

Plenteous Redemption

A Sermon

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“With him is plenteous redemption.” — [Psalm 103:7](#).

REDEMPTION is a word which has gladdened many ears, when there was no heavenly sound in its blessed chime. Apart from any theological use of it, the word is a very sweet one, and has been melodious to many hearts. In those days when piracy was carried on continually along the coast of Africa, when our fellow Christian subjects were caught by corsairs, and carried away captive, you can well understand how the burdened soul of the manacled slave, chained to the oar of his galley, was gladdened by the hope that possibly there would be *redemption*. His cruel master, who had forced him into his possession, would not willingly emancipate him; but a rumour came, that in some distant nation they had raised a sum of money to purchase the freedom of slaves—that some wealthy merchant had dedicated of his substance to buy back his fellow-countrymen; that the king himself upon his throne had promised to give a liberal redemption that the captives among the moors might return to their home. Truly I can suppose the hours run happily along, and the dreariness of their toil would be assuaged, when once that word “*redemption*” had sounded in their ears. So with our fellow-subjects and our fellow-men, who once were slaves in our West India settlements. We can well conceive that to their lips the word *redemption* must have been a very pleasing song. It must have been well nigh as sweet to them as the marriage peals to a youthful bridegroom, when they knew that the noble British nation would count down the twenty millions of their redemption money; that on a certain morning their fetters should be snapped asunder, so that they should no more go out to the plantations to sweat in the sun, driven by the whip, but they should call themselves their own, and none should be their masters to possess thir flesh, and have property in their souls. You can conceive when the sun of that happy morn arose, when emancipation was proclaimed from sea to sea, and the whole land was at liberty, how joyful must their new-found freedom have appeared. O there are many sonnets in that one word “*redemption*.”

Now, ye who have sold for nought your glorious heritage; ye who have been carried bondslaves into Satan’s dominion; ye who have worn the fetters of guilt and groaned under them; ye who have smarted beneath the lash of the law; what the news of redemption has been to slaves and captives, that will it be to you to-night. It will cheer your souls and gladden your spirits, and more especially so when that rich adjective is coupled with it—“*plenteous redemption*.”

This evening I shall consider the subject of *redemption*, and then notice *the adjective appended to the word*: “*plenteous redemption*.”

I. First, then, we shall consider the subject of REDEMPTION.

I shall commence in this way, by asking, *What has Christ redeemed?* And in order to let you know what my views are upon this subject, I would announce at once what I conceive to be an authoritative doctrine, consistent with common sense, and declared to us by Scripture, namely, that whatever Christ has redeemed, Christ will most assuredly have. I start with that as an axiom, that whatever Christ has redeemed, Christ must have. I hold it to be repugnant to reason, and much more to revelation, that Christ should die to purchase what he never shall obtain; and I hold it to be little less than blasphemy to assert that the intention of our Saviour’s death can ever be frustrated. Whatever was Christ’s intention when he died—we lay it down as a very groundwork truth, which ought to be granted to us by every reasonable man—that Christ will most certainly gain. I cannot see how it can be that the intention of God in anything can be frustrated. We have always thought God to be so superior to creatures, that when he has once intended a thing, it must most assuredly be accomplished; and if I have that granted to me, I cannot for a moment allow you to imagine that Christ should shed his blood in vain; that he should die with an intention of doing something, and yet should not perform it; that he should die with a full intention in his heart, and with a promise on the part of God, that a certain thing should be given to him as a reward of his sufferings, and yet should fail to obtain it. I start with that; and I think that everyone who will weigh the matter, and truly consider it, must see it to be so, that Christ’s intention in his death must be fulfilled, and that the design of God, whatever that may be, must certainly be carried out. Well then, I believe that the efficacy of Christ’s blood knows no other limit than the purpose of God. I believe that the efficacy of Christ’s atonement is just as great as God meant it should be, and that what Christ redeemed is precisely what he meant to redeem, and exactly what the Father had decreed he should redeem. Therefore I cannot for one moment give any credence whatever to that doctrine which tells us that all men are redeemed. Some may hold it, as I know they do, and hold it very strongly, and even urge it as being a fundamental part of the doctrine of revelation. They are welcome to it; this is a land of liberty. Let them hold their views, but I must tell them solemnly my persuasion, that they cannot hold such doctrine if they do but well consider the matter; for if they once believe in universal redemption, they are driven to the blasphemous inference that God’s intention is frustrated, and that Christ has not received what he died to procure. If, therefore, they can believe that, I will give them credit for being able to believe anything; and I shall not despair of seeing them landed at the Salt Lake, or in any other region where enthusiasm and credulity can flourish without the checks of ridicule or reason.

Starting, then, with this assumption, I beg now to tell you what I believe, according to sound doctrine and Scripture, Christ has really redeemed. His redemption is a very compen-

dious redemption. He has redeemed many things; he has redeemed the souls of his people; he has redeemed the bodies of his people; he has redeemed the original inheritance which man lost in Adam; he has redeemed, in the last place, the world, considered in a certain sense—in the sense in which he will have the world at last.

Christ has redeemed *the souls of all his people who shall ultimately be saved*. To state it after the Calvinistic form, Christ has redeemed his elect; but since you do not know his elect until they are revealed, we will alter that, and say, Christ has redeemed all penitent souls; Christ has redeemed all believing souls; and Christ has redeemed the souls of all those who die in infancy, seeing it is to be received, that all those who die in infancy are written in the Lamb's book of life, and are graciously privileged by God to go at once to heaven, instead to toiling through this weary world. The souls of all those who were written before all worlds in the Lamb's book of life, who in process of time are humbled before God, who in due course are led to lay hold of Christ Jesus as the only refuge of their souls, who hold on their way, and ultimately attain to heaven; these, I believe, were redeemed, and I must firmly and solemnly believe the souls of none other men were in that sense subjects of redemption. I do not hold the doctrine that Judas was redeemed; I could not conceive my Saviour bearing the punishment for Judas, or if so how could Judas be punished again. I could not conceive it possible that God should exact first at Christ's hands the penalty of his sin, and then at the sinner's hands again. I cannot conceive for a moment that Christ should have shed his blood in vain; and though I have read in the books of certain divines, that Christ's blood is fuel for the flames of hell, I have shuddered at the thought, and have cast it from me as being a dreadful assertion, perhaps worthy of those who made it, but utterly unsupported by the Word of God. The souls of God's people, whoever they may be, and they are a multitude that no man can number—and I could fondly hope they are all of you—are redeemed effectually. Briefly, they are redeemed in three ways. They are redeemed from the guilt of sin, from the punishment of sin, and from the power of sin. The souls of Christ's people have guilt on account of sin, until they are redeemed; but when once redemption is applied to my soul, my sins are every one of them from that moment for ever blotted out.

“The moment a sinner believes,
And trusts in his crucified Lord,
His pardon at once he receives,
Salvation in full through his blood.”

The guilt of our sin is taken away by the redemption of Christ. Whatever sin you may have committed, the moment you believe in Christ, not only will you never be punished for that sin, but the very guilt of that sin is taken from you. You cease to be in God's sight any longer a guilty person; you are reckoned by God as a justified believer to have the righteousness of Christ about you; and therefore, you can say—to recal a verse which we often repeat—

“Now freed from sin I walk at large,

My Saviour's blood's my full discharge;
At his dear feet my soul I lay,
A sinner saved, and homage pay."

Every sin, every particle of guilt, every atom of transgression, is by the redemption of Christ, effectually taken away from all the Lord's believing family.

And mark, next: not only the guilt, but the punishment of sin is taken away. In fact, when we cease to be guilty, we cease to be the objects of punishment altogether. Take away the guilt, the punishment is gone; but to make it more effectual, it is as it were written over again, that condemnation is taken away, as well as the sin for which we might be condemned. "There is, therefore, now, no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." None of those who were redeemed by Christ can ever be damned; they can never be punished on account of sin, for Christ has suffered their punishment in their stead, and therefore, they cannot, unless God be unjust, be sued a second time for debts already paid. If Christ their ransom died, they cannot die; if he, their surety, paid their debt, then unto God's justice they owe no longer anything, for Christ hath paid it all. If he hath shed his blood, if he hath yielded up the ghost, if he hath "died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God," how, then, would God be just, and yet the punisher of those whom he has already punished once in the person of Jesus Christ their Saviour? No beloved, through the plenteous redemption of Christ we are delivered from all punishment on account of sin, and from all guilt which we had incurred thereby.

Moreover the believing family of Christ—or rather, all for whom he died—are most effectually delivered from the *power* of sin. Oh! there are some who suck in the two truths I have been mentioning, as if they were honey; but they cannot endure this other point—Christ delivers us from the power of sin. Mark you this, then—we affirm it very strongly—no man can ever be redeemed from the guilt of sin, or from the punishment of sin, unless he be at the same time delivered from the power of sin. Unless he is made by God to hate his own sin, unless he is enabled to cast it to the ground, unless he is made to abhor every evil way, and to cleave unto God with full purpose of heart, walking before him in the land of the living, in the strength of the Holy Spirit, such a man has no right to believe himself redeemed. If thou art still under the dominion of thy lusts, O wicked sinner, thou hast no right to think thyself a purchased heir of heaven. If thou canst be drunk, if thou canst swear, if thou canst curse God, if thou canst lie, if thou canst profane the Sabbath, if thou canst hate his people, if thou canst despise his Word, then thou hast no right whatever, any more than Satan in hell, to boast that thou art redeemed; for all the Lord's redeemed are in due time brought out of the house of bondage, out of the land of Egypt, and they are taught the evil of sin, the horrible penalty of it and the desperate character of it in the sight of God. Art thou delivered from the power of sin, my hearer? Hast thou mortified it? Art thou dead unto it? Is it dead unto thee? Is it crucified unto thee, and thou unto it? Dost thou

hate it as thou wouldst a viper? Dost thou tread on it as thou wouldst tread upon a serpent? If thou dost, albeit there be sins of frailty and infirmity, yet if thou hatest the sin of thy heart, if thou hast an unutterable enmity to it, take courage and comfort. The Lord hath redeemed thee from the guilt and penalty, and also from the power of sin. That is the first point of redemption. And hear me distinctly again, lest any should mistake me. I always like to preach so that there can be no mistake about it. I do not want so to preach that you will say in the judgment of charity, he could not have meant what he said. Now, I mean solemnly again to say what I have said—that I do believe that none others were redeemed than those who are or shall be redeemed from the guilt, the punishment, and the power of sin, because I say again, it is abhorrent to my reason, much less to my views of Scripture, to conceive that the damned ever were redeemed, and that the lost in perdition were ever washed in the Saviour's blood, or that his blood was ever shed with an intention of saving them.

2. Now let us think of the second thing Christ has redeemed. Christ has redeemed the *bodies of all his children*. In that day when Christ redeemed our souls, he redeemed the tabernacles in which our souls dwell. At the same moment when the spirit was redeemed by blood, Christ who gave his human soul and his human body to death, purchased the body as well as the soul of every believer. You ask, then, in what way redemption operates upon the body of the believer. I answer, first, it ensures it a resurrection. Those for whom Christ died, are ensured by his death a glorious resurrection. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ, shall all be made alive." All men are by virtue of the death of Christ quickened to a resurrection, but even here there is a special property of the elect, seeing that they are quickened to a blessed resurrection, whilst others are quickened only to a cursed resurrection; a resurrection of woe, a resurrection of unutterable anguish. O Christian, thy body is redeemed.

"What though thine inbred sins require
Thy flesh to see the dust,
Yet, as the Lord thy Saviour rose,
So all his followers must."

What! though in a little time I shall slumber in the tomb, though worms devour this body, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and because he lives I know that in my flesh I shall see God. These eyes which soon shall be glazed in death, shall not be always closed in darkness; death shall be made to give back his prey; he shall restore all that he has taken. Lo, I see him there! He hath the bodies of the just locked up in his dungeons; they are wrapped up in their cerements, and he thinks they are secure: he has sealed their tombs and marked them for his own. O death! foolish death! thy caskets shall be rifled; thy storehouses shall be broken open. Lo, the morning is come! Christ hath descended from on high. I hear the trump, "Awake! Awake!" and lo! from their tombs, the righteous start; while death sits in confusion howling in vain, to find his empire all bereft of its subjects, to find all his dungeons

rifled of their prey. “Precious shall their blood be in his sight;” precious shall be their bones! their very dust is blessed, and Christ shall raise them with himself. Think of that, ye that have lost friends—ye weeping children of sorrow! your redeemed friends shall live again. The very hands that grasped yours with a death clutch, shall grasp them in paradise; those very eyes that wept themselves away in tears, shall, with eye-strings that never shall be broken, wake up in the noon-day of felicity. That very frame which thou didst sorrowfully convey, with dread attire of funeral, to bury in its tomb—yes, that selfsame body, made like the image of Jesus Christ, spiritualized and changed, but nevertheless the selfsame body, shall rise again; and thou, if thou art redeemed, shalt see it, for Christ has purchased it, and Christ shall not die in vain. Death will not have one bone of the righteous—nay, not a particle of their dust—nay, not a hair of their heads. It shall all come back. Christ has purchased all our body, and the whole body shall be completed, and united for ever in heaven with the glorified soul. The bodies of the righteous are redeemed, and redeemed for eternal happiness.

3. In the next place, all *the possessions of the righteous* which were lost in Adam are redeemed. Adam! where art thou? I have a controversy with thee, man, for I have lost much by thee. Come thou hither. Adam! thou seest what thou art now, tell me what thou once wast; then I shall know what I have lost by thee, and then I shall be able to thank my Master that all thou didst lose he has freely bought back to all believers. What didst thou lose? “Alas!” cries Adam, “I had a crown once; I was king of all the world; the beasts crouched at my feet and did me reverence; God made me, that I might have supreme command over the cattle upon the hills, and over all fowls of the air; but I lost my crown. I had a mitre once,” said Adam, “for I was a priest to God, and oftentimes in the morning did I climb the hills, and sing sweet orisons of praise to him that made me. My censer of praise hath often smoked with incense, and my voice has been sweet with praise.

”These are thy glorious works, parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then;’

Oft have I bidden misty exhalations, sun, and moon, and stars, sing to his praise; daily have I bidden the herds upon the hills low out his glories, and the lions roar his honours; nightly have I told the stars to shine it out, and the little flowers to blossom it forth: but ah! I lost my mitre, and I, who was once a priest to God, ceased any longer to be his holy servant.” Ah! Adam, thou hast lost me much; but yonder I see my Saviour; he takes his crown off his head, that he may put a crown on my head; and he puts a mitre on his head, to be a priest, that he may put a mitre on my head too, and on the head of all his people; for, as we have just been singing,

“Thou hast redeemed our souls with blood,
Hast set the prisoners free;
Hast made us kings and priests to God,

And we shall reign with thee.”

Just what Adam lost: the kingship and the priesthood of Christ, is won for all his believing people. And what else didst thou lose, Adam? “Why, I lost paradise.” Hush, man! say nothing upon that; for Christ hath bought me a paradise worth ten thousand such Edens as thine. So we can well forgive thee that. And what else didst thou lose? “Why, I lost the image of my Maker.” Ah! hush, Adam! In Jesus christ we have something more than that; for we have the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, and sure that is even better than the image of the Maker, for it is the very dress and robe that the Maker wore. So, Adam, all that thou hast lost I have again. Christ has redeemed all that we sold for nought. I, who have sold for nought a heritage divine, shall have it back unbought,—the gift of love, says Christ, e’en mine. Oh! hear it, then! The trump of Jubilee is blown; Christ hath redeemed the lost possessions of his people.

4. And now I come to the last thing that Christ has redeemed, though not the last point of the discourse. Christ has redeemed this world. “Well, now,” says one, “that is strange, sir; you are going to contradict yourself flatly.” Stop a moment. Understand what I mean by *the world*, if you please. We do not mean every man, in it; we never pretended such a thing. But I will tell you how Christ has redeemed the world. When Adam fell God cursed the world with barrenness. “Thorns also and briars shall it bring forth unto thee, and in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread.” God cursed the earth. When Christ came into the world they twisted a crown made of the cursed thorn, and they put that on his head, and made him king of the curse; and in that day he purchased the redemption of the world from its curse; and it is my very belief, and I think it is warranted by Scripture, that when Christ shall come a second time, this world will become everywhere as fertile as the garden of Paradise used to be. I believe that Sahara, the literal desert, shall one day blossom like Sharon, and rejoice like the garden of the Lord. I do not conceive that this poor world is to be a forlorn planetary wanderer for ever; I believe that she is yet to be clothed with verdure, such as she once wore. We have evidences in the beds of coal underneath the earth, that this world was once much more fertile than it is now. Gigantic trees once spread their mighty arms, and I had almost said one arm of a tree in that day would have builded half a forest for us now. Then mighty creatures, far different from ours, stalked through the earth; and I believe firmly that a luxuriant vegetation, such as this world once knew shall be restored to us, and that we shall see again a garden such as we have not known. No more cursed with blight and mildew, with no more blast and withering, we shall see a land like heaven itself—

“Where everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers.”

When Christ cometh he shall do even this.

In the day of the fall, too, it is currently believed that animals for the first time received their ferocious temperament, and began to fall on each other; of this we are not sure; but if

I read Scripture rightly, I find that the lion shall lie down with the kid, and that the leopard shall eat straw like the ox, and that the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. I do believe that in millennial years that are coming, and coming soon, there shall be known no more devouring lions, no blood-thirsty tigers, no creatures that shall devour their kind. God shall restore to us again, and even to the beasts of the field, the blessing which Adam lost.

And, my friends, there is a worse curse than that which has fallen on this world. It is the curse of ignorance and sin: that, too, is to be removed. Seest thou yonder planet? It is whirling along through space—bright, bright and glorious. Hearest thou the morning stars sing together, because this new sister of theirs is made? That is the earth; she is bright now. Stay! Didst remark that shadow sweep across her? What caused it? The palnet is dimmed, and on her face there lies a sorrowful shadow. I am speaking, of course, metaphorically. See there the planet; she glides along in ten-fold night; scarce doth a speck of light irradiate her. Mark again, the day is not come, when that planet shall renew her glory, but it is hastening amain. As the serpent slips its slough, and leaves it behind it in the valley, so yon planet hath slopped its coulds, and shone forth bright as it was before. Do you ask who hath done it? Who hath cleared away the mist? Who hath taken away the darkness? Who hath removed the clouds? “I have done it,” says Christ, the sun of righteousness; “I have scattered darkness, and made that world bright again.” Lo, I see a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. To explain myself, lest I should be mistaken, I mean this. This world is now covered with sin, ignorance, mistake, idolatry, and crime; the day is coming when the last drop of blood shall be drunk by the sword; it shall be no more intoxicated with blood; God shall make wars to cease unto the ends of the earth. The day is coming—oh that it were now!—when the feet of Christ shall tread this earth. Then down shall go idols from their thrones; down superstitions from their pinnacles; then slavery shall cease; then crime shall end; then peace shall spread its halcyon wings over all the world; and then shall you know that Christ hath died for the world, and that Christ hath won it. “The whole creation,” says Paul, “groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now;” waiting for what? “waiting for the redemption;” and by the redemption, I understand what I have just explained to you, that this world shall be washed of all her sin; her curse shall be removed, her stains taken away and this world shall be as fair as when God first struck her from his mind; as when, like a glowing spark, smitten from the anvil by the eternal hammer she first flashed in her orbit. This Christ has redeemed; this, Christ shall, and most assuredly must have.

II. And now, a word or two concerning the last thought—“PLENTEOUS REDEMPTION.”

It is plenteous enough, if you consider what I have already told you Christ has bought. Sure I should have made it no more plenteous, if I had lied against my conscience, and told you that he had bought every man; for of what avail is it that I am bought with blood, if I

am lost? Of what use is it to me that Christ has died for me, if I yet sink in the flames of hell? How will that glorify Christ, that he hath redeemed me, and yet failed in his intentions? Surely it is more to his honour to believe, that according to his immutable, sovereign, and all-wise will, he laid the foundation as wide as he intended the structure to be, and then made it just according to his will. Nevertheless, it is “plenteous redemption.” Very briefly, lend me your ears just a moment.

It is “plenteous,” when we consider the millions that have been redeemed. Think if ye can, how great that host who have already “washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;” and then think how many now with weary feet are plodding their way to Paradise, all of them redeemed. They all shall sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Is it not “plenteous redemption,” when you reflect that it is a “multitude that no man can number” that will be gathered in? Let us close that by saying, “And why not you?” If so many are redeemed, why should not you be? Why should you not seek for mercy on the strength of that, knowing that all who seek will most assuredly receive, for they would not have sought unless it had been prepared for them?

It is “plenteous,” again, if we consider the sins of all who are redeemed. However great the sins of any redeemed soul, this redemption is enough to cover it all to wash it all away—

“What though your numerous sins exceed

The stars that spread the skies,

And aiming at th’ eternal throne,

Like pointed mountains rise;”

Yet this plenteous redemption can take all your sins away. They are no greater than Christ foresaw, and vowed to remove. Therefore, I beseech you, fly to Jesus, believing that however great your guilt, his atonement is great enough for all who come to him, and therefore you may safely come.

Remember, again, that this “plenteous redemption” is plenteous, because it is enough for all the distresses of all the saints. Your wants are almost infinite; but this atonement is quite so. Your troubles are almost unutterable; but this atonement is quite unutterable. Your needs you can scarce tell; but this redemption I know you cannot tell. Believe, then, that it is “plenteous redemption.” O believing sinner, what a sweet comfort it is for you, that there is “plenteous redemption,” and that you have a lot in it. You will most certainly be brought safely home, by Jesu’s grace. Are you seeking Christ? Or rather, do you know yourselves to be sinners? If you do, I have authority from God to say to every one who will confess his sins, that Christ has redeemed him. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.” Are you a sinner? I do not mean a sham sinner; there are lots of them about, but I have no gospel to preach to them just now. I do not mean one of those hypocritical sinners, who cry, “Yes, I am a sinner,”—who are sinners out of compliment, and do not mean it. I will preach another

thing to *you*: I will preach against your self-righteousness another day; but I shall not preach anything to you just now about Christ, for he “came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” But are you a sinner, in the *bona fide* sense of the word? Do you know yourself to be a lost, ruined, undone sinner? Then in God’s name I urge you to believe this—that Christ has died to save you; for as sure as ever he has revealed to you your guilty by the Holy Ghost, he will not leave you till he has revealed to you your pardon by his only Son. If you know your lost estate, you shall soon know your glorious estate. Believe in Jesus now; then thou art saved, and thou mayest go away happy,—blest beyond what kings could dream. Believe that since thou art a sinner, Christ hath redeemed thee—that just because thou knowest thyself to be undone, guilty, lost and ruined, thou hast this night a right, a privilege, and a title, to bathe in the fountain filled with blood, “shed for many for the remission of sins.” Believe that, and then thou shalt know the meaning of this text—“Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom also we have received the atonement.” God dismiss you with a blessing, for Jesus’ sake!