

Saved, Redeemed and Carried

by Thomas Bradbury

The sermon emphasizes the Lord Jesus Christ's sympathy with His people, His ability to save them, and His role as their Saviour, Redeemer, and Carrier.

Scripture: Isaiah 46:3, Isaiah 63:9, John 3:16, Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 13:5

Topics: "Divine Redemption", "Christian Salvation"

Description

Thomas Bradbury preaches about the profound love, sympathy, salvation, redemption, and succor provided by Jesus Christ to His people. He emphasizes how Christ, as the Angel of God's presence, sympathizes with and saves His chosen ones, redeeming them through His love and pity. Bradbury highlights the necessity of a Savior who can truly understand and bear the afflictions of His people, carrying them through all trials and challenges, from birth to old age, with unwavering love and care.

Transcript

"In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them: in His love and in His pity He redeemed them: and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old." (Isaiah 63:9)

I like that description of the Brother born for adversity, the Messenger of the covenant, the Redeemer of His Church, and the Carrier of His elect brethren. That is the Saviour that will do for me. Anything short of Him can only leave me lost and ruined for ever and ever. A perfect Saviour, an out-an-out sinner as the one who now addresses you. Not that I have any desire to make myself singular or conspicuous in sinnership, for I am fully conscious that there may be a vast amount of talk concerning corruption and depravity where there is no contrition of spirit before God. The child of God, though he feels himself to be the vilest sinner out of hell, as he is taught by the blessed Spirit, loves to take his place among, not above, the children. He desires not the pre-eminence, nor to soar above the rest of the family; but, if it please the Master, to take the lowest place even at His feet. Lowly and little ones He loves to fold in His bosom, there to enjoy those covenant blessings which flow from His loving heart.

Let us notice a few of the prominent features of this very precious chapter. At the commencement, the prophet, by Divine inspiration, asks the question, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength?" or, with His head erect, proceeding in triumph, having settled matters with the adversaries of His people. Edom, or Idumea, lay to the south of Judea, and was inhabited by the sworn enemies of Israel and of Israel's God.

Bozrah was a fortified place, and evidently the capital of Edom, thus the center of enmity and opposition to Jehovah. In these we have lively illustrations of the opposers of God's Christ throughout all time. In looking at this precious portion, many thoughts and questions will arise in the mind of the spiritual student of God's Word. To what period do these events refer? Some will have us believe they simply refer to the achievements of our blessed Lord and Saviour in Gethsemane and upon Calvary.

Others point to that dread period "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His Power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day." (2 Thess. 1:8-10) But I believe that those of us who are led by the Holy Ghost into the knowledge and apprehension of God's mind, as revealed in the Scriptures of truth, can see both these periods in this precious portion.

In Satan's own territory, the Captain of our salvation achieved His grand and glorious victories over sin, death, and hell, and, as the child of God beholds Him on resurrection ground and in ascension glory, but is not blessed with a personal interest in Him, he may well ask the question, "Who is this that cometh in triumph from the midst of the enemies of God and of His people, glorious in His apparel, and travelling in the greatness of His strength?" Such a question is not left long without an answer, for the Traveller Himself gives it.

This is a rare mercy to the tried and tempted child of God, who feels his weakness and ignorance day by day, to know that when none other can communicate the needed intelligence, the Lord Jesus Christ as the Responsible Teacher, the Servant of the covenant, and the Steward of the household of God, who has the very words committed unto Him which shall flow forth in prayer and supplication from their hearts He Himself will blessedly communicate the answer: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." (Isa. 63:1) Oh, what a mercy this is to those of us who bowed the knees of our bodies before our God this morning, and experienced a true melting of soul as we confessed that, "we have left undone those things which we ought to have done: and we have done those things which we ought not to have done."

Righteousness not to be found in any part of our thoughts, words, ways, or works; all our thoughts are foolishness, all our words are evil, all our ways are crooked, all our works are sin. Everything of ours is calculated to bring upon us JEHOVAH'S wrath, and banishment from His presence, and from the glory of His power. But here comes the Righteous One who has made an end of all His people's sins, brought in everlasting righteousness, and now, before the face of His Father, speaks in righteousness for me, and by His blessed Spirit communicates to me the precious fact that He, in His perfect obedience to the law, is my Righteousness in the presence of God.

"I that speak in righteousness." On the ground of His own perfect obedience, He speaks to the Father for me; and He speaks to me for the Father. As it is His delight, as my Intercessor to make mention of my wants and necessities in the court of heaven, so it is His to convey to me by the grace of His Spirit the knowledge of my Father's love and affection, care and concern over me. Does He bless me with the sweet words of His mouth? He speaks in righteousness. Does He curse the objects of His Father's righteous indignation? He speaks in righteousness.

"Mighty to save." To save from what? From sin, Satan, and self. See! He saved in purpose before the worlds were framed, according to 2 Tim. 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not

according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." He saved in His performance of the Father's purpose when He suffered on Calvary's rugged tree. He saved, experimentally, when He was revealed in us by the Holy Ghost, and our hearts were comforted with a sight of His bleeding wounds, precious blood, perfect righteousness, and all-prevalent intercession. He saved me, and blessed be His holy name, He has given me some sweet intimations of the same during the past week; but here I am this morning feeling my need as much as ever, and crying unto Him, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Do you know what this means?

"He saves us at first, and He saves us again,

Each day full a thousand times o'er."

Are there any here deep down in the dungeon of despondency? He is mighty to save. Is there one who is tossed to and fro with cruel temptations? He is mighty to save. Is there one in the midst of trouble, crying, "All these things are against me?" He is mighty to save. Is there one harassed with doubt and fear, crying, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul?" He is mighty to save. Ah, my dear friends, many times we are perplexed with second causes, troubled with many fears, and busy with many cares which we professed to have left in His sacred hands. This reminds me of the old woman, who, when she was counselled to leave all her concerns in the hands of the Lord, said, "I have left them there many a time; but I have such a knack of taking them out again." He is mighty to save us from all our sins, sufferings, and sorrows from all evil that would grieve us, from all error that would deceive us; and all these would be our lot were it not for His glorious grace and sweet perseverance, patience, and pity.

Another question is asked and answered: "Wherefore art Thou red in Thine apparel, and Thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?" He is ready with an answer: "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." We see this in the record given of gloomy, dark Gethsemane by the Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke. Look at Him on Calvary! Betrayed by Judas. Denied by Peter. Forsaken by all. Truly He trod the winepress alone. But He continues to speak, and that in righteousness: "For I will trample them in My fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all My raiment." Think of this! "For the day of vengeance is in Mine heart, and the year of My redeemed is come." This calls us to the contemplation of that marvellous discrimination which appears throughout the whole of God's most holy Word. Discrimination was seen in the case of the first two born into this world Cain and Abel. Discrimination is revealed as the great King-Priest appears on the throne of His glory separating the redeemed sheep from the unredeemed goats. To the sheep He says, "Come, ye blessed of My Father;" (Matt. 25:34) while to the goats the decree goes forth, "Depart, ye cursed into everlasting fire." (Matt. 25:41) So, in the portion before us, vengeance and love flow from the same heart. Strange contrast, yet marvellously mingled in the weak perception of the children of God. See! The day of vengeance against all the adversaries of God's people; but the year of redemption for all those upon whom His love was fixed before all worlds, and to whom He reveals His kindness and His care during their sojourn in the enemy's land.

"And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore Mine own arm brought salvation unto Me; and My fury it upheld Me." My fury with what? With the sins of My people, and with all their adversaries death, hell, and the grave. "And I will tread down the people in Mine anger, and make them drunk in My fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth." This is what all haters and despisers of God's truth may expect. Now listen!

"I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us," upon the ground of accomplished redemption and finished salvation. "A salvation which God could not mend and devils cannot mar." It may be that some with wavering hopes and little faith, and some, so far as their feelings are concerned, without any faith at all, are wondering is there any bestowal of God's goodness for them. Here is a word of comfort for such.

Is the bestowal of God's grace and goodness according to thy faith? No. According to thy hope? No. According to thy asking? No. According to thy diligence in reading and studying the Bible? No. According to your faithfulness in defending the truth, ministering to the saints, or attendance upon the means of grace? No. We will mention His lovingkindness and praises not according to anything we may have done, or do, for Him, but "according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us."

But some poor, anxious sinner may say, "I want to know that He bestows something on me!" Look here, my friend, God loadeth His people daily with His benefits, and among them the least is not a broken heart. Have you got that benefit that load? Then it is according to all, not part, but "all that the Lord hath bestowed on us." As He hath bestowed upon us, according to our weak conceptions, the faintest experience of His covenant mercy, so He will bestow every mercy which in His everlasting covenant He designed for us.

It is a sweet mercy that our God is not limited in His bestowing by our feelings and experiences. If it were so, our poor hearts might give way, and our hopes and expectations perish eternally from the Lord. This is God's order of bestowing His bounties: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." (Eph. 1:3,4) There you have it.

All the blessings and benefits that I need or require during my sojourn in the wilderness, the faith needed, the hope requisite, and the very prayers and desires I breathe out before the throne, by the teaching and bedewing of the Holy Ghost all bestowed on me in Christ before the foundation of the world. Here you have God's standard by which He bestows His blessings upon us. "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19) Let us continue with this expression of the prophet's gratitude, "and the great goodness toward the house of Israel."

Not toward everybody, but "toward the house of Israel, which He hath bestowed on them according to His mercies, and according to the multitude of His lovingkindnesses." It is this which causes the heart to thrill with spiritual delight, and the spirit to quiver with heavenly love, heavenly life and liberty in His sacred and solemn presence. Nothing short of God's standard will do for me.

"For He said, Surely they are My people, children that will not lie; so He was their Saviour." "I cannot come in there," say you. Not at all, I answer, if you look at yourselves. From the womb we went astray, speaking lies, and we are in possession of deceitful hearts which can do nothing but conceive and utter words of falsehood. (Jer. 17:9; Isa. 59:13) Look at Rom. 3:4a portion invariably misquoted to tone down its seeming harshness. Let God be true, and every man a liar? No. Let God be true, though every man a liar. Not that. "Let God be true, but every man a liar?" That's it. The man in the pulpit, and the hearers in the pews. This is not very complimentary to poor, religious human nature, but will make all such ready to gnash with their teeth, while it oftentimes proves a hard nut for many of God's children to crack before they get to the kernel of truth contained therein. What, then, are we to understand by the words, "Children that will not lie?" We are not to look at these children as they appear in union with Adam, or when left to themselves; but as

they stand in covenant union to Him who is essentially "THE TRUTH," and as they are guided by the SPIRIT OF TRUTH into communion with the GOD OF TRUTH. When they bow their knees before a sovereign and heart-searching God, Arminian lies and free-will falsehood in the afternoon, and make a hash of both for the evening. Through a long eternity, those whom THE TRUTH makes free, shall look in His dear face and sing of electing, redeeming, and glorifying love. They are "children that will not lie" as they bow before Him here and confess what sinners they are, but own the sovereignty of His grace which first chose them, plucked them as brands from the burning, and gave them a place among the children. That is a blessed display of sovereign grace in Zech. 3:1-5. A redeemed sinner stands before the Lord, and Satan appears at his right hand to resist him. The Lord throws electing grace into the face of the accuser: "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan: even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke these; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" He stripped him, cleansed him, clothed him, and crowned him. Is not this a blessed clearing up of that declaration, "So He was their Saviour?" We now come to the portion I have read by way of text

"In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bare them, and carried them all the days of old."

I. SYMPATHY "In all their affliction He was afflicted."

II. SALVATION "And the Angel of His presence saved them."

III. REDEMPTION "In His love and in His pity He redeemed them."

IV. succour "And He bare them, and carried them all the days of old."

I. We have blessed SYMPATHY "In all their affliction He was afflicted." Of whom is the prophet speaking? Of the elect, redeemed, and regenerate people of God, who are called by Jehovah, "An afflicted and poor people." (Zeph. 3:12) "In all their affliction." We must look at this in its widest sense and universality. "In all," not in some. To consider this aright, we must have some spiritual knowledge of this Sympathizer, Saviour, Redeemer, and Carrier. He who was God in undivided oneness with the Father became one in perfect identification with His tried and tempted brethren.

He who lived in the heights of glory descended to the depths of His people's doom. He who was the Object of the acclamations of angels and the songs of the glorified, came to be greeted with the sighs of the sorrowful and the groans of the oppressed. He whom all heaven praised from the days of eternity became the object of cruel scorn and derision. He who was the delight of His Father's heart came down to be the make sport of Satan and to be assaulted by the powers of hell. Why was this?

Here we see a grand necessity. He, as God in eternal oneness with the Father, could not truly sympathize with the objects of His love. For a person to sympathize with another it is necessary for him to be brought into like spots and to endure the like sufferings. God could not suffer, therefore God could not sympathize. But He who is God became truly Man. God and Man, one Christ, one glorious Person. Not two persons. Not two Christs. From the poor manger at Bethlehem to the bitter cross upon Calvary, He spent a life of suffering and sorrow, and gave full proof of the truth of the first part of our text, "In all their affliction He was afflicted."

Mark that word "all." You remember that precious declaration in Heb. 4:15, "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are; yet

without sin." Who among His members can look upon this and not feel the heart bound with love to Him? A poor weak babe hanging upon His virgin mother's breast. "He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich." (2 Cor. 8:9) What poverty was this?

It was our Lord Jesus Christ putting Himself into the very same spots of spiritual poverty which His own children are brought to experience through the convicting power of God the ever-blessed Spirit. There is not a spot of spiritual poverty that I am brought into, but a precious Christ was there before me. Do I know and feel myself to be stripped of everything through the transgression of Adam the first? Do I know by painful experience that I am wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked?

What a mercy it is for me to be taught by the Holy Ghost that Jesus came to all these spots for me, that He might lift me out of them, and put me into the possession of those unsearchable riches which He has treasured up with undisturbed and security for me in Himself.

Let us think of the sufferings and temptations of our blessed Lord in comparison to our own. Think of the constitution of that sacred, sinless, and sensitive body. Yes, so sacred, sinless, and sensitive that it must have recoiled from the very sins, impurities, and corruptions which our vile bodies delight in. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." (Heb. 7:26) No taint of sin in Him. "He knew no sin." (No spot of sin could be found to mar the fair beauty of His adorable person. We cannot conceive how He must have shuddered at the very thought of bearing the load of all the sins of all His people from Adam's days to the entrance of the last elect vessel of mercy into glory. Notice what He says in John 14:30, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me." Oh, how the sinless soul and sensitive nature of our blessed Lord and Saviour must have shrunk from the approach of the evil one! We can gather a little concerning this in the declarations of the evangelists. See Matt. 4:1, "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." But Mark has it thus: "And immediately the Spirit driveth Him into the wilderness." Driven by the Spirit to be tempted of the devil. Led, brought, taken, driven by the Spirit to the temptation in all points like as we are. In all points afflicted. Was He? Indeed He was. He was hungry, and His hunger was associated with the vilest temptations from the evil one. He thirsted on Calvary's bloody tree, and His thirst was accompanied with mockery and derision from a devilish mob. His friends forsook Him in the moment of His deepest distress. His foes defamed Him in the hour of His bitterest grief. His Father's face was hidden during the period of His direst agony.

"In all their affliction He was afflicted." Know ye anything of Satan's temptation to doubt and to despair in the midst of your afflictions in mind, body, and estate? Know ye what it is in the midst of soul trouble and dark desertion to question the reality of Divine revelation? Know ye what it is to be brought into such spots of desperation as to cry in the bitterness of your soul with Elijah, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life;" (1 Kings 19:4) or with Jonah, "It is better for me to die than to live?" (Jonah 4:8) But the religious liberality and sentimentality of the present day will scarcely tolerate a man who, by the teaching which is from above, enters into depths and heights like these. Well, we glory in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses which bring us into loving and sympathetic oneness with our once suffering Head. It is a spiritual privilege, rich and rare, to know that in every pain and perplexity, temptation and tribulation, anxiety and care, our Head up yonder has a fellow feeling. That is a precious testimony in 1 Cor. 12:21, "And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee." The eye that is, the seeing organ of the Head, the knowledge Jesus has of any busy, bustling, working member of His body cannot say to such, "I have no need of thee." "Nor again the Head to the feet, I have no need of you." Though the feet may oftentimes be soiled with the dust and the dirt, the mud and the mire of the wilderness journey, yet the Head cannot say to them, "I have no need of you." Oh, ye sin-polluted ones! Oh, ye

defiled and depraved ones in your own estimation before God, here is a word of consolation for you: He who is sinlessness itself, in the love of His heart, took you into His fond embrace and will never let you go.

Now look at a few Scriptures bearing upon this precious subject. Judges 10:16, "And His soul was grieved for the misery of Israel." Turn to Zech. 2:8, "For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye." Mark that! The eye is the most sensitive part of the body, and God in Christ cannot be roused so soon as when one of His eternally-loved Ones is persecuted. It does not say, "he that striketh;" but "he that toucheth you," even by insinuation of reflection. God will paralyze the tongues of all the Egyptian dogs that wag against His covenant people Israel. Turn to Acts 9:4,5, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me. And he said, Who art Thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom Thou persecutest." I am the Head, Saviour, Supporter, and succourer of all these poor members of Mine whom thou art persecuting. Nay, more, thou art persecuting Me in them. This is a marvellous truth. "In all their affliction He was afflicted." See! As the head is the center of all influence and motive power to the human body, so the Head of the Church in glory is the Center of all influence and motive power to the human body, so the Head of the Church in glory is the Center of all influence and motive power to the members of His body; therefore when the members suffer, the Head feels the pain. One has beautifully said, "When the foot is trodden upon earth, the Head cries out in heaven." When blessed with a sweet interest in these things, I feel that I care not how soon the summons may come to take me home; but when I look at those near and dear to me by the ties of nature and of grace, I want to stay a little longer. My mind now roams o'er the past, and I remember long years ago, when Justice Talfourd delivered his charge to the Grand Jury at Stafford. Yes, I remember the circumstance well, for it made a lasting and solemn impression upon my young mind. He uttered these words:

"THE GREAT LACK IN ENGLISH SOCIETY IS SYMPATHY."

The judge's head dropped. He was dead. He was gone either to heaven or to hell. I do not say this lightly, for I am inclined to think with that judgment of charity which God has wrought in my soul, that the judge was carried from his chair to glory. Think about this, and may God bless the thought to your profit and peace:

"THE GREAT LACK IN CHRISTIAN SOCIETY IS SYMPATHY."

It is! But there is no lack of sympathy in HIM.

II. SALVATION "And the Angel of His presence saved them." I love that salvation which is brought from the presence of JEHOVAH by the Angel of the everlasting covenant. Who is this Angel? He is the Messenger of the covenant of grace in whose hands the pleasure of JEHOVAH prospers. He is the Angel of His presence in whom all to whom He is sent find sweet acceptance. He is the glorious Mediator between God and redeemed men, by whom all covenant communications are made. What is the meaning of the word Angel? One sent on a certain message. In Jesus we see the Sent of the Father. "For He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto Him." (John 3:34) "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." (1 John 4:14) What world is that? A world within a world. The world of His elect, loved with an everlasting love. The world that He has saved, does save, and will save in Himself with an everlasting salvation. The Father sent His own Son, who stood in the presence of His glory from the ages of eternity as the Representative of the covenant, to save, succour, and sympathize with all those for whom He stood as Covenantee. In some portions of God's Word, the term "angel" refers to those glorious intelligencies who surround His

throne, waiting to go forth at His command to do His bidding. It also refers to bishops, elders, pastors, and ministers, as the angels of the seven Churches in Asia. See Rev. 2 and 3. God's own ministers can only preach and declare His will as He sends them forth. "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." (Rom. 10:15) You see something of this sending in Mark 3:13,14: "And He goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto Him whom He would: and they come unto Him. And He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach." You see they must be with Him before He sends them forth to preach; and as He was with the Father from all eternity, knowing the Father's mind and will. He came forth to reveal and communicate that mind and will, which was the salvation of the whole election of grace by His sacrifice and blood-shedding.

By the obedience and death of the Sent One, sin was put away, righteousness brought in, Satan defeated, death destroyed, God glorified, and salvation and solace brought home to the hearts of elect sinners. These were saved in purpose, saved by purchase, and are saved by power. When danger is near, when temptations abound, when sins distress, Jesus is ready to save, and nigh at hand to bless. But what is salvation? It is complete deliverance from danger, death, and damnation. As we look at ourselves, true descendants of Adam the First, what are we? Sinners by birth and practice, dreading danger, dead in sins, and deserving damnation; but from all these the Angel of JEHOVAH'S presence perfectly saves His people. I love to know this salvation in the light thrown upon it by a poor factory girl in Manchester. She said to me, "God's salvation, experimentally realized, is a succession of deliverances from sin, guilt, and death, from the first sigh in regeneration to the first shout in glory." That is worth knowing. Know ye anything of such a salvation as this? I do. Left to ourselves for a moment or two, what are we but fit subjects for His saving grace and delivering mercy? His salvation is revealed in His title: "The Angel of His presence." As God, He stood in the presence of the Father as no created angel could. (John 1:18) As the God-Man, He came forth from the presence of the Father to reveal the Father's smiling face to His elect brethren. (John 17:25) As the Father's faithful Servant, and the Surety of the covenant, He brings "poor vile sinners" into the presence of the Father. See! "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." (John 14:6) "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (1 Pet. 3:18) "For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." (Eph. 2:18)

III. REDEMPTION "In His love and in His pity He redeemed them." The loving sympathies of Jesus slumber not, but are ever active. They are neither selfish, fickle, or partial. What think ye of sympathies like these? Ah, says one, the subject is too vast for my poor finite mind to comprehend. You are right, for none can truly describe it. As is the love of the Father to His Son, so is the love of the Son to His people. Beginning, it had none, and it never can. See John 15:9, "As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you." "Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me...for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:23,24) Look at that precious prayer of Paul for the Ephesian Christians in Eph. 3:17-19, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." We know, we know but little, we think we know, and are, "Lost in Godhead, love, and blood," and are looking forward to that glorious period when we shall be swallowed up in an eternity of unceasing and uninterrupted love, the love of a precious Christ. His love is uninfluenced, there was nothing in His people to deserve it. His love is sovereign, and flows where He will without consulting the objects thereof. His love is immutable and knows no change. His love is inexhaustible and knows no diminution.

Not only love, but pity.

"O had He not pitied the state you were in,

Your bosoms His love had ne'er felt;

You all would have lived, would have died, too, in sin,

And sunk with the load of your guilt."

Love delights in us as we appear in all the glorious perfections of our Covenant Head and Husband. Pity finds and feels for us in our fallen, sinful, and helpless state. This is blessedly set before us in that precious chapter, Ezek. 16. The sinner is cast out in the day of his birth. God says, "None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee. But Zion's Redeemer, who is "full of pity, joined with power" for "sinners poor and wretched," thus reveals Himself: "Now, when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread My skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness; yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest Mine." Here we see love and pity in the person of Jesus redeeming.

By nature we are sold under sin, and the bond-slaves of Satan; we hug our chains and defy our Deliverer. In Adam we were sold to slavery. Who can buy us back? Who can pay the price of our redemption? Jesus, our Kinsman-Redeemer. What is the price? "The precious blood of Christ." (1 Pet. 1:18,19) Through the virtue and power of that blood, all the elect of God are for ever secured from hell, and free from all the demands of God's righteous law. With this eternal redemption, Satan cannot detain you, sin cannot damn you, death cannot destroy you, and hell cannot devour you. "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people." (Luke 1:68)

IV. succour "And He bare them, and carried them all the days of old." What do you think of a carrying God? a carrying Saviour? No other kind of a Saviour will do for me. If I take a single step without the strength and support of His arm, I am sure to stumble. But the Father sent Him, and He came willingly to redeem, to save, to sympathize, and to succour. As a gentle Shepherd He carries His sheep upon His broad shoulders of sovereign power, and folds His lambs in His bosom of unfaltering affection. Like a Nursing Mother He carries His poor weak children through every danger and difficulty until He lands them safe in glory. See how beautifully this is expressed in the promise, "Hearken unto Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by Me from the belly, which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age I am He; and even to your hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." (Isa. 46:3,4) See! In the person of Christ the whole of God's redeemed are sheltered and succoured, and, blessed be His holy name, they are refreshed and encouraged with the sweet assurance from His sacred lips, that come what will from earth, from hell, from sinner, or from saint, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

May the Lord in His love and pity add His blessing for His name's sake." Amen.

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