

THE TWO REDEMPTIONS

A SERMON

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“Even denying the Lord that bought them.” 2 Peter 2:1

I HAVE this morning three things to do. I have, in the first place, *to prove that there are, in the word, of God, two distinct redemptions*; that the one is providential and temporal, that the other is sacrificial and eternal, and that our text does not belong to the redemption that is sacrificial and eternal, but that it belongs to the redemption that is providential and temporal. We shall presently have to prove this. And then, secondly, we have to describe *what it is fatally to deny the Lord*; and then, thirdly, *the terrible consequences thereof*, “and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

I have, then, in the first place, to prove that *there are, in the word of God, two distinct redemptions*, and perhaps I cannot be too clear upon this matter. Now, in the first place, the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt is, as you learn in the 15th of Exodus, called a redemption. “You, in your mercy, have led forth the people which you have redeemed; you have guided them in your strength unto your holy habitation.” Here, you observe, they were brought by providence and by power, and thus there is a redemption that is providential and temporal. And then, in that same 15th of Exodus, Moses, looking forward to the Israelites entering the promised land, says of the enemy, “Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of your arm they shall be as still as a stone; till your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over which you have purchased.” Thus, you find in that 15th of Exodus that the term redeemed, and the term purchased, both these terms are applied to the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. Thus, then, beyond all dispute, there is a redemption that is providential and temporal, in contrast to the redemption that is sacrificial and eternal. A word upon the other presently. Then you come to the 32nd of Deuteronomy, and you will find Moses there setting forth the God of Israel in distinction from all other gods, and all he there says will apply to that temporal redemption; and after we have applied those scriptures to that temporal redemption, after we have given them their primary meaning, then let them apply to their ultimate object, that eternal redemption that is by Christ Jesus the Lord. Let us then, for the sake of clearness, trace this matter out. Moses, having declared what good his doctrine should do unto many, goes on to describe the doctrine. “He is the Rock;” there is the Lord in his stability. Now the Lord promised Abraham, this you get at the latter part of the 15th of Genesis, the Lord there promised Abraham that his descendants should be delivered from the Egyptian power. Hence, there are, as you are aware, set before us in the 15th of Genesis, the sacrifices, and the lamp passing out between those pieces, in which he saw the literal salvation, the literal redemption, of

his descendants from Egypt. So that God made this promise 400 years before he fulfilled it. Moses, in relation to God's faithfulness to his promise, said, "He is the Rock." The Lord kept the promise that he made to Abraham and renewed again by Joseph; "God shall surely visit you and bring you up out of this land." And then, "His work is perfect." How perfect the Lord's work was in bringing the Israelites out of Egypt! Not one was left behind; not one feeble person was among them. "Yea," says Moses, "not a hoof shall be left behind." How perfect the work was! Not one was left behind, not a life was lost, not a single error committed. The Lord took the whole affair in hand; and although many other parts of that dispensation were conditional, yet this was one of the unconditional parts, and, consequently, there was no failure. Hence, after Moses reminding us of God's stability, and the entirety of the salvation from Egypt, he then says, "All his ways are judgment;" that is, the Lord arranged his plans, and did everything after the order of an infinite and unerring judgment. So that among the ten plagues, and the various circumstances by which the Lord brought them out of Egypt, the Lord had not to undo one thing. We know that with us there are a great many things which we do and undo; not so there with the Lord; his ways were judgment; his plans were fixed and arranged after the order of infinite judgment, and, of course, that plan answered. "A God of truth;" and so he was: he abodes by the truth of that covenant. There was the Abrahamic covenant, and God abode by it. "And without iniquity;" that is, without error. And so, it was. He would not admit one error. If they set up a golden calf, God will put it down; he will not admit anything of human device in connection with that deliverance from Egypt. And "just and right is he;" and so he was. He was just to his engagement, and right in all he did; because he is God over all, blessed for evermore. Then Moses looks at the people as apostatizing from this, as turning round and lightly esteeming the rock of their salvation. "Then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation." "They have," says Moses, "corrupted themselves; their spot is not the spot of his children; they are a perverse and crooked generation. Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise? is not he your father that has *bought* you?" There, you see, is the very word used in our text. "Is not he your father that has bought you? Has he not made you and established you?" Here, then, it is pretty clear that there is such a thing in the Scriptures as that of a providential and a temporal redemption; and there was such a thing, is such a thing, as people being thus providentially and temporally brought out of the world into God's service for a time; these are servants, but they are not sons. Here, then, the people apostatized; here, then, there were false teachers, that stood opposed to that order of things which the Lord revealed to Abraham, which he revealed to Joseph, and which he revealed to Moses. And so "there shall be false teachers among you, who secretly shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them." Now, before we enter upon the other redemption, let us remember that all creatures are God's servants, and he sometimes takes a man and bestows gifts upon him. God buys him out of the world, takes him out of the profane world, bestows gifts upon him, and he goes on to a certain extent. Now that man is bought by the providence of God and is bought temporally. This man, being destitute of grace, and having no real experience of his state as a sinner, and never having felt his need of the new covenant certainty of the gospel, he consequently preaches something else; and if he begins at the first to preach the truth, he will be sure, even in preaching the truth, to make terrible mistakes. You will find that the man who preaches even the doctrines of truth up to a certain extent, if he has not any experience of them, his testimony of experience will run counter to the experience of the real child of God; he will call upon the child of God to do what the living soul feels it cannot do; and he will preach ten thousand faults, and, indeed, almost bring in, or quote, sometimes, the threatening's of the Bible against us because we do not pray more, and love more, and have more fellowship with God, and will speak

to us as though we had these things at our own command. Such are false apostles; such are ministers of Satan transformed as the ministers of righteousness, for Satan himself is transformed as an angel of light, and therefore it is no marvel if his ministers should be thus transformed as ministers of righteousness. Here, then, my hearer, draw a line of distinction between gifts and grace. Men are raised providentially to carry on the work of delusion. "There must be heresies among you, that they that are approved might be made manifest."

Now, then, the teachers here, or the persons here who denied the Lord, were bought providentially, were bought temporally; but then to be bought in the other sense of the word is quite a different thing. But perhaps I have said enough to show, though I could quote many other scriptures to show, that you must not always suppose that the words *redeemed, purchased, bought, redemption*, and so on, must not always suppose that those words refer directly to the redemption obtained by Jesus Christ. Those words do refer mediately to Jesus Christ, but not immediately; that is to say, you must admit their literal meaning; and then, when you once establish the fact that there is this temporal redemption, this temporal buying, and this temporal purchasing, and that a man may be bought by the providence of God into some department to carry on delusion; for it is the work of God to send delusion, as well as it is the work of God to send the truth; for he says, "I will send them strong delusion." God takes a man, and he says, That is the man for my purpose; I will raise him up in my providence; I will buy him by my providence; Satan shall be his teacher, and he shall shine like a comet, and the delusion shall go on, and God will fulfil his word that "he will send them strong delusion, and they shall believe a lie." And all such are sure to deny the Lord that bought them. Now, before I enter upon the other division, let us see if we can understand this, that the false teachers in ancient times were always setting up something else in opposition to some part of God's truth. You see this in the golden calf in the wilderness, and you see this in the gods that were set up in the land of Canaan afterwards, and you see this by the accumulation of human tradition down to the time of the coming of Christ. And therefore, they thus denied the Lord in setting his truth aside; they had never known his truth. There is a certain people that hate God, and yet profess to love him; that is, that hate his truth; and, "Forty years," said the Lord, "was I grieved with this generation, for they do always err in their heart, and they have not known my ways." And, therefore they hated ministers that did know God's ways; they erred in their hearts, and therefore they hated the minister that had a true experience in his heart, and as they thus did not know God's ways, they preferred those prophets that did not know God's ways, and that pointed out some other way; and as they erred in their hearts, and had not the truth there, they chose prophets that advanced error, and did not advance the truth. And so, like people, like priest; denying thus, as they did, that very God that bought them from Egypt; him they denied.

Now we come to the Christian covenant, and the apostle here says, "There shall be false teachers among you;" that is, in the gospel dispensation. The degree of falsehood is what I will not occupy your time in enlarging upon this morning; but if you look, for instance, simply at the Roman Catholic Church; look at the priests of that church, false teachers; God bought those men temporally and providentially; he had work for them to do, a work of delusion; I will send them strong delusion;" "and if a prophet be deceived, I the Lord have deceived that prophet." And so, if we look at that church, the Roman Catholic Church, and then look at many other sects which to me are the same in substance, more refined, not quite so ceremonial, rather more doctrinal, rather more free, rather nearer the truth, but in essence the same. So that these refined systems are nothing else but that delusion which God sends for the delusion of men, and to put his own people to the

test. "There must be heresies among you," as I have already quoted, "that they which are approved might be manifest." And how hereby are they which are approved made manifest? Why, they have an experience that keeps them close to that redemption of which I have presently to speak; that keeps them standing firm against every encroachment of the adversary; keeping the truth in its purity, in its harmony, in its vitality, in its practical worth, in its eternal certainty, and being willing to endure all the consequences of thus standing out for the truth. The buying, or the redemption spoken of in our text, is another thing altogether. They were bought providentially and temporally; but not bought spiritually, sacrificially, or eternally. It is, then, an undeniable fact that there are in the Scriptures these two redemptions; the one is providential and temporal; the other is sacrificial, spiritual, and eternal. And if God wants a Judas, he will choose a Judas for a Judas' work; if God want an Ananias, he will choose an Ananias for an Ananias' work; if God want a Demas, he will choose a Demas for a Demas' work. When Abel offered a sacrifice to God, you would not deny, on the one hand, that he did really offer a lamb to God, literally so, you would not deny that; and on the other hand, you would not, those of you, at least, that are taught of God, you would not for a moment believe that Abel looked to that literal lamb for the eternal redemption of his soul, for his justification, for his pardon, or eternal life. Abel held this literal lamb only as the type of the antitypical Lamb, the Lamb of God that appeared in the fulness of time. But you need not deny the literality of the one, in order to make way for the spirituality of the other, because the one is a type of the other. And so that redemption that was from Egypt is a type, clearly so, of that redemption that is by Jesus Christ; but how infinitely different the two! You in your mercy have led forth the people which you have redeemed, into an earthly promised land; but the people which are redeemed by the blood of Christ, they are regenerated, and led by regeneration into an eternal inheritance, an inheritance that is in entire keeping with the redemption of Christ, for he has obtained eternal redemption.

And so, the Lord guides his people in his mercy by the eternal redemption of Christ into an eternal inheritance; and so, they have the promise of eternal inheritance. "Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of your arm they shall be as still as a stone; till your people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over which you have purchased." This had a literal meaning; but then, when we have done with the literal meaning, and take it spiritually, and apply it to a dying hour, we may look at the Canaanites there as figures of our sins and the powers of darkness; and when we come to die, fear and dread shall fall upon all that would hurt us; and by the greatness of the Savior's arm, that arm that wrought salvation, our enemies at that time shall be still as a stone, and we shall pass clean over Jordan into possession of the promised, the glorious land, and there to dwell forever. And if God were a rock in that covenant, how much more lastingly is he a rock in this new covenant! And if there were perfection in his work of bringing the Israelites out of Egypt, how much more have we eternal perfection by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, who has, by his one offering, perfected forever them that are sanctified! And if the ways of God were ways of judgment there, how much more so in the new covenant! And if he were a God of truth there, abiding by that covenant, how much more so in that new covenant where we have this sacrificial and eternal redemption! And if he were without iniquity there, how much more so here, where Christ has put away our sins! There God stood related to a people whose sins were not put away; but here, in the new covenant, he stands related to a people whose sins are put away; Christ has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. So that here the Lord, personally and relatively, is without iniquity, and the church is blessed with his majestic name: "This is the name wherewith she shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness." Here, then, "just and right is he." And shall these people

that are brought to know this eternal redemption; shall these people that are brought to know the Lord is a rock by this eternal redemption; shall these people that are brought to know something of the price by which they are redeemed, shall they so requite the Lord as to go away from him? shall they forsake the God that made them? shall they lightly esteem the rock of their salvation? shall they lose the place of God's children? shall they turn enemies? shall they turn round and hate that love which has loved them? shall they turn round and reject that electing grace that has chosen them? shall they turn round, forget and despise that eternal redemption by which they are redeemed? shall they turn round and forget that covenant relation into which they are brought? As says the Holy Ghost, in the prospect of sinners being brought to God, "They shall come and inquire the way to Zion, saying, Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant, that shall not be forgotten."

Here, then, the sacrificial redemption of Christ, that redemption which he has wrought, is as clearly eternal as the other was temporal as clearly spiritual as the other was providential. The effect of that redemption ceased. Thousands fell in the wilderness; thousands more fell in the promised land; till, by-and-bye, all were swept away together, as with the broom of destruction. But shall one of the ransomed be ever lost? "The ransomed," by sacrificial and eternal redemption, "shall return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy;" or else, where is the eternity of redemption, if it were not so? "Everlasting joy shall be unto them; sorrow and sighing shall flee away." I think what I have said clearly proves that there is such a thing in the Scriptures as a temporal redemption; and, on the other hand, that the redemption of Jesus Christ is not merely providential. No; it is provisional, sacrificial, spiritual, and eternal. God puts a temporal redemption together with the destruction that follows upon it. Just so I have done this morning. I admit that redemption, in its results, was conditional. I admit that it could be lost. I admit that men may be thus saved out of Egypt, and afterward, through unbelief, destroyed. I admit all this; but I will not admit it in the new covenant. A man may be saved out of Egypt, and cease to believe, and so undergo destruction; but I will never admit that a man can be saved by the blood of Christ, and afterwards destroyed; that a man can be brought out of the world by regeneration, and afterwards destroyed. I will never admit that a man can be loved with an endless love, and drawn with lovingkindness, and afterwards turned into a vessel of wrath; that a man be once brought into the bond of a sworn and eternal covenant, and after that be destroyed. I freely admit, in the one case, they not only can be destroyed, but are destroyed; but in the other case they cannot be destroyed, they never shall be, they are safe, and safe for ever.

Thus, then, persons may be bought providentially and temporally but may, to their own destruction, deny the Lord that has thus providentially and temporally bought them; but no man can be bought by the blood of Christ, and then deny the Lord. Peter denied the Lord. That was only partially and temporarily; that did not last; nor can it last long with any of the people of God. Let us, then, draw a line of distinction. I say, again and again, let us draw a line of distinction between that which is temporal and that which is eternal. To my mind, what a lovely light this sets the Savior in! what a contrast he stands to the temporal salvation! what a contrast he forms and is to the temporal redemption! what a contrast! Why, Wesleyanism, I laugh at it. Wesleyanism is chaff; duty-faithism is chaff; Catholicism is chaff; the whole system is chaff. And in our day, professors, for the sake of a little pretended morality, for it is nothing else, it is only pretense, for the sake of a little pretended morality would sacrifice the whole truth of God, the souls of men, and do away, by degrees, with the Savior altogether. But, bless the Lord! there are a few poor

sinners still left that will cleave to the eternity of the gospel, that will cleave to the eternity of redemption, to the eternity of salvation, to the eternity of the covenant; and while they think us fools, we know they are. They think we are obliged to deny such a scripture as our text, and that you high Calvinists can make nothing of it; but you see we are not at a loss. Why, say some, you are boasting. Well, of course I am. I have a right to boast. I am boasting in the Lord: I am boasting in his light. I can see that the buying here is not the buying of Calvary's blood. I lived in the blasphemy of Wesleyanism long enough, when I ignorantly joined in charging the Savior with losing some for whom he died; when I ignorantly charged an immutable God with loving today and hating tomorrow; when I ignorantly charged the Holy Spirit with beginning a work in the heart of a dead sinner, and yet, after he had made him alive, could not carry it on. I had enough of that blasphemy. God be praised for ever for delivering my soul from that and every other delusive system and bringing me into the eternity and glory of that redemption that is in Christ Jesus the Lord. Let, then, mere professors, that are bought providentially and temporally, let them deny the God that bought them; let them deny his truth as long as they please; we expect nothing else of them; let them deny the people of God, and represent them in what colors they will. Carnal people will act carnally; and those under the influence of those hostile principles will act in accordance with them. If a tree be not good, it cannot bring forth good fruit. I rejoice, then, not only in Christ's eternal redemption, but in the light. If you are as fond of light as I am in these things, I am exceedingly, I must confess, I do not mean mere speculative light, but that light that reaches the heart, that expands the soul, that endears the Savior, that makes the Bible my delight, that makes God my exceeding joy, and that enables me to unite my present position with eternal glory, without a schism between, without anything that can occur to bring about a separation. There the Savior stands,

“His precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
lie saved to sin no more.”

So, then, there are two redemptions; the one temporal, from Egypt, not only from Egypt; God does by his providence still set men in slippery places; he still bestows gifts upon them, in order to do their work of delusion. “I will send them strong delusion, and they shall believe a lie.” God has his judicial as well as his gracious decrees; God has his judgments, as well as his mercies. Why, we should shock the world, if such a thing were now to be said for the first time, namely, “For this same purpose have I raised you up.” Will you say Pharaoh was raised up by the blood of Christ; that he was raised up by regeneration, by faith in the mercy of God? And yet God says, “For this same purpose have I raised you up.” And that will apply to every enemy, to every false teacher, to everyone, from the refined duty-faith man to the Wesleyan, to the grossest Catholic priest, to every advocate of delusion under heaven, “I have raised you up to this end, that I might show my power in you, that my wonders in Egypt might be multiplied.” I know the devil is the immediate teacher of these but Satan acts under the restraints and government of God. Ah! you are rather strong this morning; I will give you something stronger yet. You see that old prophet sitting there in his room, and meditating upon the love of God, and the salvation of God, and the mercy of God, and then meditating upon the temporal covenant, and then looking at the apostacy of the people, and then seeing them in their fondness for that which was the most fashionable; and do you see the Spirit of God descending upon him, and showing to him that the very plan that they are now concocting,

that the very step they are now discussing the propriety of taking, is a step of entire destruction to Ahab? Then, just as this revelation is made, the prophet is sent forth, and they tried to soften him, coax him over. They all speak good of the king. "Let your word, I pray you, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good. And Micaiah said, "As the Lord lives, what the Lord says unto me, that will I speak." Now then, pass by the detail, and come to the summary. "Now therefore, behold, the Lord" that is, Jehovah, "has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets, and the Lord has spoken evil concerning you." God did it. Men may have great gifts, and they may be everlastingly flinging in your face the great good they do: what is that to me, if there be underneath it a current of poison and secret enmity against the truth as it is in Jesus?

Thus, then, to be bought providentially and temporally is one thing; that men unacquainted with covenant mercy, unacquainted with covenant love, and ignorant of Jesus Christ, will deny the Lord that has providentially bought them. But to be bought in the new covenant sense, to be regenerated by the Spirit of God, and brought into oneness, as I have said, with Christ's redemption, with eternal redemption, is quite another thing. I believe that to be the mind of the Holy Spirit in our text; that he intends here to set before us the providential and temporal buying, providential and temporal redemption.

Now the second point I have to notice, and I must do so very concisely, is *that of denying the Lord*; that is, by setting his truth aside. Perhaps, before I come to that, I may just name, that is all I can do now, as your time is gone, the several ways. First, a man gives way by degrees to companionship with men given to drink. Professors do this, and by degrees they become very loose, and come even into a pew in the house of God offensive by the drink that they have had: and by degrees they get loose; they lose every fine feeling; mere professors, away they go into an ungodly world; the sow washed returning to her wallowing in the mire. This is one way in which men deny the Lord that providentially bought them. Another way is by worldly interest. And here I must have just a word to the people of God. I say to you that know the Lord, what a mercy it is to be able to keep the kingdom of God as your first interest! "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added." But if you set your temporal interest up first, and make your spiritual interest subservient to your temporal, instead of making the temporal subservient to the spiritual, you are thus turning things upside down, you are thus putting darkness for light, and light for darkness; for what a mere toy are all the possessions and acquirements of human life compared with that eternal inheritance, with that eternal tranquility, with that eternal blessedness we have by the Lord Jesus Christ! Do not misunderstand me; I am not speaking against industry; I admire that; but what I mean is this, when you would not step one inch out of the way for God's truth, if that inch should tend at all to hinder you temporally. Now mere professors, see how they square their profession by their temporal interest; and the consequence is, that by degrees off they glide, heaven knows where, I do not know; for when you once begin to go, you know not where you will stop. It was wise in Moses, amidst the various ceremonial uncleanness; his plan was, "Touch not, taste not, handle not." And so, this is one of the ways, then, setting temporal interest first, and making the welfare of our soul the secondary thing. This is the way in which many professors have apostatized to their own destruction, and the way, too, in which some of the children of God have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. The third way in which men deny the Lord is by bringing in false doctrines. It says in the preceding part, "Bringing in damnable heresies." The word here translated *heresies* may with equal propriety be rendered, *sects*; the same word sometimes rendered sects. A remarkable thing that is; "Bringing in damnable sects;" that is,

destructive sects; the word *damnable* means *destructive*. Ah! there is a dear man, Mr. So-and-so; you would not object to him preaching for us once, would you? Some straight-haired deacon, an old hypocrite, comes and says, I have been thinking of having Mr. So-and-so just to preach for us once, that's all: and if the minister is weak enough to give way, if this parson happen to get a pretty good collection, then of course his sect must come in; and then that one liberal sect stands connected with more sects; and so you bring in one sect after another, till, by-and-bye, you become so loving, you love everybody; you have got them all at last. And what is the result? Why, the soul of the child of God is laid waste, the truth is got rid of, it hardly dares now appear in the pulpit. This is another way in which men deny the Lord that has providentially bought them. But those who are spiritually bought will stand fast against these encroachments, and rather die sword in hand. As the Lord lives, I would rather see this chapel in flames, or swallowed up by an earthquake, than I would see in this pulpit any of these systems. We must stand out-and-out; and those that do not like it must go, for you will never find me a bit softer than I am. And then we will take the other reading: "Bringing in damnable heresies;" it conveys the idea of amalgamation. And the fourth way in which men deny the Lord is by the special inspiration of Satan. 2 Thessalonians 11; "Who's coming," in hostility to the truth, "is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders." Oh, how many lying conversions there are! conversions that profess to be conversions, that are no conversions at all. How many lying professors there are, that profess to belong to God, and yet hate his truth! All these are lying wonders. The world may wonder, and professors wonder, but it is by these signs, and wonders, and feasibilities, that they maintain their denial of God's truth and their hostility to God's people.

I know I shall get but little thanks for such a sermon as this. There are times when we must set up our banners; there are times when we must just let people know where we are; there are times when we must just give the devil and those of his host to understand that we will not be trifled with; that we will not compromise, God keeping us; and that we are not only where we were, but where we mean to be, and where we shall be, and that to eternity. Hence said John, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." And the apostle Paul says, "To whom we gave place by subjection," when these pious men brought in their amalgamation scheme, "no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." "And though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed."

Thus, then, there are two redemptions; in the one case they can deny the Lord that bought them; in the other case, the elect of God are kept therefrom. The various ways in which mere professors deny the truth; but can the people of God deny the truth? No. Shall their worldly interest produce a separation between them and the love of the truth? No. Shall they bring in all sects, and become such hypocrites as to pretend to love all? No.