne is the worthiness of the Lamb that was slain to redeem us to God and to make us a kingdom of priests who shall reign on the earth. In heaven the theme is redemption through the blood of the Lamb; in this connection the Lord's name is never directly linked with any other animal on earth, not even with those listed in the Pentateuch. The reason for this is that of all

the animals mentioned in the Bible the lamb is the one most commonly associated with sacrifice, and the only one named for redemption. When referring to the sacrifice made before the foundation of the world it is the Lamb that was slain. The sacrifice of the Lamb is foundational to everything God builds.

No other kinds of animal were slain for redemption; their blood(s) were not even considered by God for that purpose. For reasons decided by Him alone, only the blood of the lamb was redemptive. There is a quality of life in the Son of God so precious in His Father's eyes that has earned Him the title 'the Lamb of God'. Somehow this divine mystery has been woven into nature itself, for in the whole realm of the animal kingdom there is nothing so sweet and endearing to the human heart as a lamb.

There of course the likeness between the innocent animal and Jesus ends, for a lamb is well-nigh helpless and powerless. It is not these features of a lamb that speak to us of the Lord, and this is why, in order to describe Him as adequately as possible in animal terms, the qualities of the lion are ascribed to Him. On the cross He was a lion to destroy the devil and his minions, and a lamb to redeem souls in their millions.

6- A LAMB FOR A HOUSE.

When God of old moved Moses from the backside of the desert into Egypt, it was because the time had come for Him to redeem His people. Four hundred years before, though not in so many words, He had promised Abraham He would do so. At that time the fullness of the promise was unknown to men, but with God it was already an eternal oath involving an eventual blood covenant. Time and again He enlarged it, making further commitments to Abraham, until the day he at last made the great prophetic statement, 'God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering'.

Abraham was the original patriarch, the founding father of the nation of Israel. Through him God best displayed the basic relationship of Father and Son in the

Godhead, and revealed its fundamental purpose. Two fifths of a millennium passed into history before Abraham's seed had developed to race-like proportions, and by that time the children of Israel were prisoners in Egypt. So it came about that in fulfilment of His promise to Abraham, Moses was sent by God into Egypt. He was about to found a nation.

When the children of Israel went down into Egypt they were literally the family of Jacob, seventy souls in all, as yet only the beginnings of the tribes which later became the nation. But now they were a great and growing people whom God regarded as His house. How then could He leave them in the land of Egypt, 'the house of bondage'? He had determined to put into effect the eternal covenant of redemption and bring His people out of Egypt to the new

homeland He had promised them through Abraham. This accomplished He would dwell in (the midst of) them and fulfil all He intended when He made that original promise to Abraham, then they would be His people and He would be their God.

God knew He could not found a house or take a nation to Himself except by the lamb, nor could He redeem them except by its blood. With this in mind He sent Moses down to Egypt and following some preliminary exchanges with Pharaoh judged and punished that nation with a series of plagues. All of this, miraculous and necessary as it was, led up to the point where He revealed redemption to Israel. He planned that this should be the basis of the last plague, as well as the substance of the last judgement He intended to mete out

upon Egypt; He carefully instructed Moses in the divine method.

Unlike His form of procedure in the other nine plagues, the Lord did not move in the same way with the tenth. Until this last occasion He had sharply divided between Egypt and Israel, dealing with each as separate nations; now He was going to deal with them individually according to their families. Every household, whether they were Egyptians or Israelites, was to be dealt with in the same way. Whereas as far as the plagues had been visited upon Egyptians only, this last plague would be visited upon all without discrimination or exception unless they obeyed God. On the other hand everybody who obeyed Him would be saved quite irrespective of race. This was entirely new, so God gave His instructions very clearly.

He said that on a certain day every man was to take a lamb - a lamb for a house. It was to be without blemish, a young male; it was to be kept until a particular day and killed at a certain hour. Its blood must then be sprinkled upon the lintels and side posts of each house in which the lamb was to be eaten. God was precise about this; the lamb was to be eaten only by those within the house upon which its blood was sprinkled. God allowed only one exception to this commandment, namely, if the number of persons in the household were too few to eat the whole lamb it could be shared with a neighbouring household, providing the house was sprinkled with the blood of the same lamb whose flesh they ate. The whole lamb had to be devoured, God was adamant about that; He would allow nothing of it to remain in Egypt; if for any reason some of it

remained uneaten, it must be burned before they fled. God was redeeming His house and the whole lamb was for that whole house and that alone. As none of His redeemed people were to be left in Egypt, so nothing of the redeeming lamb could be left; God's word was 'a lamb for a house'. The blood was not acceptable to Him unless it was sprinkled upon the house: only there was it acceptable to Him. It was to be a token of their faithfulness, declaring to Him that they were within eating the lamb. If they would not eat the lamb, God would not redeem them; it was all very clear.

So it happened according to God's word; God brought out His people from Egypt and founded His nation and His house on the slain lamb. Doing so He kept to His eternal plan and also broadened the revelation. In the beginning it was 'the lamb slain from the

foundation of the world'; then in Canaan it was, 'God will provide Himself a lamb'; in Egypt it is 'a lamb for a house'. Until now no mention had been made of its blood: now the blood has been given a special function; only when God saw the blood did He pass over the house on which it was sprinkled; that house and only that house was safe. But this itself was only an indication, a further step towards a fuller revelation.

7- THE TABERNACLE (GOD'S HOUSE).

The Lord had planned that the house of Israel should be brought to and built in the land He had originally given to Abraham by promise, so He proceeded to lead the people there. The arrival there was delayed by many tragic events, during which the whole generation of responsible males that came out of Egypt was destroyed: this judgement of God spread out over forty years. When at last the judgement was complete, the nation came to Canaan and their home(-land) eventually fixed, God approached them about making Him a place for His abode.

His plan was that Israel in the land were to be God's house, His intention had been to dwell in His own tabernacle in the midst of them there. He had prepared them for this

earlier when He halted them at Sinai soon after crossing the Red Sea. He gathered them to Him there and gave them His law, then He gave them instructions about making and erecting His tent, and after that told them who He wanted as His servants. This done He gave them elaborate commandments about the sacrifices and offerings He required and how they were to be offered to Him. This was the equivalent of ordering the food He desired, telling them in detail what He wanted - or His likes, and what He would not have - His dislikes. He even told them how to prepare it for Him, taking meticulous care that they understood Him aright. All was to be laid upon three 'tables' specially constructed for Him according to His designs. He called these respectively the brazen altar, the altar of

shewbread and the golden altar. These were to be sanctified entirely to His use.

Nobody was allowed to touch or even to go near these except the priests in their special anointed liveries. Everything and everybody that stood and served within the tabernacle was to be holy unto the Lord. Each article of furniture and every vessel had been carefully made and then placed and anointed according to His commands. Every vessel was holy, however menial its use. Some were of gold, some of silver, some were earthen vessels, some were unto honour and some unto dishonour, and all had to be fit for the Master's use. Some contained the precious blood for God, some carried meat for men, some carried ashes to desolation without the camp, some held dead sparrows, some held incense, some oil. Of different shapes and sizes and uses, they

were made for a variety of reasons unto different ends; He had a use for them all, but all must be fit for the Lord's service.

Now almost all this was based upon a system of atonements devised by God for the benefit of His people. At first glance this system may appear very complex, certainly it was most exact. It was a method whereby, upon fulfilment of certain conditions, every person in Israel could be kept in favour and communication with God. While they were in Egypt it was unknown to them, for the system was only devised to function in connection with God's dwelling-place on earth. This was not in existence while as yet the people were still in Egypt. They had to be brought out of the world before there could be any house or law or any system of atonement. The blood of atonement(s) was never shed in Egypt, it was for God's house

only. The blood shed in Egypt was the blood of redemption.

The blood of redemption was shed and used for a different purpose than the blood of atonement. Redeeming blood was far more fundamental to Israel than the blood of atonement, indicating purchase with a view to salvation from death and possession and ownership. Nothing of this is ever attributed to the blood of atonement; nowhere in scripture does God claim Israel as His because of atonement. He never says, 'I am thy Atoner', but He says, 'I am thy Redeemer.. .I have redeemed thee, thou art mine'

For this reason the Lord founded the whole scheme of atonements upon the fact of redemption. This is plainly brought out by the instructions He gave Moses concerning the inauguration of public worship following

the consecration of the priests. Having fully installed these men according to God's word, Moses had to prepare the altar for God and the people. This involved a ceremony lasting a week: for seven days a sin-offering for atonement had to be offered upon it to God. By this He was insisting that the altar must be thoroughly cleansed through perfect atonement. Following that, it had to be anointed and sanctified wholly, and from that moment whosoever and whatsoever touched the altar must be holy. All this was done in preparation for the beginning of public worship in the house of the Lord; it was a clean, holy start.

Having established His house and His servants to His satisfaction, the Lord now proceeds to establish the order of worship for the people. Day by day continually two lambs were to be offered to Him, one in the

morning and the other in the evening - 'throughout your generations', He said. So it was He founded everything to do with Himself and His people, His house and His worship, upon the lamb and his blood. The lamb first. Not all the other variety of animals and offerings. They had to do with atonement(s) for sin, but the lamb alone represented redemption. In common with other creatures, it was also used for atonement, but they never shared in the distinction of redemption with the lamb; that honour belonged to the lamb alone. By this the Lord was insisting that worship was for a redeemed people only: each day began and ended with the lamb. He showed them that the lamb was for a house. He called Israel His house. Whether it was for each house, or shared in Egypt between two houses or more because one house was too

small for it, the lamb and the house were joined for ever. In a wonderful way God had planned to keep this forever fixed in the sight of all Israel.

Properly viewed on the day of its erection the layout of the Tabernacle was nothing other than an adaptation of the historic events through which Israel had recently passed. God never said this was so, nevertheless it is plain to be seen. The Lord was very strict with Moses about the Tabernacle. First He took him up into the mount and showed him the pattern, so that Moses knew exactly how He wanted it. Up there with God, Moses studied the plan of the finished work with care, noting the position of each piece of furniture and its layout in relationship to each of the others. It was obvious to him that God had worked

to a plan and was determined to have it carried out to the last detail.

It was obvious also that for the time being the Lord had set up His headquarters on Horeb. It was from there He had directed His campaign for the deliverance of Israel. This accomplished, He brought them right from Egypt to Himself at His headquarters in the holy mount. Having done so, He addressed Israel through Moses in marvellous language, likening the whole episode to the idea of a great eagle bearing its young on its wings to its mountain eyrie. Having arrived there, for the next nine to ten (lunar) months they were to rest from travel and devote themselves entirely to making the Lord their God a home. He wanted a tabernacle as they themselves had, but not according to human design. They were not allowed to make it as they wished. He was

most precise in His specifications, asking of them the very best materials and their most precious possessions, and in their hearts He found a ready response.

Israel brought gold, silver, precious stones, brass, skins, linens, colours - all He asked - and lavished them upon Him with love. Then with all their strength and mind and soul they devoted themselves to Him and worked with skill and might until all was as God wanted. Following His instructions with meticulous care, under divine guidance every detail of the divine mind was wrought out to perfection until at last everything was assembled according to God's will. Their labours took up the whole of their time for the remaining months of the year. It was a kind of human gestation period; the Tabernacle was formed within the nation who gave it issue from God.

He always thought of Israel as His wife. Looking back later upon those first two or three months when He led them from Egypt, He said He remembered them as the time of loving espousal. It was a wonderful period to Him; wilderness journey though it had been, Israel had gone after Him; they loved Him, wanted Him, were prepared to follow Him anywhere. The kindness and love of those days was like the springtime of their first youthful awakening to pure love, and it lived in His heart. 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love', He could say, but His words spoken through Jeremiah were tinged with sorrow; not all His memories of them were sweet. 'My people have forgotten me days without number', He mourned; 'yet will I not forget thee', His faithful heart asserted through Isaiah. He had entered into the sacred covenant of marriage with Israel at

Horeb and to Him it was unbreakable. There He had joined them to Himself in holy wedlock and there sowed the seed and thought of the Tabernacle, which eventually took shape before Him at the second year of their union.

The foot of Sinai was a scene of busy labour during those months of expectation.

Supervised by Moses, the children of Israel, led by Bezaleel and Aholiab, wrought with affection and zeal to complete the sacred task, and over all the Lord watched from His mountain headquarters. He and they were awaiting the day when He could remove from Sinai into the home of love, and live in the midst of His people. Hopes were high as the day of completion drew near, and when finally all was finished and brought to Moses for inspection and approval he responded with a benediction; (perhaps also the entire

congregation said a big unrecorded 'Amen'!) All had gone according to plan - the reproduction of the heavenly pattern was perfect.

The last two chapters of Exodus record the erection of the Tabernacle at Sinai; they seem to be full of the repetitive phrase, 'as the Lord commanded Moses'. Fifteen times in all, the testimony to Israel's faithfulness and obedience is recorded. God was pleased with them beyond words, and waiting only for the dawn of the first day of the year, they rose with one accord and assembled the Tabernacle. It was all done 'as the Lord commanded Moses'; he set it out in the order he had seen in the pattern God showed him in the mount; it was exact. Then the Lord descended from the mount. He came down to take up His abode in His new headquarters in the wilderness;

thenceforward it was to be known as the Holy of Holies.

The Lord could dwell there because all was right. He had insisted on having His way. There was no other way He could dwell with men. The pattern was right and so was the finished product; He had worked it out to the last detail, His house spelled out the truth that had set Israel free; it told the story of redemption. That is why He had it laid out in this order; He had planned it, prepared a pattern or model of it, instructed Moses about it, furnished it to His taste, timed its erection, arranged for a retinue of servants and taken up His abode in it. All Israel knew He had come. He filled the place with the glorious cloud, baptising it in His sanctity, both revealing His presence to them and veiling Himself from their eyes at the same time. They needed to see it all, it was so

reassuring to their hearts. They had seen the cloud and fire upon Sinai, it had hovered there night and day for months. The whole vicinity was lighted and warmed at night by its strange light and welcome warmth. It was the same cloud they had followed from Egypt, leading them on through the wilderness, keeping them in the way. Now its abiding presence assured them that God was in His temple in their Tabernacle.

Much more than they knew, it was the Tabernacle of the Congregation. It was the Tabernacle of Witness too; God had seen to that. Before He would take up His abode there He ensured it should ever be an undeniable testimony to them and their children after them. Whether or not they knew it, the Lord had ordered and laid out the major pieces of His house furniture in such a way as to tell the story of their

deliverance. This is why He descended visibly in the cloud from Sinai to sit upon the Mercy Seat of the Ark. The operation He had mounted from Sinai was completed; He accomplished it in three major stages:

- (1) God's Passover in Egypt;
- (2) Israel's passage (passover) of the Red Sea;
- (3) Israel's meeting with God at Sinai.

Without informing Israel of the strategy behind His basic plan, the Lord had incorporated this into the layout of the Tabernacle.

Every adult Israelite knew that to approach God in His house he must come via the Altar and the Laver. True, he must be represented by a priest, but everyone knew that the priest in course of his ministry was really a substitute for another; the priest

represented every man's clean, anointed, acceptable self moving into the nearer presence of the Lord. To make this possible, the Lord had the Altar and Laver placed outside the actual living apartment of His house, right in plain view so that everyone could see what was happening.

By the Altar at the dawning and departing of each day a lamb was slain; its blood, followed by its body, was placed upon the Altar table, one to be roast and eaten and the other to be drunk by the fire until nothing of either remained. It was the perpetual reminder to them of their redemption from Egypt. Twice in every twenty-four hours God caused them to observe the sacrifice. He insisted that whether day or night all Israel should know that time only began for them and continued to be for them as a nation by

redemption. It was a kind of re-enactment whereby God kept fresh before their eyes the most fundamental elements of their national existence. Unless they were a redeemed nation they were not a nation at all, nor the people of God; the Lord redeemed them by the lamb - its blood and its flesh - the whole lamb. The Lord was spelling out redemption to His people.

Next in exact order of redemption as laid out by God in His Tabernacle was the Laver. From the people's standpoint this stood between the Altar and God's holy place into which the priests entered to accomplish their service. By this Laver the second vital step of their recent experience was constantly displayed to them. When they had left Egypt heading for Canaan that solemn night twelve months earlier, the Red Sea lay between them and safety. Pharaoh

and his host pressing hard on their heels pursued them to the brink of death in its waters, and God, to save them, opened up a way in the sea; the path lay through the mighty waters. So the Lord had the Laver placed next in order to the Altar - first the lamb and its blood, then the sea and its water - redemption - regeneration: Calvary followed by Pentecost: bought to be baptised, purchased to live unto God. By the Laver God was saying, 'through this baptism you have passed through death and resurrection into me all the priests passed into God's house on their behalf via the Laver; there was no other way.

The third major event emphasised by the symbolic realism of the Tabernacle was God's descent to the throne on the Ark. The stated purpose of God by redemption was to bring Israel to Himself at Sinai. Having

accomplished this He gave them His Law, instructing Moses, the mediator of it, to place it in the Ark which immediately became the Ark of the Covenant. It was constructed to hold the Law and bear the Mercy Seat with its attendant cherubim in-turned to gaze upon the sprinkled blood and blazing glory. Upon its completion and erection the Tabernacle was ordered by Moses, with the Ark of the Covenant in the chief place; this he did first, for it was to be the throne of God in His private chamber. Gradually, placing everything else in position as he went, Moses withdrew, until at last the order completed he stood outside the courts of the Lord. Then the cloud, which until then abode on Sinai, covered the Tabernacle and the Lord's glory filled it. God had taken up residence in His house to complete the story of redemption. 'I have brought you to

myself', He had said at Sinai, and there He and they tarried, wedded with intention to bring forth the Tabernacle of His abiding presence. All led up to this.

So it was that throughout their history the children of Israel had in their midst a permanent testimony to their original redemption. God had insisted on it. Whether in the wilderness or the land, in tent or temple, the pattern of redemption was ever before them; they were a redeemed people. God had brought them to Himself, and He installed into His 'house-testimony' this most fundamental method of salvation. He also developed a system of atonements based upon the same plan. He needed to do this because, by the Law He had given them, they had knowledge of sin; He gave it for that reason. He therefore provided for

justification from sin by atonement, but this was only possible because of redemption. This was made clear to them by the practice of morning and evening sacrifice. Each day and each night was heralded and bounded by redemption. Every day was a day of redemption; God was fixing it upon their minds, their lives, indeed time for them was only possible because of redemption. Their existence as a nation dated from the redemption, so each day must tell the same story, redeemed! The enforced limitations of the Levitical sacrifices show to advantage the difference between redemption and atonement. No sacrifice offered for redemption could atone for sin. God had laid this down firmly, that it should be understood clearly right at the beginning. When the lambs were slain in Egypt and their blood sprinkled at the entrances to

Israel's houses, sin was not in view. The blood and body of the lamb were for the entire family sheltering inside. What could not be eaten must be burned within the camp. They were an exclusive company, the people of the lamb. Sheep and sheep-keepers were an abomination to the Egyptians, they never ate lamb anyway; but Israel kept and ate sheep and became God's sheep. That is what redemption is all about: belonging to God exclusively - total possession by God; 'I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine'.

The episode at Sinai when God said He would destroy Israel was a most dreadful experience. It seemed almost impossible that God should even think of doing such a thing, leave alone saying it. Why should He bring a nation of people out of Egypt

through the Red Sea to Himself, sustain them by a series of unprecedented miracles, give to Moses a law for them, and then threaten to kill them? Simply because they broke the basic law of redemption. The first 'word' of the Law, which was soon to become the foundation of their civilisation, was 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me'. That was the logical outcome of redemption; God first and God alone as God. But while Moses was assimilating this and other associated commandments, the people down below were making and worshipping a golden calf. They were destroying the first, second and third principles of the philosophy and doctrine of redemption, they had no understanding of it whatever.

Their behaviour was inexcusable. God was very angry; He had already told them they

must not do these things and had also just written the commandment into stone to be a permanent prohibition to them. 'Thou shalt not make unto thee Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God'. But Israel broke the lot. They were not blamed because they did not understand the principles of redemption, but for disobedience. Their attitude towards Him was intolerable. He did not expect them all to be philosophers or theologians, but He did expect them to be grateful enough to obey Him. But they would not, therefore He would slay them, and but for Moses' intercession would certainly have done so because of their total disregard of the basic principles of eternal life.

8- THE LAMB OF GOD - THE FIRSTBORN.

As has been pointed out, when God brought His people out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb He did not mention sin. Sin was there of course, but as He says, because the Law had not yet been given He did not impute sin to the people. The scriptures say He went to redeem a people for Himself, it was no part of His purpose then to define or particularise sin; He did that later. He was not ready at that time to inaugurate His system of atonements for sin. He had already planned it, but Egypt was not the place for it, so He did not introduce it there. First He redeemed His people from Egypt utterly, then He taught them the truth of atonement. By this He was saying 'redemption makes you mine, atonement keeps you mine': John writes in this vein.

First he presents the Lamb of God in chapter one, and then in chapter fourteen tells us what Jesus said about His Father's house and that He is the way, the truth and the life by which all must come to the Father. This was nothing new in substance really, for He said as much in another way in His discourse recorded in chapter six, when speaking as the Lamb in view of the approaching Passover.

The people are gathered unto Him in great numbers, He is seated on a mountain. He feeds them with a view to teaching them and us some vital lessons. 'I am the bread of life', He says, 'the bread of God the true bread from heaven not as your fathers did eat bread (manna), and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever'. He points them back to the Passover; 'eat my flesh', He says, 'drink my blood; except

you eat my flesh and drink my blood you have no life in you' - in a word, dead. It was as though He was saying, 'you think you are the firstborn nation, the premier people of the world; the nation that has life; the redeemed people, Israel, the house of God. You think you are alive just like the firstborn son in every blood-sprinkled house in Egypt, but you are dead. I am the Lamb; as your fathers had to eat the flesh of their lambs in Egypt in order to live, so must you eat my flesh and drink my blood in order to live. I am the firstborn; each of your fathers ate of the lamb to become part of the firstborn nation and the house of God. If you do not eat the first-born you are not one of the firstborn and part of the house of God'.

Many of His disciples left Him then, they could not take what He said. He was seeking to build the spiritual house of God - the

spiritual house of Israel - they could not accept it. Only those stayed with Him who believed He was speaking words of eternal life. They fed on the truth of His soul as they listened to the words of His mouth. He uttered from His Spirit and life, and they ate Him and drank Him. He was their Lamb, their unleavened bread, their bitter herbs, although they never understood all He was saying. No one could listen to Him without realising premonitions of an impending tragedy in His words; truly the bitter herbs of a terrible death were mingled with His flesh and blood. No leaven of sin was mixed with and baked in the bread, neither sin nor its sting were in Him; but the bitterness of being made sin was with Him on the cross, so that was in the diet too.

In keeping with the type sin is not mentioned, it was there of course creating

need in every man, but it is not the main point of emphasis in redemption, nor the chief reason for it. Redemption is the first great reason why the Lamb of God was slain for man. That man needed to be justified, sanctified, reconciled, regenerated, forgiven, cleansed is also true, and all was accomplished in the one great sacrifice of Christ; these things are inseparable. But because the sacrifice is so great and accomplishes so many things, it has to be analysed and the various works classified. This is done for us in scripture by the Holy Ghost in the course of His ministries, using the words above listed. Analysis is not to be mistaken for division; its purpose is definition with a view to emphasis without confusion.

9- THE KINSMAN-REDEEMER.

There are several ideas introduced into scripture by the different words used for redemption. These vary between the old and new testaments, and combine throughout them both to present a glorious whole. The basic idea common to both testaments is very plain, namely purchase with a view to ownership. In the New Testament the thought of liberation is also introduced, implying that in the redeeming act someone or something, as the case may be, is set free. Added to this also there is the suggestion of a degree of finality about the transaction. Combining these ideas we arrive at the conclusion that to be redeemed is to be purchased, liberated and kept for ever. In the Old Testament yet another idea is presented to the mind. The writers from

Moses onwards use a word which introduces the thought of relationship. When applied to a person making the purchase it can best be expressed as kinsman-redeemer. So when we read of God saying, 'I am thy Redeemer', He is really saying, 'I am thy kinsman who has redeemed thee'.

This thought is so dear to the Lord that He actually legalised it in Israel. One of the reasons the little book of Ruth is introduced into scripture is that it sweetly highlights this aspect of redemption, and we shall examine it later. The importance of this truth is its emphasis on authority - ability because of right - to redeem; this underlines the basic necessity required by the Law. Joining the whole of these aspects of truth together, we may say that redemption is the act of a man towards his blood-relative whereby he purchases and liberates him and his

completely, finally making him his own. These ideas are greatly expanded, illustrated and legalised in the Old Testament canon, and fulfilled and finalised in the person of Christ in the New.

Three outstanding aspects of redemption are presented in the Old Testament, each by a different means: the first is the familiar one of the redemption of the children of Israel from Egypt; the second is the redemption of persons and possessions within Israel; the third is the redemption of Israel from Babylon. The first we have already examined and is by the blood of the lamb. The second has also been referred to and was by money. The third, as yet unmentioned, is by the outpouring of the Spirit. All were by power and the second and third were based upon the first historic redemption by blood in Egypt. Much is

known of this first and most basic act of redemption, so we will pass immediately to the second, the redemption of persons and possessions within Israel. This could not be better shown than by the story of redemption related in the book of Ruth.

The incident took place during the days of the Judges, at a time when spiritual and natural famine desolated the land. Because of it, Elimelech, a man of the tribe of Judah, left all his earthly possessions in Israel and departed with his family to live in Moab. There they settled, and eventually his two sons each married one of the daughters of Moab. Before long tragedy hit the family again, wiping out the three men and leaving behind three sorrowful widows, Naomi, Orpah and Ruth. Some time after this, news reached Naomi that God had visited Israel in blessing and prosperity, so sick and bitter in

heart she decided to return to Israel. Orpah refused to go with her, but Ruth refused to be separated from her mother-in-law, and so the two women departed from Moab, arriving eventually in Israel at Bethlehem. There the little drama is played out to the end, and a whole aspect of redemption comes into fullest focus.

They arrived home at the time of barley harvest when all available hands went to the fields to reap grain. It was a very propitious time, for it was law in Israel that the poor, the stranger, the widowed and the fatherless were permitted to glean among the reapers. The poverty of the two women was evident. They had no possessions of their own and were without any means of livelihood; they were in acute need. The only hope of life and sustenance for them was that they should find grace in someone's sight and be

allowed to glean in his field. They needed enough grain to meet present needs and also to lay up in store against harder days ahead. Therefore, taking advantage of this merciful law, Ruth set out one morning to find a field in which to glean. Now at Bethlehem lived a very wealthy man named Boaz, who was a great landowner and husbandman, and a relative of the now deceased Elimelech. Into one of his fields Ruth all unknowingly came and commenced to glean.

The delightful story continues to unfold through chapter three, in which discoveries were made and identities revealed, all finalising with Boaz promising Ruth to 'do the part of a kinsman' to her. Naomi planned, the Lord overruled and Ruth obeyed, so that eventually the redemption of both Ruth and Elimelech's possession

took place as may be expected. The story is a beautiful idyll. The fourth chapter discloses the end of it all. From its detail we gather these facts:

- (1) the redeemer must be the nearest blood-relative on the father's side;
- (2) by the transaction he must not mar his own inheritance;
- (3) he must raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

There is a wealth of other detail, all of it most instructive, but for our purposes these three will suffice.

The first of these is of most interest to us here; by it we are granted an opportunity of further insight into the person of the Lord Jesus. He is our heavenly Boaz, the true kinsman-redeemer. The self-evident connection with Bethlehem need hardly be

pointed out, it was the place of His birth. Yet for the truth we need to learn it cannot be overstressed, for it is around this that the whole point turns. In his day Boaz was a wealthy Jew, he belonged to the race of Israel, the tribe of Judah and the family of Elimelech; perhaps the description 'lion of the tribe of Judah' may well have fitted him, for he was truly lionised of men.

On the other hand the Lord Jesus, when He was born, had none of the earthly things with which Boaz was blessed. Jesus was an Israelite indeed, of the tribe of Judah; in fact Boaz was the great-grandfather of David, of whom Jesus is often called 'the greater son'. But there the similarity ends, for He was only of David through Mary His mother. Joseph, we know, was also of David's line through another branch of the family, but he was not Jesus' father. Paternally Jesus was

not of the same race or tribe or family as David or Boaz or Elimelech; paternally He was of God.

Both Mary who bore Him and Joseph who adopted Him were of the house and lineage of David though, so Jesus is rightly called the son of David. He is properly 'the lion of the tribe of Judah', for greater than any man He was begotten into the human race by God through a virgin of that tribe. It is noticeable that though man called Him 'the King of Israel' and 'the King of the Jews', Jesus Himself never claimed the titles. His title is displayed in the book of the Revelation as 'King of kings and Lord of lords'; He had no need to make lesser claims. Also genetically speaking it would not have been true had He made them. Claim to kingship or inheritance in Israel was made only according to paternal, not maternal parentage, hence the

silence of Jesus on the matter. He knew that if God was His Father, He could not, as David's son Solomon, claim to be of Bethlehem-Judah; His Father was of heaven. To those of us who were not born Israelites of the tribe of Judah these things are of good comfort as well as of great importance, for by the very fact that in this respect Jesus was not wholly Jewish, He could be the kinsman of all. The basic relationship required for redemption by a kinsman was of blood, not of flesh or town. The right of redemption did not belong to an in-law, for as in the case of Ruth herself, he or she could be a foreigner; it was vested in blood alone. Paul told the Athenians that God 'hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth'. Save in the matter of blood-group, human blood is the same the world over, and may be

transfused from nation to nation without fear.

However, it is with particular thankfulness that we marvel at the extraordinary way in which Jesus is the Son of Man and not the child of Israel. His flesh was the Word, His blood was God's; He is literally the nearest blood-relative that man could have, and therefore his only redeemer. He is the only one who could be said to be the blood-relative of every man. This is one of the reasons that the angelic herald of His birth told the shepherds that the good tidings of great joy was to all people; 'unto you' he said, 'is born a Saviour'. Jesus was born to all of us, He is the Son of Man. Adam did not beget Him, neither did Abraham, nor David, nor Joseph, but God.

During the months preceding Jesus' birth Joseph and Mary were married and together

they awaited the birth of the babe conceived of the Holy Ghost. For the event they were lodged in the inn at Bethlehem where, some time before the shepherds reached the manger, somewhere out in the dark a lamb was slain. The babe was Mary's firstborn son, and according to the Law of God, in remembrance of Israel's redemption and consequent deliverance from Egypt, Jesus had to be redeemed. A lamb died and its blood was shed in order that He as a human being might live, and living, live unto God. When the shepherds saw Him they were looking at a redeemed life. In common with all Israel He bore testimony that they were a redeemed nation. On the eighth day He was circumcised to show that He was of the seed of Abraham, and within two months was presented to the Lord in the temple. At the same time Mary, of her

poverty, brought her own compulsory offering for cleansing according to the Law - 'two young pigeons or a pair of turtle doves'. As the little group entered the temple intent on their business, so also did Simeon, a prophet of the Lord. At the sight of Jesus, the man of God, quite unasked, took Him up in his arms, prayed and prophesied over Him, and then presented Him to God. Scarcely was this over, when an aged prophetess named Anna took up the strain, speaking of Him 'to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem'. So within the first three months of Jesus' young life He was both legally and prophetically encompassed by redemption. It would be difficult to know exactly what Anna understood from her own prophecy. To which kind of redemption was she referring - national/material and spiritual, or individual/spiritual? Whatever

others thought, the Lord meant fullness of redemption, but almost certainly none of those who heard the prophecy would have understood it to mean that. Perhaps some people's hopes were raised to a feeling that something was afoot, but who could have imagined that this was the world's kinsman-redeemer? Simeon spoke of 'Thy salvation - a light - the glory'. Anna spoke of redemption. The message was salvation by redemption, but who understood it?

It is probably true that reports of these happenings had persisted throughout the Lord's life. Certain it is that thoughts of redemption had been in the minds of at least some of Jesus' disciples when He died, for they spoke of their hopes of it to the Stranger who joined them on the road to Emmaus. However these hopes had all been dashed when Jesus was crucified. As far as

men's expectations were concerned He had died without redeeming them. Because He had not in some way delivered the nation from the bondage of Rome they regarded His mission as an unfinished project. Perhaps their hopes had been raised because in word and deed He had exceeded both Moses and David. In their day each of these had been a deliverer, a kinsman of some sort, who had set the nation free from Egypt and the Philistines. By His words and in His works Jesus had either directly claimed or plainly implied that He was greater than either of these national heroes, yet at His death He had not accomplished anything like the kind of redemption achieved by either of them. To His disciples He did not appear to be the anointed redeemer after all, yet of all men he was the

only one by whom all the requirements of God for redemption were fulfilled.

The reason why Boaz appears in the Bible is that in the unfolding revelation of Jesus as the kinsman-redeemer, this man gives us an insight into the Lord's role as the lion of the tribe of Judah, 'the root of David'. Moses was a Levite and therefore could not be Judah's lion; David, though of Bethlehem-Judah, could not be his own root, for he could not bear himself. Great though both were, these men only partially filled the role of kinsman-redeemer. But Jesus fulfilled all. There is no talk of redemption by bloodshed in the book of Ruth. It was surely by blood though, the blood of relationship. The emphasis of the story is not upon purchase by money as of right; God underlines Jesus' ability and authority. Boaz had ability to redeem because he was a wealthy

landowner with great possessions; he had the right to redeem because of blood relationship to Elimelech. He had the desire to redeem because of his love for Ruth, and in the end it was discovered that there was no one else to do it. He could though; without marring his own heritage he could raise up the name of the dead and also marry Ruth; he was able, willing, righteous and loving to redeem. Whether he was a bachelor or not we are not told, but it would seem so, for all mention of other women who could be wives is noticeably absent from the text. From things said in course of the blessings and good wishes and congratulations showered upon them by friends and admirer's, it would appear that Boaz's hopes of children lay entirely in this union.

Many of the elements of redemption are present in the Ruth story: her former husband (her old man) was dead. She had been brought up out of the land where she formerly lived; together with all she possessed she was purchased outright by Boaz. She was truly 'married to another that she would bring forth fruit unto God. She became the ground of redemption from which David in the fourth generation sprang. Everything about it is spiritually, ethically, morally and legally correct. When legalising the role of kinsman-redeemer in Israel, God acted in conformity with principles of righteousness. He could have granted legal rights of redemption to someone other than a blood-relative, but He did not. Everything was founded upon Himself and His loving designs for man. From all eternity He is the world's only Kinsman-Redeemer.

Now, sweet as is the story unfolded in the book of Ruth, and great as Boaz was, they could not between them do more than hint at the redemption provided by God in Christ. Ruth could lie at the feet of Boaz, be covered by his skirts, glean in his fields, receive his favour, become his wife, live in his home and bear his children, but she could not be in him. She had redemption through her husband, but not in him, except hopefully. In common with all Israel with whom her lot was cast, she shared in the blessings which were their God-given heritage. Perhaps above the majority she enjoyed blessings and possessions and security to the degree her station allowed. She was the wife of a very wealthy man who held a position of great power in the nation, but 0 how far short both he and she fell of the eternal glories of the redeemed in Christ revealed in

the New Testament scriptures. She was chosen by Boaz when he saw her; we were chosen by the Father in Christ before the foundation of the world. She was blessed with just about all earthly blessings in Israel, but we are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ. And so we could go on piling up the superiority of our position and its advantages over Ruth's, making endless comparisons and contrasts. But, sure of our grace, let us instead occupy ourselves with more profitable things.

10- JUSTIFICATION.

Paul, who received from God the revelation of our election in Christ and delivered it to us, makes much of this knowledge, unfolding its many splendours in the various letters he wrote to the churches. To the Romans he writes of the glory of God that he by grace should justify sinners absolutely freely. This is a marvellous revelation, quite beyond the minds of men to accept and totally impossible except he add, 'through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus'. It is unethical to think and believe that a man can be forgiven and more than forgiven apart from some atonement made on his part or on his behalf. Unless there is a factor unknown to man, yet operative on his behalf, which justifies him before God, it would be utterly wrong and amoral to

absolve him. So it is that Paul states the basis of justification, thereby assuring man, justifying God and vindicating the gospel. He does this by making inspired use of the means familiar to himself and all Jews, and made fully known to all men in the scriptures of truth, namely the tabernacle/temple type and ritual of ancient Israel. He speaks of 'Christ Jesus whom God hath set forth - a propitiation - through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God'.

As is so often the case, Paul is referring to the great day of atonement, Israel's yearly feast. On that day God freely forgave His people all the sins He had forborne to visit upon them during the past year, sins of which they were totally ignorant and for which therefore they could not make

atonement. If God had punished them for those it would have been utterly unjust, for why should a man be punished for sins of which he knows nothing? So God devised and ordained a means whereby He could forgive all, and in doing so be completely just, as well as the only justifier of Israel. He therefore had the Ark of the Covenant made to His specifications, that His Law for righteousness may be placed in it, and His Mercy Seat be set on it for a lid. Upon this throne of mercy He commanded the blood of atonement to be sprinkled annually. This Ark of the Covenant represented Christ Jesus standing before God in absolute holiness. In the New Testament another name used for this Mercy Seat is 'the propitiatory', or 'place of propitiation'; it describes the place where the atoning blood was sprinkled. It was the

exact spot where God fully absolved His people from all their sins.

Now Jesus Christ, says Paul, is set forth by God in order to declare His righteousness; this is symbolised in the Ark of the Covenant by the ten commandments. Because Jesus was so perfectly righteous He could be set forth as the One whose sacrifice could completely justify God in justifying men. His whole self and life was predestined to be propitiatory, so in the end at Calvary, when crowned with His own blood, shed on behalf of men, He achieved His purpose. He was both the propitiation and the propitiatory - He was the propitiation which propitiates and the place where the propitiation was made. Himself offered Himself upon Himself, because He was Himself.

That which He did was perfectly satisfying to God, and because of it He can righteously

justify everyone who believes in Jesus; that is grace. Now the Day of Atonement was celebrated annually in goats' blood because through the blood of the lamb they were already a redeemed people. True to this, Paul says all is 'through redemption that is in Christ Jesus'. He is telling us that whether it be Israel or anyone else, there would have been no such thing as justification had it not been for the redemption. Justification is only possible because of redemption.

In relation to Israel this is most clearly seen and is not less true for men today.

Analytically speaking God never justified His people in Egypt, He redeemed them from it. As regards order of time redemption was accomplished by God first; justification was introduced later. The Lord does not justify people in their worldliness and sin, but from the world and sin. God redeems people

while they are still in sin in the world system of satan's kingdom. This is what Paul stresses most clearly to the Romans, 'God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us'.

The lamb was slain and its blood sprinkled on the houses of sinners while still in Egypt under Pharaoh's power in 'the house of bondage'. By first birth spiritually we all are the devil's children in experience, though God's children in reality. We all are firstborn to satan in his house of bondage, yet by God's choice and in His elective purposes we belonged to Him before the foundation of the world. We are His firstborn in that by His will we were chosen by Him in Christ before we were ever born in this world. For these reasons God made the final plague in Egypt the judgement of the first-born; it was all

about firstborn sons - God's and Satan's. The devil's firstborn, being so to speak a plague to God, were cut off at one stroke. Doing this God dealt with the thing that both grieved His heart and plagued the earth, incorporating the operation into redemption.

Redemption has to do with spirit, soul and body. It is outright purchase of the human being, God claiming the right to have man wholly in order to do with him as He pleases. Everything depends on this. Redemption is directly connected with the covenant, the oath God swore to Abraham. He redeemed Israel because He had made promise to their fathers. Whether or not they were in sin made no difference, God had committed Himself to His friend Abraham; if for no other reason, He would have done it for his sake alone. It was as much a matter of

honour as a revelation of love and a display of power: 'Hath He not said and shall he not do it?'

Herein lies the pre-eminence of redemption over every other thing God wrought through the death of His Son. The person He was and the life He lived was redemptive, He was in Himself the Redeemer. When He shed His blood it was to purchase us and in this sense we were redeemed, but redemption can only be experienced as we are baptised into Him. Redemption is in Him as well as through or by Him. In order to teach men this, God ordered His people to be brought to Him at Sinai. There He gave them His law for righteousness.

He had shown Himself to be righteous in that He had redeemed them, though they had done nothing to merit it. God's righteousness towards them lay in His

faithfulness to keep His word to Abraham. They could not enter into Christ as we can, yet figuratively they did so. It was for this reason that God gave them His Law and His instructions about the Tabernacle which was to be His home. The Tabernacle was a figure of Christ Jesus. Its structure and furnishings spoke wholly of Him, and although only a few select priests were allowed to enter into it, through them Israel vicariously entered into and found their redemption in Him. Even though it was impossible for them in their day to be the Church of Jesus Christ, when dealing with them God could not depart from basic principles of eternal truth. They were therefore regarded by Him as His Church; indeed Stephen called them 'the church in the wilderness'.

God is insistent about the facts and order of truth. The Tabernacle before the land is a

revelation of invariable eternal principle. Entrance into Christ was typified to them primarily in terms of the priesthood and tabernacle worship, and only later as entering the Promised Land. Entrance into the Promised Land was delayed for some forty years and therefore is quite secondary to entrance into the House of God. In the Tabernacle all spoke of Christ. Basically the Promised Land itself represents man's soul in its natural state when fully possessed by Christ - flowing with milk and honey - 'a land of corn and wine and oil, favoured with God's peculiar smile'. This is nothing other than a metaphorical way of describing the normal soul-state of Jesus the man.

Unlike the children of Israel, and better than they, we enter into Him for redemption, not into a tabernacle or a land. Structures and territories have no meaning now, everything

to do with our salvation is spiritual. We are saved into Him through His own blood in order to experience His spirit/soul state for our God-given inheritance - 'In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will'.

The invariable laws governing all God's gracious dealings with His redeemed were well known to Paul. The word 'obtained' in Ephesians chapter one means 'to obtain by lot', and is a direct reference to the occasion when Joshua cast lots before the Lord to determine the tribal and family inheritance of the children of Israel in the Promised Land. By the lot each man's inheritance was predetermined; he had to go to the portion of Canaan given to him by God, and he must possess it and live and work there - nowhere

else. It was all part of the predestinating process; it was done according to purpose as God's will counselled him.

Redemption itself is all part of God's great predestinating will. God planned and purposed and created Canaan to be an inheritance for Israel; before the nation existed He promised the land to Abraham. Likewise, before we had any existence, save in God's will and Jesus' heart, He planned and purposed Christ's glorified eternal inward states to be our inheritance. The act of redemption through bloodshed at Calvary was just one phase of the operation of God according to the overall plan of salvation. It was the most costly thing He ever did, involving far more than the actual bloodshed so vitally necessary for the purchase. But the Lamb slain in heart from the foundation of the world shed no blood then; in that

sacrifice His death was not physical. He was slain prehistorically that the mind of God may be justifiably made up and the decision to save unborn men be taken, and even the world itself be founded.

God sought nobody's counsel about His action, but moved in absolute love and justice. Redemption was validated then without bloodshed; there was no Calvary. There was much suffering though; that is why on earth Jesus was a man of sorrows - He was acquainted with grief in eternity. When He came to earth He was already our Redeemer - redemption was in Him as of nature, He was made redemption to us of purpose. It was all part of God's predestinating will and action to bring us into Him that we should obtain our inheritance, namely the spiritual status of sons of God, enjoying the soul-state of Jesus

the man of God. This is the absolutely irreducible minimal basis of eternal life for the sons of men. For us the lot has been cast, the decision made, the inheritance given, the will fixed, the destination settled; we are now the redeemed in Christ the Beloved.

Paul had a wonderful grasp of eternal truth; time and again he brings out treasures of knowledge connected with being in Christ. In one place he speaks of himself as having been 'carnal, sold under sin'; it is a reference to Adam's transaction with satan in Eden. At that time the whole human race was sold to the devil; Adam did it for the prize of being allowed to retain Eve. Paul realised that without his knowledge he was included in that transaction, that Adam betrayed his trust and that in Adam he died; he said, 'as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be

made alive'. The redeeming act purchased us - the full price for Adam's heinous original sin was the sum total exacted of Jesus in recovering God's loss and restoring that which He took not away; it was love beyond degree and grace beyond deserts.

Adam sold us all out to the devil, robbing God of His created man. He never paid God anything, he robbed Him. So the last Adam came and as man paid God full price for man; having done so He kept him, but not for Himself, He gave him to His Father and God. This then is the defeat of satan, the negation of Adam's sin, the resolution of the problem - God chose us in Christ before the world began, but only in redemption - 'in Christ shall all be made alive'. The crowning virtue of Jesus' wholly virtuous life was His willingness to die for us. Because of the redemption in Him we are justified freely,

but He could not do that for us until we belonged to Him wholly; justification is conditional and entirely dependent upon redemption.

It seems that many in the early Church did not properly understand this conditional salvation. At any rate Paul had repeatedly to make it clear to his converts, firmly grounding his doctrines in the Old Testament scriptures, and invariably using God's dealings with Israel to illustrate his points. Not that everything commenced with Israel; it did not, but so much of redemption truth now known to the Church was first either applied to or plainly typed in them. Therefore when Paul wishes to bring understanding of redemption to the Church he draws upon his vast knowledge of scripture and Israel's history.

For instance, what he tells the Corinthians is typical of his style, 'ye are not your own.. .ye are bought with a price'. Always this is his starting point. That is why, following some brief opening remarks, he presents the cross to them right in the first chapter. The effectiveness of the cross lies in its comprehensiveness, its completeness and its finality. It applied the innate power of Christ to the total basic needs of man according to the total requirements of God. Because of that, by the cross God bought every member of His Church outright. In chapter five Paul rightly connects this with the Lamb - 'Christ our passover is sacrificed for us' , he says, 'let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth'.

The redemption of Israel was unto a feast of bread without leaven. Taking up this feast

and using it as a figure, Paul says we are an unleavened lump; redemption through the blood of Christ is from sin. New Testament redemption involves more than being purchased, it also means being purged. This is implied in the use of the word which means to loose or to liberate. To Israel this aspect of redemption was spelled out to them in the words 'out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage'. This meant that God would bring them out from under Pharaoh's yoke completely; redemption effected total deliverance out from under all the tasks and burdens of the Egyptians. To them redemption meant that they would be liberated from slavery and the slave-master, it did not mean, nor was it ever suggested, that it effected liberation from sin. The blood of the lambs on the houses of Egypt could no more take away sins than could the

blood of the bulls and goats on the Altars of Canaan, or on the Mercy Seat itself. But testifying of the superior blood of Jesus, John says, 'unto him that loved us, and loosed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us a kingdom of priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory for ever and ever. Amen'.

The liberation in Jesus' blood is by inward purging rather than by outward release. Paul spoke frankly to servants still 'under the yoke', telling them not to seek release from bondage to a master, but to be free from sin and turn their slavery into joyful service for Jesus. His blood is the powerful antidote to sin. We have faith in His blood that it is the faultless blood of a righteous man - a lamb without blemish and without spot in His outward life in this world. Lambs anciently sacrificed in Egypt or Canaan had to be of

this quality in their bodies; whatever their behavioural patterns were did not matter as long as their bodies were of this standard of perfection. On the contrary, when Jesus was crucified, far from being without physical blemish, 'he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our sins was upon him.. .with his stripes we are healed'. God demanded that sacrificial lambs should be physically perfect' as a testimony to the spiritual perfection of the inward manhood and outward life of Jesus. (They did not bear sins in their bodies, or suffer for others, they only died that their blood should justify God in first redeeming Israel and later forgiving the people their sins. That was all God required of them).

In the New Testament the purpose of the four Gospels is to furnish proof of the

perfections of Jesus. The spirit within the man of Galilee was clearly God, for the life manifest in His flesh was purest soul; inwardly and outwardly He was without blemish or spot or even a wrinkle. He was the perfect Redeemer. The whole body of the truth of justification by faith, though hinted at in the Gospels, is not properly introduced until after Pentecost. Apart from a reference here and there to expiation and forgiveness, the Gospels largely ignore Christ's propitiatory function in favour of presenting Him as the redeeming Lamb.

This is a remarkable testimony to the fact and truth of inspiration. Each of the Gospels was written long after the revelation of justification by faith through the blood of Christ, yet none of them refer to it in any degree. There is not any suggestion that Jesus ever gave systematic teaching along

that line; their testimony is given under the control of the Holy Spirit and is exclusively overruled to give conclusive proof to the unprejudiced mind that Jesus is indeed the Kinsman-Redeemer. That is the most important point of all. Nothing else of truth could be developed unless it was first established that Jesus is the redeeming Lamb.

Anna's prophecy to Israel could be summed up as 'look for redemption, behold this babe, observe His life'. On the mount of transfiguration the theme of conversation between Moses, Elijah and Jesus was the exodus He should accomplish at Jerusalem. The disappointed testimony of the two on the road to Emmaus when speaking of Jesus was 'we trusted it had been he that should have redeemed Israel'. There are a few recorded occasions when He had forgiven

people their sins, but this was not the main emphasis of His teachings and ministry among men. The reason for this was that until the redeeming blood was shed He could not speak about justifying anybody. It would have been premature to have done so.

Even on the day of Pentecost when the new era had dawned, Peter did not speak of justification. Instead he pursued the theme of redemption. He did not even mention the word righteousness, but laboured to show that Jesus is Lord and Christ. Those to whom he spoke understood perfectly what he meant. Under the power of the Spirit Peter skilfully linked King David with Jesus, and presented the crucified, dead, buried, raised, ascended, exalted, enthroned Messiah-Kinsman-Redeemer. Not until later, and chiefly through the selection and

installation of Paul to the apostolate, was the propitiatory aspect of Christ's death and the theme of justification introduced and developed in the sacred canon. This does not mean that Peter and the rest of the apostles did not know or believe that Christ is the propitiation; on the contrary they all rejoiced in it.

It does mean however that the scriptures are the word of truth and shows that all was written under the strict control, revelation, inspiration, supervision and order of the Spirit. He constrained and restrained the men of the New Covenant, so that they wrote in the same doctrinal vein as the men of the Old Covenant, namely first redemption, then justification. This was no great difficulty for Him, given the right instruments, for the history of salvation recorded in the Book runs a parallel course

with world events. It unfolds naturally and honestly; there is no need to twist facts and concoct stories, nothing is strained or contrived. There is no suppression of facts in the Bible; the New Testament flows on and out from the Old Testament as a great river of truth growing deeper and wider the further it flows.

Redemption for Israel - the few - grows into redemption for the world - for many. God's love for Israel is shown to be only a part of His love for the world; indeed it is revealed to be but the foundation of the greater love. He selected Israel chiefly that He might use them for the purpose of bringing His Son into the world for a greater redemption and exodus than Israel ever knew. Redemption of the few (Israelites) by the blood of many lambs has been superseded by the

redemption of the many by the blood of one
Lamb.

11- CAPTIVITY TURNED - PENTECOST.

Redemption was made effective for us by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This is how it was accomplished for ancient Israel when captive in Babylon. In effect what God said to Israel through Isaiah when promising them salvation was, 'I have redeemed thee thou art mine. I will pour out my Spirit water floods'. As a result Israel would be brought back from captivity.

It is quite clear from scripture that redemption is not possible to men except through baptism in the Spirit. There is only one method known to God and therefore revealed in the Bible whereby a person may experience 'the redemption in Christ Jesus by faith in His blood', namely by the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. Jesus must baptise us into Himself and He can only do that in one way -

the way of Himself. He went to the cross and the tomb accomplishing the act of redemption en route, pouring out His precious blood and rising again from the dead. He did not immediately baptise His restored disciples into Himself however, but promised them He would do so 'not many days hence' and that they would be as truly baptised in the Holy Ghost as they were in water when John baptised them in Jordan. Jesus was waiting until the day of Pentecost should fully come. That was the day God planned that Christ should fully come into them and they fully into Christ. He knew this could not be accomplished except each person was baptised in the same way as Jesus, via the cross and the grave; each must be crucified, dead and buried and raised as He. What happened to Him physically must happen to us spiritually. This is the whole

point; everything turns on this. Except there is individual experience of it there can be no life for anyone. So important is it that Jesus Himself must both supervise and personally administer that death and resurrection to each person who would know redemption. For this He needed the assistance of the Holy Ghost. Jesus could no more accomplish redemption of mankind without the help of the Spirit than without the cross.

This is one of the main reasons the Holy Spirit is called the Comforter - Paraclete - one called alongside to help. He was needed by Jesus to be the medium in which believers could be baptised into the eternal life in Himself. Therefore on the day of Pentecost Jesus baptised men and women in the Spirit into Himself via the cross and the grave that they might know His redemptive life. It is His life alone which gave virtue and

power to the blood to make it redemptive in effect to us all that we might live in eternal redemption in Him.

This is why Isaiah so clearly makes redemption contingent upon the outpouring of the Spirit. In the chapters dealing with it he is speaking to a people in captivity. In the first great captivity Moses speaks of the lamb and the blood; in this second captivity by the same inspiration Isaiah speaks of the Spirit. He does not mention the blood in relationship to it at all. For redemption from Egypt the blood of the lamb, for redemption from Babylon the Holy Ghost. In no other book of the Bible are so many references made to redemption as in Isaiah. More notably still, for its size, by comparison Ruth outstrips even this major prophet in the number of times redemption is mentioned. As already noted, in Ruth the thought of

purchase is uppermost, but in Isaiah it is the outpoured Spirit.

The prophet insists that in order to effect salvation from captivity and bondage and sin, Israel's Creator and Redeemer, their Holy One who had chosen them, would pour out the Spirit in floods: 'I have redeemed thee', He says, 'I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine'. He deliberately introduces the same elements as those He enforced upon their forefathers in Egypt; Israel had to be redeemed by blood and pass through the Red Sea in the beginning, and now so must they — 'When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee'.

Previous generations of Israel had passed through the mighty waters of the Red Sea and Jordan's river respectively, and there is

no different way out from captivity in Babylon. But there was to be no comparative bloodshed for them in their day; neither was any blood redemption wrought for Israel at Jordan; in neither case was it necessary. The one great redemptive act was sufficient for Israel for all time, 'I have redeemed thee', (N.B. past tense, not 'I will redeem thee').

The blood once shed in Egypt was all sufficient for all Israel throughout their history, but it could not be made effective to them without the Baptism of the Spirit. Although the blood is insisted upon only once for redemption in Egypt, the Holy Spirit is referred to on all three occasions. Whether it was in Egypt or Canaan or Babylon, the Holy Ghost is made indispensable to redemption. In the first generation the children of Israel were

baptised at the Red Sea. In the second generation they were baptised at Jordan and now they must be baptised at the point of crisis in Babylon.

Ezekiel's prophecy opens with the prophet sitting among the captives on the banks of Chebar. Babylon lay east of the Euphrates: to return to their land Israel had to cross the river, travelling westward to Canaan. At the conclusion of the book Ezekiel shows the river proceeding from the temple in Jerusalem and repeatedly insists that it is crossed over — 'he brought me through the waters' — until at the last attempt it could not be crossed — waters to swim in. The pathway to blessing for the redeemed of the Lord is through the waters.

The Lord never attempted of old, nor does He promise for the present day or in the future, that redemption can be experienced

or known apart from the baptism in the Spirit.

In this way the Lord consistently taught that redemption is only possible through baptism. Water was the chosen element then, for as yet the Holy Spirit had not been outpoured, the universally comprehensive redemption had not been accomplished and the situation did not warrant it. Redemption was at that time national and not international, local not universal.

Nevertheless, although Israel could not be baptised in the Spirit to form them into a nation, they had to be seemingly baptised in water. In fact neither at the Red Sea, nor yet at Jordan, were they immersed in water - instead they discovered the path through the water(s). They found the way - God had hidden His way beneath the waters of the Red Sea and Jordan. Until He revealed it no

one ever dreamed that beneath the sea and the river lay a path for the redeemed of the Lord to pass over. It was there all the time, but hidden from every eye.

The Calvary way of crucifixion - death, burial and resurrection - is revealed upon the pages of scripture, but hidden away from human understanding in the Baptism of the Spirit. Many preachers, teachers, expositors and commentators have taught the typical significance of water baptism. Throughout the years champions of truth have spoken of dying with Christ, buried with Christ, risen with Christ, but few have seen and taught that water baptism can only be valid as it is presented as a type of the baptism in the Spirit administered by Jesus the Christ. Herein the body of flesh never gets wet, but the spirit is totally immersed and the soul is saturated and the being filled in, by and

with, the Holy Spirit as the person is processed through Christ's Calvary into Christ's body. This is eternal life through total redemption unto absolute possession — 'I have redeemed thee, thou art mine'

By the waters of the Red Sea the redemption of Israel is seen to be 'out of'. By the river Jordan it is shown to be 'in to', and by the 'waters' (literal or figurative of the Spirit) of Babylon the same truth is revealed, 'out of' and 'in to'. In the former two the emphasis should be laid upon the Holy Ghost as the way, while in the latter the emphasis is on being filled - drinking in the Holy Spirit - a privilege connected with and opened only to the people of the New Covenant - that is spiritual Israel.

If Pentecost had not followed Calvary the way of redemption could not have been revealed, for it only revealed to us as being

in the Spirit. 'We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel', mourned the disciples on the Emmaus road; they did not know that they were talking to the Redeemer or that Redemption had been achieved at Calvary. The unknown Christ spoke to them of the necessity of His sufferings and glorification, opening the theme from the scriptures, and finally revealing Himself to their wondering gaze, only to vanish from their sight again. They had listened with burning hearts to His teachings by the way, but never heard Him say one word about redemption.

Not once did the risen Lord speak the word they longed to hear. He couldn't, for until the Holy Ghost was outpoured it was not available to them. They needed a new concept of redemption altogether - they needed to be baptised into Him. The

redemption God has provided for us, as for them, is in Christ who paid for it at Calvary and supplied it at Pentecost. It is total purchase of and immersion into all the inward states of the person of the Christ. The redeeming act leads to the redemption experience, which is realised in the redemptive state of the person of the Redeemer.

None of this was available to Israel in Egypt or the wilderness or Canaan. Ruth knew nothing of it, nor did the captives returning from Babylon. All these experienced and understood something of the gracious dealings of God in their lives and in them to some degree certain aspects of the redemption in Christ Jesus are typified. But although God did such great things for them, whereof they were glad, it is said, whether

nationally or individually, they only experienced outward redemption.

This is not to say that many of them did not enjoy soul salvation to the fullest extent possible under law. There is no doubt many did, but God 'has provided some better thing for us' and we are more glad than they. The redeeming act of Jesus enabled Him to administer to us the redemptive experience whereby we are powerfully initiated into Himself, the Redeemer, so that we should be redeemed by Him and in Him.