

the same." He is nearer still, in that He is their *covenant head*, representative, and surety. In Him, as their covenant head, they were chosen from eternity to life everlasting. In Him as their Head, and by virtue of his mediation, they are pardoned, justified, adopted, and will be finally glorified. But He is nearer still, in that He and they are actually *one*. As the vine and branches are one tree—as the head and the members of the body are one person—as the husband and the wife are one flesh—so the Redeemer and his believing people are absolutely one. He is the Vine and they are the branches. He is the Head and they are the members. He is the Husband and they are "the bride the Lamb's wife." So near is the Redeemer to all them that are his, that in all their afflictions He is afflicted. He that touches them touches the apple of his eye. What Boaz declared concerning an earthly relative, is eminently true in relation to the sinner's Friend, "howbeit, there is a kinsman nearer than I."

The epithet *near kinsman* is specially suggestive of the office that the Lord Jesus Christ discharges for his people. According to the law of God, and the customs of the Jewish people, it was the duty of the near kinsman to redeem his relative's mortgaged inheritance. That is what the Lord Jesus Christ has done for his people. They had, as it were, mortgaged their spiritual inheritance. By sin they lost the favour and blessing of God, and forfeited eternal life which was promised as the reward of obedience. In that great love wherewith He loved them, the incarnate Son of God bought back that forfeited inheritance. He paid the uttermost farthing of that debt which they owed to the Divine law and justice, and so restored that glorious estate which they lost in Adam—the favour and love of God on earth, and the eternal enjoyment of God in heaven.

And what was the *price* which the Redeemer paid for the restoration of this inheritance? Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished O earth! nothing less than his own precious blood. "In him we have redemption through his blood." We admire the kindness of one who voluntarily sacrifices a portion of his estate to relieve the necessities of a friend, but what is such friendship to the wondrous loving kindness of Him who redeemed all them that are his, "not with such corruptible things as silver and gold," but with his own "precious blood." Should not praise ever dwell on our lips; should not love ever burn in our hearts; should not our song ever be, "To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."

III. THE REDEEMER'S SECOND ADVENT.

He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. Whatever reference there may be in these words, to the first advent of the Son of God in the flesh, when "He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" there can be no doubt that, in uttering them, Job looked beyond the Saviour's first coming. There can be no doubt that he looked forward to the end of the Gospel dispensation, and that his eye of faith rested on the glorious appearance of the great God and our Saviour when He shall come "the second time without sin unto salvation."

The doctrine of the Redeemer's second advent, to judge the world in righteousness, was taught at an early period in the history of the world.