

A History of the Work of Redemption

By Jonathan Edwards

Lesson 7 - Period 1 - Part 4 (From Moses to David)

“The work of redemption is a work that God carries on from the fall of man to the end of the world”

In the entirety of the Old Testament there is not one event that so clearly pictures and foreshadows God’s plan of redemption as the _____ out of Egypt.

“The first thing that offers itself is the redemption of the church of God out of Egypt; the most remarkable of all in the Old Testament, the greatest pledge and forerunner of the future redemption by Christ, and much more insisted on in Scripture than any other of those redemptions. And indeed it was the greatest type of Christ’s redemption of any providential event whatsoever. This was by Jesus Christ, for it was wrought by Him who appeared to Moses in the bush; the person that sent Moses to redeem that people.”

“This was the glorious Redeemer who redeemed the church out of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharoah; as Christ, by His death and sufferings, redeemed His people from Satan, the spiritual Pharoah. He redeemed them from hard service and cruel drudgery; so Christ redeems His people from the cruel slavery of sin and Satan.”

It was not merely Pharoah who was seeking the destruction of the nation (through both the death of every male and also by attempting to destroy them all in the Red Sea) but it was the very activity of Satan to try and put an end to the promise of redemption. However, the Lord _____ and _____ the people from whom the promised Seed was to come.

The _____ of Israel and _____ of all the Gentile nations was also an advance in the God’s work of redemption. Before this there were believers amongst the Gentile nations (such as Melchizedek and Job and his friends). Now it was God’s plan to choose one nation to preserve the line and Word and allow all others to stagger in unbelief. This plan would then make the redemption of the Gentile world during the New Testament era all the more glorious.

“As the first calling of the Gentiles, after Christ came, was accompanied with a rejection of the Jews; so the first calling of the Jews to be God’s people when they left Egypt, was accompanied with a rejection of the Gentiles.”

When thinking of the time of Moses one almost immediately thinks of the giving of the 10 commandments. This too was an advance in God’s work of redemption. Edwards sees the _____ law as both “a new exhibition of the covenant of works” and “as a rule of life”.

“The work of redemption, in its saving effect on men’s souls, in all its progress, is not carried on without the use of this law delivered at Sinai.”

“It was given in an awful manner with a terrible voice, exceedingly loud and awful, so that all the people in the camp trembled; even Moses himself, though so intimate a friend of God, said, ‘I exceedingly fear and quake.’ The voice was accompanied with thunders and lightnings, the mountain burning with fire to the midst of heaven, and the earth itself shaking and trembling. This was done in order to make all sensible how great that authority, power, and justice were, that stood engaged to exact the fulfillment of this law, and to see it fully executed.”

A ceremonial and judicial _____ were also given to the nation of Israel. These laws were given so as to continue to point the people to the great work of redemption that would be accomplished in Christ Jesus.

“Now, instead of representing the great Redeemer in a few institutions, God enacts a law full of typical representations of good things to come. By these, that nation were directed every year, month, and day, in their religious actions, and in their conduct, in all that pretrained to their ecclesiastical and civil state, something of Christ.”

Not only did the Lord graciously give His people these typical laws but He also gave to them His Word in _____ form. God’s Word had always accompanied the types that God gave to His people but now He gives them His Word in a form that they cannot forget but that they can reference and be reminded of. This was a great advancement in God’s work of redemption.

“The written word of God is the main instrument employed by Christ, in order to carry on His work of redemption in all ages. There was a necessity now of the word of God being committed to writing, for a steady rule to God’s church...God having now separated a nation to be a peculiar people, to be the keepers of the oracles of God; God saw it to be a convenient time now to commit His word to writing, to remain henceforward for a steady rule throughout all ages.”

The progression of the exodus account provides for us an overview of the “_____” of all of the redeemed throughout the ages. The exodus presents a grand type for the work of redemption.

“God was pleased now wonderfully to represent the progress of His redeemed church through the world to their eternal inheritance, by the journey of the children of Israel through the wilderness, from Egypt to Canaan. Here all the various steps of the redemption of the church by Christ were represented, from the beginning to its consummation in glory.”

From the time of the flood until this time of the exodus we see the gradual shortening of human life. Before the flood it was common for humans to live for centuries but now we find that the life of person is shortened to be on average around 70 to 80. Edwards sees two benefits to the shortening of man’s life: 1. The promises of the gospel are now seen as more _____ & 2. The _____ of men is cut short.

“Man’s life being cut so very short, tended to prepare the way for poor, short-lived men, the more joyfully to entertain the glad tidings of everlasting life, brought to light by the gospel, and more readily to embrace a Savior, that purchases and offers such a blessing. If men’s lives were still commonly about nine hundred years, how much less would be the inducement to regard the proffers of a future life; how much greater the temptation to rest in the things of this world, and to neglect any other life but this! This probably contributed greatly to the wickedness of the antediluvians. But now how much greater motives have men to seek redemption, and a better life than this, by the great Redeemer, since the life of man is not one twelfth part of what it used to be, and men now universally die at the age when formerly they used to be setting out in the world.”

The _____ of the nation was also a great part of His work of redemption.

“This preservation of Israel in the wilderness, was on some accounts more remarkable than any of them; for it was by a continual miracle of so long a duration...Thus God upheld His church by a continual miracle, and kept alive that people in whom was the blessing, the great Redeemer of the world.”