

in His holy life and precepts to meet the condition of the world, apart from His death, till men had accepted that as their atoning sacrifice for sin. The Apostles taught that reconciliation preceded forgiveness, and that love and obedience followed it. To ignore the relation of His death to our new life, is to lose the key to our redemption story. It was the doctrine of the cross—Christ crucified to make atonement for sin, made always so prominent by the Apostles, that was an offence to the unbelieving world; hence, Paul termed them "*enemies of the cross of Christ*." That is, opposed to the doctrines of the cross.

These doctrines were to the Jews a stumbling block, to the Greeks foolishness. The Jews expected Messiah to save in another way, to deliver them from their enemies by conquest, not to save them by His death from sin and its penalty. The Greeks, so philosophic in their own estimation, accounted the scheme of redemption foolishness. This was the *offence of the cross*.

The doctrine of redemption is on the surface of the Bible. "God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "Christ died for the ungodly." By believing this good news, we become "partakers of Christ, and accepted in the beloved." "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Forgiveness of sin, we are taught, lies on the threshold of the Christian life. "Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." The Jews and Greeks may explain away the atonement as they will, we find the cleansing blood, the cross, in all apostolic teaching. John Baptist proclaimed Him as the "Lamb of God that taketh away sin." John the evangelist had a vision of Him in heaven, *not* as a "great reformer," but as a *sacrifice*, as "a Lamb slain," in the midst of the throne.

Redemption song in heaven will be "worthy the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Paul's theme was "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." Whatever the Jews or Greeks may feel in regard to it, Paul gloried in the cross, made the sacrifice there emphatic. Christ's death would not have offended, apart from the fact that it was proclaimed to be substitutionary and sacrificial, and the ground of pardon

to all who believed. Have we outgrown the atonement?

Some say we have. It is, say they, a notion for a period of ignorance, when the world knew nothing of government by love. The Bible, however, recognizes no antagonism between love and penalty. "It presents both paternal kindness and judicial vigor in the representations of the character of God; but it presents these in combination, not in contrast." Rule without authority, law without penalty for its violation, may be a figment of modern times, but it has no analogy in nature, or countenance in the word of God. It is not conceded that dropping out the atonement is progressive evolution, or the product of advanced thought. It is the old hatred to the doctrine. If a penalty has been incurred it is not for man, but for God, to say on what conditions it may be remitted. Men stumble at the conditions, and tell us that "advanced thought" rejects the theory of a bloody sacrifice for sin, as "out of accord with the light of the times." Doubtless the "advanced thinkers" among the Israelites stumbled at the token, at the blood-sprinkled doorpost, at the passover. Later on, the "advanced thinkers" could see no connection between looking at a brazen serpent and healing power. The philosophers of Jericho could not see anything saving for Rahab, in the scarlet line tied in her window. So the power of Christ crucified, the cross, has in every age been an offence to men, who imagine that what they cannot understand must be rejected or explained away. So the wise men of the nineteenth century omit the doctrines of the cross in their new way of saving mankind. Their opposition is really as old as the gospel.

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### SPURGEON.

Truly C. H. Spurgeon was a remarkable man; the most remarkable man of this generation, perhaps of this century. We cannot form a just estimate of his work and worth, unless we bear in mind two things: first, how much he has accomplished, and next, under what disadvantages he began life. He had not the advantages of an illustrious parentage, only in as far as moral worth