

A History of the Work of Redemption

By Jonathan Edwards

Lesson 10 - Period 1 - Part 5b (From David to the Babylonian Captivity)

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

Continuing in this section of time before Christ, Edwards notices how the _____ was kept in the family of David. Even though the ancestors of David acted foolishly and frequently did not do right, the Lord kept the crown in this family. The southern kingdom was unlike the northern kingdom which saw the crown continually move from family to family.

“The crown of God’s people was wonderfully kept in the line of Christ’s legal ancestors...Rehoboam carried himself in such a manner that it was a wonder all Israel was not provoked to forsake him...and though he was a wicked man, and deserved to have been rejected altogether from being king; yet he being the legal ancestor of Christ, God kept the kingdom of the two tribes, in which the true religion was upheld, in his possession.”

“So great a difference was there between the crown of Israel and the crown of Judah; the one was continued evermore in the same family, and with very little interruption, in one right line; the other was continually tossed about from one family to another, as if it were the sport of fortune. The reason was not, because the kings of Judah, at least many of them, were better than the kings of Israel; but the one had the blessing in them; and they were the ancestors of Christ, whose right it was to sit on the throne of Israel.”

The building of the _____ was also a great type of the future work of redemption that Christ would accomplish. Edwards sees the temple as representing 3 things in Scripture: Christ-in His human nature, the church, and heaven.

The reign of Solomon, in all of his glory, was also a picture of the coming glory of Christ and His kingdom. This glory of Solomon was to picture both the glory of the _____ in this world (as it should draw others to it so as to marvel at what is happening) and the future glory of the church of God in heaven. This point of Jewish history was its high point and immediately after it the glory of the nation began to _____ away.

“Thus God was pleased, in one of Messiah’s ancestors, remarkably to shadow forth the kingdom of Christ and Himself in His glory.”

“After this the glory of the Jewish church gradually declined more and more till Christ came; yet the work of redemption went on...As the moon, from the time of its full, is approaching nearer and nearer to her conjunction with the sun; so her light is still more and more decreasing, till at length...it is wholly swallowed up in the light of the sun. So it was with the Jewish church from the time of its highest glory in Solomon’s time...God, by this gradual decline of the Jewish state and church from Solomon’s time, prepared the way for the coming of Christ several ways:

- 1. This decline made the coming time of the gospel more _____ -***“It is fit that the twinkling stars should gradually withdraw their glory, when the sun is approaching towards his rising point...If the Jewish church, when Christ came, had been in the same external glory that it was in, in the reign of Solomon, men would have their eyes so dazzled with it, that they would not have been likely, joyfully to*

exchange such great external grandeur, for only the spiritual glory of the despised Jesus.

2. **This decline showed forth, with greater clarity, the great _____ of God-**
“God’s people being so diminished and weakened by one step after another, till Christ came, was very much like diminishing of Gideon’s army...With a small handful of disciples, Christ conquered the world.”
3. **This decline helped to distinguish with more clarity those Jews who truly were _____-**
“This prepared the way for Christ’s coming, as it made the salvation of those Jews who were saved by Christ to be more sensible and visible.”

Edwards here again notices the expansion of the canon of Scripture at this time through the writings of Solomon (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs) which further pointed the people forward to Christ as the only _____ for mankind.

As Israel declined in strength and glory, _____ also declined. Again, it appeared that the true worship of God would be completely swept away by all forms of idolatry.

“God wonderfully upheld His church and the true religion through this period...When things seemed to be come to an extremity, and religion at its last gasp, He was often pleased to grant blessed revivals by remarkable outpourings of His Spirit, particularly in Hezekiah’s and Josiah’s time.”

During this time of great decline spiritually the Lord saw to it that the _____ of the _____ was not entirely lost and forever forgotten.

“God remarkably kept the book of the law from being lost in times of general and long-continued neglect of it...God preserved it from being finally lost. In Josiah’s time, when they came to repair the temple, it was found buried in rubbish. It had been lost so long that Josiah himself seems to have been much a stranger to it.”

The Lord protected and preserved the tribe of _____ during this time. Even though there were times when it appeared that Judah would be swept away by stronger nations, the Lord protected the line from which Christ would come.

During the time of king _____ the Lord also blessed His people with mighty prophets who declared the sweetness and glory of the gospel with much power and clarity (Isaiah, Amos, Jonah, Micah, Nahum). Prophecies of Christ were abundant during this period, much more than the preceding periods of history.

“This was a great dispensation of Providence, and a great advance made in the affair of redemption, which will appear, if we consider, that the main business of the prophets was to point out Christ and His redemption. They were the forerunners of the great prophet. The main end why the spirit of prophecy was given them was, that they might give testimony to Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer, who was to come.”

“And therefore we find, that the great and main thing that the most of the prophets in their written prophecies insist upon, is Christ and His redemption, and the glorious themes of the gospel. And though many other things were spoken of in their prophecies, yet they seem to be only as introductory to their prophecy of these great things. Whatever they predict, here their prophecies commonly terminate.”