

The Tabernacle
The Goal of Redemption
Part One

By

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Introduction

Normally if one were asked: “Why did God redeem Israel?”, the answer would be: “To bring them to the promised land”. Sadly, such is perhaps the lowest reason for their deliverance for they were redeemed for several reasons. By being redeemed (Ex. 6:6; Psa. 111:9) and delivered by power (Ex. 14:9-31), they were freed to:

- a) Sacrifice to the Lord:
 - (i) “And they shall hearken to thy voice: and thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and ye shall say unto him, The LORD God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.” (Ex. 3:18)
- b) Serve Him:
 - i) “Let my son go, that he may serve me.” (Ex. 4:23)
- c) To be the executors of his judgements and manifestations of His character:
 - i) “Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you.” (Lev. 18:24)
 - ii) “For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.” (Deut. 18:12)
- d) To enjoy the inheritance He had for them:
 - i) “And I am come down to . . . bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.” (Ex. 3:8)
- e) To be the fear of the nations among whom they would dwell. (Deut. 2:25)

There was a higher purpose in their deliverance. It was for God to bring them to Himself (Ex. 19:4). It appears to me that this aspect is often overlooked in gospel preaching, with the focus being for individuals to get delivered from the wrath to come, and assure them of Heaven. Wonderful as that is, however, to be with the Lord in Heaven necessitates a full reconciliation to Himself.

To be brought unto God is more than being able to come near Him. It means the removal of all that causes guiltiness, slavery, disharmony, and distortion. Clearly then there must be justification, peace and redemption, and resurrection for:

- a) Without resurrection there could be no removal of distortion.
- b) Without peace there could be no removal of disharmony.
- c) Without justification there could be no removal of guiltiness.
- d) Without redemption there could be no release from slavery.

Only when these factors are dealt with can there be reconciliation.

That Which It Cost Divine Persons To Bring Us To God

When the Lord took Israel out of Egypt it was a work of love, power and will, but it cost God nothing. When God provided redemption it was at an infinite cost to the Father and the Son.

What It Cost The Father

The providing of redemption, the cost to the Father came in two ways: “He gave His only begotten Son” (Jn. 3:16) and on the cross for salvation to be righteously provided (Rom. 3:25), “He spared not His own Son” (Rom. 8:32). Had Jacob known that which would befall his son Joseph, I am sure he would never have sent him to see how his brethren fared (Gen. 37:13-14). I suppose no one could enter into the heart of Abraham knowing that which he was to do to his beloved son. For three long days they walked together, and despite Abraham knowing God would raise his son from the dead, to deliberately slay his son must have been a burden of incomprehensible grief. I knew a father who had to “pull the plug” on his only daughter of twenty-seven years. He could not do it on his own and asked another brother to come with him, and neither of them ever got over it.

Easily, we read the words:

- a) "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death" (Psa. 22:15)
- b) "The Lord hath laid on Him" (Isa. 53:6)
- c) "Stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted" (Isa. 53:4)
- d) "He hath made Him to be sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21)
- e) "It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief" (Isa. 53:10)
- f) "See if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me" (Lam. 1:12).

This was not the activity of a cold emotionless God, functioning no cold clinical activity. For to hear His Son cry: "Oh my Father, if it be possible remove this cup from me" (Matt. 26:39; Lk. 22:42), yet such was the greatness of His love for humanity that He could not respond. To see His son mocked and spat upon, to stand back and watch His Beloved Son being lashed and the hair plucked of His face and do nothing must have been immeasurably hard. Then at midday, to forsake Him and start the deliberate measuring of righteous justice, sparing nothing, and do such for three long hours is incomprehensible. We listen to His orphaned cry: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me" (Matt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34), and we hear words so profound: "He spared not His Son" (Rom. 8:32).

On such love my soul still ponder, love so rich, so full, so free,
Say while lost in holy wonder, why O Lord such love to me?"

Ponder it deeply, Christ suffered as a guilty hell deserving sinner. God had to not only look on Him as that, not only judge Him as that, but execute judgement on Him as such. There could be no minimizing the severity of the executed judgment. He had to be treated as one under the condemnation of God by birth and self will. Such things are too wonderful for me.

What Did It Cost The Son?

It is so "natural" when we think of the cost to Christ that immediately our minds go to His sufferings on the cross when He suffered for our sins in the three hours of darkness. However, we need to go before that chronologically, and consider that which it cost Him.

- a) There was the cost of Him taking the "form of a servant" (Phil. 2:7) which was followed by His condescension and incarnation. In so doing, he gave up the outward manifestation and acknowledged worship for who He was. He was treated as one:
 - i) Who was counted as nothing (Isa. 53:3)
 - ii) Lived a hard life of continual hounding, hatred and sorrow (Isa. 53:4)
- b) He paid the cost of providing propitiation for the sins of the whole world (1 Jn. 2:2), and thus be the sacrifice for all who put their trust in Him.

On this subject there are several teachings which are totally evil in their content:

- a) Christ became "satanized" when on the cross:
 - i) This teaching is based on the words: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up" (Jn. 3:14). The first observation is that the serpent was lifted on a pole to be high enough for all who were bitten to look upon and live (Num. 21:8-9). The narrative can be used as an illustration of salvation: "Look and live", but the serpent never was to prefigure Christ when on the cross. It is the lifting up that is the similarity, a fact that the Lord spoke several times of (Jn. 8:28; 12:32, 34).
- b) Christ became a sinner when on the cross:
 - i) When Paul wrote: "He hath made Him to be sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21) it does not mean that our Lord was made a sinner! There can be no doubt He was judged as that, for He was bearing the penalty for our sins "in His own body" (1 Pet. 2:24) on the tree, but suffering the penalty for the sinner is totally different from being made a sinner. When our Lord was suffering for sins He never lost His holiness, being still as holy as when in the arms of Mary or prior to His leaving Heaven. The Holy Spirit records God's evaluation of the sin offering when He wrote: "It is most holy, as is the sin-offering" (Lev. 6:17); when speaking of the sin offering He said: "This is the law of the sin-offering . . . it is most holy" (Lev. 6:25); and concerning the trespass offering He

said: "So is the trespass-offering: it is most holy" (Lev. 14:13). Our Lord became a sin offering but was never made or became a sinner!

- c) Christ suffered for sins during the entire six hours He hung on the cross.
 - i) This teaching is built on the words of Peter when he wrote: "Who His own self bear our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). Those who teach this change the word "on" to "upon", or "up to". The Greek preposition "epi" is used in seven hundred and ninety verses of the New Testament and is translated: "about the time" (Matt. 1:11); "upon" (Matt. 3:16); "in" (Matt. 6:10); "of" (Mk. 9:12). This being so, it is evident that context must decide how "epi" is translated and furthermore, to my understanding, it is never used to teach doctrine. If, and it is a very big "if", if Christ was bearing our sins the six hours on which He hung on the cross, and in all that time He was being forsaken by God, which is what hell is, receiving the punishment for sins then:
 1. In Hell sinners can torment other sinners, for sinners tormented the Lord when on the cross. (Matt. 27:40)
 2. In hell there is room for forgiveness for it was in the six hours the Lord asked the Father to forgive. (Lk. 23:34)
 3. In hell it will not be blackness of darkness (Jude 1:13), for the first three hours were daylight (Matt. 27:45-46)
 - ii) Make no mistake about it, it was in the three hours of darkness, which it must be for several reasons. God made our Lord to be an offering for sin (Isa. 53:10; Heb. 10:8, 10).
- d) Christ did not mean the work was finished even though he said so, but had to go into hell to be tormented by the demons.
 - i) This evil teaching signifies that the Lord deliberately told lies when on the cross, for it was not really finished because He had to go into Hell. This is taken from an obscure and hard to understand scripture which says: "He went and preached unto the spirits in prison" (1 Pet. 3:19), but even that does not indicate He was abused in Hell for three days! First, in Bible interpretation one must never let an obscure verse nullify the teaching of that which is plain, and to build a doctrine on what is not said is very dangerous. The body of the Lord was in the tomb for three days (Matt. 12:40), His spirit went to the Father (Lk. 23:46), and any teaching which goes contrary to that clear scripture is wrong.
 - ii) To this one adds that the work of redemption was never in the hands of Satan and his hordes. This follows on from the previous section, for the question to be asked is: "If Christ went into Hell to be abused by Satan and his associates, did this also happen on the cross?" When the Lord hung on the cross as a sacrifice for sins, it was a work of divine persons in which the evil one had absolutely no part.
- e) Christ paid a debt to Satan.
 - i) This teaching was first made by Origen (185-254) who taught that Satan held humanity captive and on the cross Jesus paid off Satan. Gregory the Great (540-604) further developed this concept by saying that Jesus came disguised as a man to trick Satan like a worm on a hook to capture the devil. Let it be clear, God never tricked the devil nor anyone else. Salvation was done in righteousness on righteous grounds.
 - ii) One very interesting fact is clear, a person will search in vain for a single verse that says that Jesus paid a debt for our sins! We may sing: "Jesus paid the debt for all the little children" or "He paid a debt He did not owe", but the closest I can find of a scripture supporting this is: "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28). In the parables debts are always forgiven and there is never any mention of a debt being paid. If an individual insists that Christ paid the debt then it must be understood that because of sin man was and is deficient in moral perfection, and at the cross the Lord cleared the guilty, and God had the ability to righteously impute righteousness (Rom. 4:11). There are two Greek words translated "ransom" and "lutron" which means "price of release" (Matt. 20:28; Mk.

10:45); and “antilutron” (1 Tim. 2:6) which carries the idea of exchange. Gustav A. Deissman states: “When anybody heard the Greek word lutron, ‘ransom’, in the first century, it was natural for him to think of the purchase-money for the setting free of slaves (not for the payment of a debt, my observation).

f) Christ complained to God when on the cross.

i) When our Lord was on the cross there is only one cry which was endorsed by the Holy Spirit to be the fulfilment of the scriptures. That was when he cried: “I thirst” (Jn. 19:28 quoted from Psa. 69:21). The fact that we have taken the cry of the Lord: “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” to be the fulfilment of Psa. 22:1 does not make it such. However, there is the tendency to go further and quote the balance of Psa. 22:2-5 as if the Lord said these further words from the cross. It must be clear the Lord never said: “O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent. But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and thou didst deliver them. They cried unto thee, and were delivered: they trusted in thee, and were not confounded”. There are those who have taught our Lord was remonstrating when he said: “Our fathers trusted in thee and you never let them down, but I thy perfect son who always did all that you desired you have not come to my need but instead have forsaken me”. (Not a translation but as it is said by those who so argue) That which He did say was the first clause and only the first clause of verse one! To say otherwise is an unwarranted assumption. It is in fact putting words in the mouth of the Lord, words that we have no scripture for. This is blasphemy!

ii) Complaining can be:

1. An attitude of heart as seen in Israel and it was a sin.

(a) “Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me” (Num. 14:29)

(b) “And ye murmured in your tents, and said, Because the LORD hated us, he hath brought us forth out of the land of Egypt, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us.” (Deut. 1:27)

2. Complaining was the way of Judas, and it was a sin.

(a) “For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor, and they murmured against her.” (Mk. 14:5)

3. Complaining was the way of the Pharisees and scribes and it was a sin.

(a) “And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.” (Lk. 15:2)

iii) To indicate that the Holy Son of God complained is to lay the accusation of sin against Him, and that being so it means that:

1. He sinned in a rebellious attitude toward God.

2. God is a false witness when He said, prophetically: “Behold My servant . . . in whom my soul delighteth” (Isa. 42:1); personally: “Thou art my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Mk. 1:11). How could God find fullness of pleasure in a man who in heart was rebelling against Him?

I state very emphatically, the Lord was utterly sinless, void of any discord with God, and His entire life was one of superlative pleasure to God.

May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.

John 16:13